

Bay State Council of the Blind

Minutes, June 13, 2021

Officers and board members

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

Ex Officio

- Steve Dresser webmaster
- DeAnn Elliott legislative chair

David called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 PM.

All officers and board members were present, along with Nick Corbett, Sharon Strzalkowski and Jessica Barr.

The minutes of our May 2021 meeting were approved by a motion.

Treasurer's report; Rick

Prior to this meeting, Rick emailed the following summary, along with

- Year to date Profit and Loss
- Cash assets

(Written report)

Please take note of the following:

list of 13 items

- Current Balance of our investment account = \$122,287.74
- Total Cash Assets = \$46,676.18
- We have a year to date positive net cash flow of \$3,007.22 (Income exceeds expenses)
- Dues to ACB National of \$995 were paid
- We donated the remaining \$400 for Bob Hachey's ACB Angel remembrance. Minimum donation for an ACB Angel is \$500. \$100 has been previously donated.
- We purchased our customary 5 Braille Forum Raffle tickets for \$250.
- Convention expenses to Perkins and for the plaques totaled \$357.16
- The JAWS Scripts for QuickBooks were purchased for Nick Corbett for \$470
- Total Auction income = \$4,332.97
- Total Convention Sponsorships = \$1,521.80
- Quarterly MMS Donations rose to \$89
- Need to reconcile chapter dues and pursue payment
- Tax documents sent to our accountant and filings in progress.

list end

As always, the detailed transactions are available for examination by any board member upon request.

(End of written report)

Rick clarified that plaque expenses included other costs charged by Perkins; large print and/or braille materials.

Our current positive cash flow will be used up by some pending expenses to be paid in July.

Rick will double-check the status of chapter dues payments.

Brian implored us to support the upcoming ACB walk fund-raiser.

Progress is being made on transitioning to Nick performing treasurer functions.

The plan is to complete the transition by the end of August. Once Nick becomes treasurer, he will automatically be bonded.

David expressed interest in sitting in if Nick and Rick have another planning call.

Rick will locate our investment policy and provide a copy to Nick. We can discuss it at our next meeting, which will be in August.

President's report; David

Sharon Strzalkowski has agreed to become chair of the publications committee. She mentioned that Myra Ross is seeking articles for upcoming issues of BayLines Express.

Cheryl Cumings has agreed to become chair of the membership committee. Mary and Brian have expressed interest in serving on the committee. Cheryl is happy to have both of them as committee members.

Publications committee report; David

(Written report)

Sharon Strzalkowski has been appointed chairperson of the Publications Committee. All committee members are confident that she will do an outstanding job.

Assuming it is OK with the Board, Steve added her address to the Board list and David gave her the user ID and password for the BSCB Zoom account.

The Pubs Committee agreed it would be good to formalize a policy whereby all committee chairs would be placed on the Board list and be given BSCB Zoom account credentials if they wish to have them.

Logistics are all set for the next Third Thursday Zoom call on June 17. The topic will be voting at the ACB Convention. Guest speakers are Jeff Thom and

Ray Campbell. Brian and/or Mary will also talk about procedures for how the delegate and alternate will conduct affiliate voting. Steve will chair the call and David will be the Zoom host.

On a previous Board call, the Publications Committee was tasked to suggest whether there should be some type of disclaimer message placed at the bottom of Announce List messages. The committee advises this not be done. It was the view of the committee that this could cause more trouble than it's worth, and members also questioned if there is really any problem. Most people who forward messages from a third party simply start with an FYI if the messages are not actually requests from the BSCB.

Earlier this week, Myra sent out a request to the Publications Committee, also forwarded to the Board, for names and suggested article topics for Bay Lines Express

articles. Thanks to those who sent ideas along. Others are encouraged to come up with ideas. Even better, it would be great if Board members and committee chairs volunteer to write articles themselves, if they have not yet done so,.

(End of written report)

We discussed who should have access to our Zoom credentials. David recommends that committee chairs be given access.

He will delete a couple of recurring ACB meetings that seem to have inadvertently been put on there.

Those with access will need to know how to check the schedule to confirm the slot they want to use is empty before they schedule a new meeting.

We discussed holding a Zoom training session for those interested that would include how to schedule meetings.

Jerry made, Sharon seconded, and the board approved a motion that any board member, officer, or committee chair may be given the Zoom credentials as needed.

Philmore is not available to Spectrum customers. Sharon called Spectrum and will follow up.

Our list of officers and board members needs updated on the website and on Philmore. David will take care of that.

Legislative report; DeAnn

(Written report)

The Massachusetts Senate budget was passed with an amendment that included an earmark for \$850,000 in additional social rehabilitation training.

The earmark includes assistive and accessible equipment, as well as tech training and rehabilitation services. An additional \$850,000 that was included in the House budget was not included in the Senate version.

