

Bay State Council of the Blind

Board call minutes, November 8 2020

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**
- **Cheryl Cumings board member**
- **Mary Haroyan board member**

Ex Officio

- **Steve Dresser Webmaster**
- **DeAnn Elliott Legislative committee chair**

Brian called the meeting to order at 7:36 PM. All officers and board members were present, along with Sharon Strzalkowski and Jessica Barr.

The minutes of our October meeting were approved.

Treasurer's report; Rick
(Written report)

My computer has gone out for repair and I am unable to produce the normal financial reports at this time. All BSCB data is stored in the cloud and is intact.

There has been no financial activity since the last report other than normal recurring expenses.

2020 Chapter dues from CRC and GDUM remain outstanding.

I prepared a document that details how to access all BSCB records in my possession should I become incapacitated. This document is in Dropbox as a protected file. The officers of BSCB have access to this document.

The PayPal payment links on the website are not working. I am researching.

I have not reached out to Nick Corbett about his interest in the treasurer position. It remains on my to-do list.

(End of written report)

Regarding chapter dues payments: Charles River chapter president has committed to writing a check this evening. GDUM is working on paying their dues; their dues are expected soon. It was pointed out that they could make a partial payment if they cannot come up with the full amount.

Rick has compiled secure documentation covering all of our financial papers and other important documents. He will provide a password to Frank, David and Jerry by phone.

Rick has not reached out to Nick Corbett to discuss Nick's interest in being a candidate for BSCB treasurer; David will facilitate a meeting between David, Brian, Rick, and Nick Corbett.

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

President's report; Brian

The recording of the recent BSCB memorial service was not stopped at the end of the meeting and ended up being 20 hours long. Brian is working on removing the blank part so it can be distributed to those wishing a copy of it.

Regarding assistance to Donna McCurdy, Brian referred to a recent announcement he sent out stating that checks could be made out to Donna and sent to Brian's house. The announcement also included a PayPalMe account that was set up by Brian. Brian said there is a problem with the account and it is not working. Some board members believe a credit card cannot be used with a PayPalMe account. Brian is checking into that.

Publications; David

(Written report)

The Pubs Committee last met on November 4.

Myra Ross has expressed interest in possibly becoming Bay Lines editor. David had a phone discussion with her several weeks ago. The Pubs Committee seeks a green light from the President and Board to offer this position to Myra. She would also become a member of the Pubs Committee.

Sharon is now fully operational as moderator of the Chat list. Steve continues to provide technical assistance, when needed.

Steve has prepared and posted a new recording of the Philmore voice menus to replace Bob's recording.

No progress has yet been made in identifying a new social media coordinator.

(End of written report)

Brian and others made positive remarks about Myra's skills and background.

Jerry made, Mary seconded, and the board approved a motion asking Brian to appoint Myra as BayLines editor. She will serve on the publications committee.

David and Brian will call Myra on Wednesday.

BSCB email lists: We agreed that future announcements will be sent only to the announce list and not to BSCB-L. This will minimize

duplication of messages on the lists. Only board members, chapter presidents, and other authorized individuals can post to bscb-announce. We agreed that it is no longer necessary to post to both lists.

Sharon confirmed that all those on bscb-l are also on the announce list.

Sharon will write an explanatory note and put it on bscb-announce.

The publications committee will post list rules quarterly.

David thanked Steve for updating the outgoing message on Philmore.

Steve will resume announcements of Council Connections on bscb-announce.

Legislative; DeAnn **(Written report)**

We had a presidential election! The VotingWorks online balloting system was in place in Massachusetts. Attorney Matthew Steele from the DLC spoke to BSCB members during the October BSCB fall conference and offered information about the process, which several members were able to use successfully to vote.

The legislative committee will send out a survey in November to solicit feedback from blind voters. This year's survey will differ slightly from the survey we've sent out in previous years because it will focus more closely on the unique experience of voting during COVID and will include questions about the VotingWorks platform.

