

Bay State Council of the Blind

Board call on January 12, 2020

Bay State Council of the Blind Officers and Board Members

- Brian Charlson President
- David Kingsbury First Vice President
- Frank Ventura Second Vice President
- Jerry Berrier Secretary
- Rick Morin Treasurer
- Rose Miller board member
- Dianna Leonard board member
- Cheryl Cumings board member
- Mary Haroyan board member

Ex Officio

- Steve Dresser Webmaster
- Bob Hachey BayLines editor
- DeAnn Elliott Legislative committee chair

Brian called the meeting to order at approximately 7:33 PM. All officers and board members were present, except for Steve.

Sharon Strzalkowski and Jessica Barr were in attendance.

The agenda was adopted as written.

Our December 2019 minutes were approved by a vote.

Treasurer's report; Rick

(Written report)

The books are current and attached please find the following two Year-End reports:

- asset Balances as of December 31, 2019
- Profit and Loss (Cash Flow) as of December 31, 2019

Please note the following:

1. We ended the year with a net gain of \$3067.77. This is largely attributable to the President's Team Convention Walk donation of \$6168.39 and that we did not disburse the stipends for the February 2020 ACB Legislative Seminar and Leadership meetings that is normally disbursed in December.
2. Our Total 2019 Income was \$22979.18.
3. Our total 2019 Expense was \$19911.41.
4. Our current liquid assets total \$ 41458.95
5. The balance of our investment account is \$\$105,282.58.
6. Bill notices to At Large members will go out this week. We will be able to accept dues for certification purposes through March 15.
7. I have yet to schedule the board meeting to discuss access all BSCB assets and be able to take control of them should the situation call for it. I propose a 7:30 meeting for one hour on Sunday January 29.
8. I will draft the 2020 budget before the next board meeting. The budget will be an extension of our current spending and income patterns.
9. The checking account for the Students under our master account has been drawing service charges and should not be. The account is showing a negative balance. I will reach out to BOA.

(End of written report)

Rick said he will be sending out dues notices this week.

All bills are paid except for stipends.

Nonprofit tax filing deadline is May 15.

Mary made, Rose seconded and the board approved a motion to approve the treasurer's report.

President's report; Brian

Progress is being made on negotiations with HBO for audio described content. Brian anticipates having a document to sign by our next board meeting.

Spring Convention report; Frank

(Written report)

Rick Morin and I did a walk through of the event facilities last week and no unforeseen issues were identified.

- All time slots in the program have been filled and I will start creating the program announcement.
- Rick will experiment with Eventzilla to see if we can use it for a registration platform.
- Don Moran from the Masons is arranging walking tours of the facility to be done during the room break down period prior to dinner.
- Jerry Berrier is working hard on obtaining volunteers although more volunteers may be needed, especially to help attendees find rest rooms.
- Although the mailing address is 186 Tremont the best physical address for Lyft/Uber is 61 Boylston St.

(End of written report)

Frank will include a detailed description of the convention with the registration announcement. Registration and program will be in separate documents.

Brian expressed concern that we are not helping potential attendees to find hotels. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Frank will re-send the original list of hotels after sorting it by price and adding the approximate distance from each hotel. He will state that the prices are representative but subject to change, and the list is not comprehensive.

Rick recommended that we refer those needing additional help to a travel agent who is known to BSCB. There was disagreement, partly because of the short time remaining before the convention. We agreed that this year will be a great learning experience that will guide us in planning future conventions.

No motion was made.

Publications

David had no report. There has been no update from Steve regarding resumption of the Council Connection podcast.

Legislative report; DeAnn
(Written report)

DeAnn went to Greater Boston Legal Services on Dec. 13 and presented a staff training to about two dozen administrators, attorneys, and front line staff about vision loss. Training included a definition of legal blindness, etiquette, some sighted guide techniques, issues of legal concern in the blindness community, screen readers and web accessibility, how to get documents embossed in braille, the BSCB, etc. It was well-received and they were very grateful for our participation.

In response to a notice from freeConferencecall.com that came through ACB and BSCB channels, DeAnn responded with an email in support of the service.