We expect the earmark to go to the governor as part of the budget and the additional \$850,000 to go to conference to see if a compromise amount may be included.

This funding is in addition to the regular SR funding in the community services 1000 account of the Mass. Commission for the Blind budget. Great work by advocates making calls to their Senators!

The ACB legislative committee has been collecting draft resolutions from ACB members. The Bay State Council of the Blind has submitted at least four that DeAnn is

aware of, with an additional one in process. Resolutions may be submitted until July 23, the final day of the convention.

Open community calls will be held on Zoom for those who would like to attend the sessions of the resolutions committee.

(Editor's note: Two corrections were made in the following sentence, as discussed during the BSCB board meeting.)

David met with the MCB Commissioner on June 2 to discuss BSCB matters. This was the first meeting that came as a result of the letter that BSCB sent to the Commissioner and Sec. of Health and Human Services in March. The president of NFB of MA will also participate in future meetings. They discussed

confirmations to the Rehabilitation Council, financial transparency, and meeting recordings, among other topics. If board members have issues they think should be brought to the commissioner's attention, please contact David Kingsbury.

DeAnn has been in contact with the Mass. Eye and Ear. We plan to schedule a Zoom call for the task force and other interested members to discuss

Mass. Eye and Ear developments prior to the meeting with MEEI. This August marks the end of our five-year agreement.

(End of written report)

DeAnn expressed thanks to all who wrote letters regarding the budget. It is looking very positive.

She is still negotiating a meeting time with mass Eye and Ear. Rick and Brian expressed interest in attending. DeAnn will reach out to a few others who are acquainted with (MEE) and may be interested. She will also schedule a strategy session on Zoom prior to the meeting.

Social Committee; Rose

(Written report)

On June 6, 2021 at 1:30 to 3:00 P.m. there was a Social Hang out. the topic was travel.

We had a guest speaker, Cindy Wentz. There were over 20 folks attending on the zoom.

Cindy talked about past travel and her upcoming travel plans. Below is her statement and the travel services she used for her adventure's.

Cindy stated that, "I love to travel - to learn the customs of other countries and immerse myself in new surroundings. Long ago my husband, also blind, and I learned that

traveling without assistance is just too much darned work. We want a vacation, not a stressful experience” “if you can afford it “make up your mind and just do it”!

Cindy says that, While I've been fortunate to be able to take many trips with friends, I've been thrilled to be able to expand my options to include Traveleyes

and Mind's Eye Travel. These are two options for domestic and foreign travel. “I've gone to, among other places, Italy, Scandinavia, Costa Rica, India,

Bhutan, Iceland and Peru”. If COVID cooperates, I already have plans for trips to New Zealand and Fiji and Vietnam and Cambodia.

There were some good questions and responses by our guest, host and BSCB members.

All and all it was a good hang out and “social”

Thank you all along with Pubs and every member of the social committee.

Hope to see you all at the Next meeting and social.

The meeting will be in the late fall.

(End of written report)

David and others said the social committee program on travel was a big success.

Rose will ask Cindy Wentz to write an article for BayLines Express.

Old Business

Dropbox: Following a lengthy discussion, there seemed to be consensus that Dropbox should be used to store official documents, minutes, correspondence, etc.

Brian made, Jerry seconded, and the board approved a motion to use Dropbox.

The account will be managed by the secretary and will be available to board members. At their next meeting which will be in August, the publications committee will discuss its structure and uses. Frank will be invited to the meeting.

The account will not be set up until after the publications committee reports back to the board.

The publications committee will also discuss backup options.

ACB Election process:

In the event of a contested election, BSCB members will be able to contact Mary by phone or Brian via email.

Brian and Mary described the election process, as explained in recent ACB emails.

More details will be sent to BSCB-announce prior to the convention.

Ad hoc Scholarship committee

This committee is to report to the board in September with recommendations on how to handle the Bob Hachey Memorial scholarship fund.

Jerry, Brian, and Sharon volunteered to serve.

Daisy Russell and Nina Kagan will also be asked to serve. Sharon will chair the committee.

David will sit in on committee meetings if he is available.

In-person BSCB events

To be discussed in August.

Interim 2nd vice president

Brian made, Rose seconded, and the board approved a motion to go into executive session to discuss filling the interim term for 2nd vice president.

Subsequent to the executive session, Brian made, Jerry seconded, and the board approved a motion making Cheryl Cumings 2nd vice president.

After some discussion, we chose to postpone electing a board member to fill the position vacated by Cheryl until our next face-to-face conference, which will likely be in November.

Due to the unique nature of the treasurer position, we will not wait to elect Nick but will likely appoint him at our August meeting.

Our next meeting will be August 8 at 7:30 PM.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM.

Respectfully,

Jerry Berrier, Secretary