The MCB announced its Worcester and New Bedford offices would be closing at the end of December due to budget cuts and different delivery models for services. Advocates were aware that a month-to-month lease was in effect but hadn't expected closings, so some concern was expressed.

On October 14, the Baker—Polito Administration submitted its revised Fiscal Year 2021 (House 2) budget proposal. The \$45.5 billion proposal

makes investments in economic development and education while protecting core government services. It authorizes a withdrawal of up to \$1.35 billion from the Stabilization Fund, which would be reduced should tax collections or new federal revenue exceed the Administration's current conservative assumptions. To read a press release about the budget, which includes a summary of key items, please visit:

<https://www.mass.gov/news/baker-polito-administration-submits-revised-fiscal-year-2021-budget-proposal#:~:text=BOSTON%20%E2%80%94%20The%20Baker%20Politico%20Administration,amidst%20the%20COVID%2D19%20pandemic>

Calls are requested to members' state representatives to support Amendment #194 to ensure adequate funding for Regional Transit Authorities.

On October 16, BSCB and other disability organizations sent a letter to the MBTA, urging it to preserve key services that are essential to people with disabilities as the MBTA considers responses to steep revenue declines stemming from reduced ridership during the COVID-19 pandemic. The letter urged management to maintain services and routes used by significant numbers of people of color, people with disabilities, seniors, low-income persons, and no-to-low-vehicle households.

A task force within ACB has drafted a new resolutions process, which was presented in a Zoom call this month. Although it would require members to submit proposals for resolutions earlier in the year (45 days before the convention), it will give the resolutions committee more time to research and work with resolution authors on drafts, which will also enable drafts to be available for review before a vote on the floor. Authors of submitted resolutions will know in advance when their draft will be discussed, meetings will be more transparent through Zoom and will be held largely prior to the convention, which will enable resolution committee members to contribute even if they are not able to attend the convention. We believe this process will

allow a wider number of people to participate and will result in even higher-quality resolutions with more transparency.

The legislative committee met several times in October and will meet again on November 19th to discuss the voting survey.

(End of written report)

The voting survey will include those who did not vote.

DeAnn recommended we nominate the Disability law Center for an award for their support and assistance with our accessible voting initiative.

We discussed the recent announcement to close two MCB offices. BSCB board members were concerned about the office closings. The next Rehabilitation Council meeting will be in December; DeAnn will add it to the agenda and Jerry as BSCB representative to the RC will speak about consumer concerns.

Membership; Mary

(Written report)

The Membership Committee has not met since the last Board call

The ACB National office has now sent out an e-mail to anyone from MA who registered for the national convention. The e-mail is a basic template provided by the Minneapolis office and customized with BSCB contact information.

Two weeks ago I reached out to ACB Scholarship Committee Chair Denise Colley asking for contact information for any 2020 scholarship recipients with a MA address. I am waiting to hear back from her.

I informed Brian that I would for personal reasons need to step away as chair of the Membership committee. I would be happy to remain on the committee if he so chooses.

(End of written report)

Mary received high praise from board members for her work on the membership committee.

Brian will seek a new chair for the committee. He encouraged board members to email suggestions to him.

Social; Rose

There has been no recent activity. Rose will begin planning something for January.

Fall conference; David

Rose will get a list of hotlines mentioned during the attorney general office presentation and send it to bscb-announce.

Spring conference; Frank

Frank said the recent spring conference meeting was very well attended.

We need to do something off the beaten path in the spring. He will present some ideas on our next board call.

He reminded us that we have to be physically together to vote on anything, but we could consider a referendum if needed.

He recommended we adhere to the new ACB policy regarding resolutions.

Other Business

Brian said attendance has been low at recent state auctions. We need to be innovative.

Brian asked David to put a note in BayLines Express and on bscb-announce inviting interested members to contact jerry if interested in being considered for the current board vacancy.

Brian will select a chairperson for the resolutions committee.

Brian will manage the disposition of Bob Hachey's adaptive equipment once he receives it from Donna.

Our next meeting is scheduled for December 13, 2020 at 7:30 PM.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully,

Jerry Berrier, secretary