Cheryl forwarded a link to an article about a proposed cut to SSDI benefits. The proposal would subject many current beneficiaries to a periodic review to determine continuing eligibility. It's expected to cut benefits to several thousand recipients. For our members, additional paperwork would be burdensome and could lead to complications in coverage. Most of our members would continue to be qualified, but it's worth submitting a comment in support, I think. Deadline is Jan.31. DeAnn will post on our announce list.

Article: [https://www.salon.com/2019/12/17/trump-proposes-social-security-change-that-](https://www.salon.com/2019/12/17/trump-proposes-social-security-change-that-could-end-disability-benefits-for-hundreds-of-thousands/)

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Federal Register:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/11/18/2019-24700/rules-regarding-the-frequency-and-notice-of-continuing-disability-reviews>

In response to our request, Mass. Eye and Ear has reached out about scheduling a meeting to work on a flier for distribution in the blindness community about their accessibility services. Date to be chosen soon.

Cheryl has completed a draft summarizing the results of the 2018 voting survey. The legislative committee will review it at our next meeting. There were 90 respondents. Report is 16 pages. Thank you Cheryl!

A member in Central Mass. Is working with a local school district to improve educational opportunities for a student who is blind. We worked to facilitate some connections.

(End of written report)

DeAnn will discuss the SSDI issue mentioned above with DPC representatives.

We discussed the probable absence of MCB Commissioner David D'arcangelo at our springconvention.

DeAnn will let Brian know the date of the next legislative committee meeting, and he will provide a Zoom phone number.

DeAnn asked that the voter survey results be put on the agenda for our February meeting.

Membership; Mary

(Written report)

1. The Membership Committee will be meeting on Monday, Jan. 13. A focus of the meeting will be to discuss plans for having another statewide call for BSCB members at large.
2. On Saturday, Jan. 4, Mary and Nona Haroyan went out to Northampton for a follow up meeting of interested blind and visually impaired residents in the area. This meeting was scheduled and organized by BSCB members at large Barbara Black, Rafael Toro and Myra Ross. Twenty people in all attended and the 2 hour meeting was filled with the sharing of information and experiences. All seemed very interested in meeting again; a date of Saturday March 7 was agreed upon. The community room at the Forbes Library in Northampton was secured for the date.
3. Mary participated in a phone training conducted by Lane Waters of the ACB Minnesota office on the use of the Affiliate Member Management System.

(End of written report)

Mary said BSCB has gained two new members this month.

Social Committee; Rose

(Written report)

We discussed various types of events and tours.

We will send out a questionnaire to ask our membership, about the kinds of things they may want to participate in.

Question is What do you want for a social event?

Listed below are a few thoughts: Please pick from the list or write in one of your own.

Rate them 1 to 3 and write the number of your choice.

Number one would be your first choice. 2 is not likely

and 3 is not interested

(1, (2, (3

* Charlestown Navy Yard

U.S. Constitution

Ferry ride to Everett or to Cassel Island

* New England Museums

* Restaurants

Ken Sails Irish Pub

Boston Bean Pot Pub

The Fours sports Bar

*Sporting Event (Paw Socks)

* Bowling

* Open Mike ,

Who has talent

Story slam

A Walking tour Freedom Trail tour

Rose Kennedy Greenway

Perkins School Campus

Out Door Adventures

State Park B Y O lunch and blanket

*Watch a movie

*Your thoughts name it below :

Please respond to Rose Miller with your top choices at: Rosemarymiller3266@gmail.com

Next meeting Sunday 7:30 P.M. February 23, 2020.

“Let’s get social “and have fun

(End of written report)

Rose said we should try to work with Outdoor Adventures to schedule an event.

Old Business

Jerry said Rick, Brian, and Carl Richardson sent written requests to attend the upcoming legislative seminar.

David made, jerry seconded, and the bord approved a motion to fund Rick morin, Brian Charlson and Carl Richardson to attend the legislative seminar. Imperatives have not yet been announce.

Brian thanked Sharon for her involvement on the BSCB grants committee. They will meet on January 23.

Frank will send Rose information on the Chaffee amendment.

Carl Richardson is chairing the BSCB nominating committee.

carl@carlrichardson.com

Carl has reached out to the Boston chapter and central MA chapter. He will reach out to CRC and the students chapter.

All officer positions will be up for election.

This board will need to approve an at large committee member

Our next board call is scheduled for February 9 at 7:30 PM.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:14 PM.

Respectfully,

Jerry Berrier, Secretary