**Wyoming Council of the Blind**

**Minutes from July’s Regular Board Meeting held via phone on July 8, 2024**

**The July regular board meeting was called to order at 7 PM. Roll call indicated that there were eight board members present, thus a quorum.**

**Officers present:**

**President – Cheryl Godley**

**Vice President – Tom Lealos**

**Secretary – Sherry Leinen**

**Treasurer – Tom Smyth**

**Directors present:**

**Sharon Byers, Gary Olson, Sarah Sexton, Debra Thompson**

**The minutes from June’s meeting were emailed to the board by Sherry Leinen prior to the meeting.**

**Tom L made a motion to accept the minutes as sent, second by Debra. M/C**

**Treasurers report: Tom S**

**Total Funds Last Month**

**$20,046.45**

**Total Monthly Gains**

**$46.04**

**Total Monthly Expenditures**

**-$195.63**

**Total Funds (6/30/24)**

**$19,896.86**

**Debra made a motion to accept the treasurers report as read, second by Sarah. M/C**

**Sarah is our ACB delegate. In order to vote she had to pay a $40 registration fee to ACB.**

**Gary made a motion to reimburse Sarah the $40 registration fee, second by Debra. M/C**

**Tom S filled out and paid the IRS and Secretary of State paperwork and fees. The state requires the names and addresses of all the board members.**

**We have one new member Laurel Henry.**

**Board positions and terms:**

**Officers**

**P – Cheryl 2024 – 2026 running again**

**VP – Gary 2024 – 2025 running**

**Sec – 2024 – 2026 open**

**Treas. – Tom S 2023 – 2025**

**Directors**

**1. Sharon 2024 – 2026 running again**

**2. Debra 2024 – 2026 running again**

**3. Sarah 2023 – 2025**

**4. Sherry 2024 – 2026 running**

**5. Linda 2024 – 2025 running**

**6. Open 2024 – 2025**

**Positions open:**

**Sec. 2024 – 2026**

**Director 2024 – 2025**

**The possible bylaw that was asked about last meeting was from the December 11, 2023 meeting. Tom S wrote a WyCB Membership Policy and Debra Thompson asked if this should be a bylaw because it includes our membership with ACB. After some discussion it was decided to keep things simple and make this a policy not a bylaw. A motion was made at the meeting to accept the membership policy as written.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Sightings (Tom L & Tom S)**

**The newsletters are sent at the end of February, June, and October. The articles for the next newsletter are due 1 October. Sarah was asked to write a report on ACB information.**

**Sarah volunteered to take over the newsletter since Tom L will be stepping down. Tom L will help her get everything ready and settled.**

**Scholarship (Debra)**

**There is no applicant at this time. It was decided that we will extend the deadline to August 15. Debra will contact Annette to make these changes on the website. Debra emailed Leslie to see if she would send the scholarship information to her clients. It was discussed that we struggle every year to get an applicant. We need to make sure that we document that we have contacted the schools and given them the scholarship information in case we received a grant to cover the cost of the scholarship. We now have a list of the high schools and colleges and their contact information. Sherry mentioned that the scholarship used to be $1500. Maybe in the future we need to think about increasing the amount back to $1500. We need to make sure that the information is given to trade schools because they are important too.**

**Convention (Tom L)**

**Tom L sent out a draft of the program and the registration form. It was mentioned that the name of the school where the convention is being held is wrong and needs to be changed on the website. We need to make sure that it is correct on all of the paperwork for the convention. Cheryl commented that we need to make sure that it says on the cover letter that there is no registration fee due to a generous donation. Tom L is working on a cover letter and will send it when it’s finished.**

**Resource Page Project**

**Annette got the resources page up on the website. All of the Sightings have been archived. Tom L asked if they went back to 2012. Tom S stated that they are from 2013 to now.**

**Cheryl emailed a clause for permission for photos and videos. ACB has one and Annette helped fit it for WyCB.**

**WyCB Photography/Videography**

**The official WyCB photographer for any WyCB event, social event, convention, and for events that WyCB members may attend, may be taking pictures and video.**

**It is understood that all WyCB activities and programs scheduled are subject to be photographed or videoed. Photos and video are the property of WyCB and are for WyCB’s use. If you do not want to be included in a photo or video, please let the photographer, or person leading the event, know at the beginning of the event.**

**Everyone on the board needs to send in a photo and a short bio about yourself to Annette so it can be put on the website.**

**Cheryl will call Leslie with VOS. Leslie stated that she would make cards listing our resources so that they could be given to their clients.**

**White Cane Day (Sarah)**

**Tom L corresponded with the governor’s office. October 4 at 10 AM is the date and time for the March at this time. He has email confirmation from Bonnie in the governor’s office. An email has been sent asking the governor to appear at the event. We need to come up with a proclamation. Laurel Henry has a past proclamation and will look for it. Ginny Chidsey is looking into whether a permit is needed. It would be nice if there were a lot of individuals that could come to Cheyenne for the March.**

**Sarah reported that she spoke with Missy from WyDOT. She will need photos of proper cane and dog guide usage. Gary suggested that we use pictures of WyCB members. It could be 2 to 3 photos of individuals using a white cane or dog guide, maybe in a delineated crosswalk or lighted crosswalk. The pictures can be emailed to Annette. Cheryl suggested that Annette be called, she may have some stock pictures that could be used.**

**Social Media (Sarah & Sherry)**

**Sarah and/or Sherry are posting on the Facebook page every day. Our rating is good and we continue to add new followers. We need to put the white cane day information on our Facebook page.**

**Speaking Engagement (Cheryl)**

**Cheryl will be speaking at the Wyoming Women’s Network on Thursday, October 17. She will be speaking about everything that WyCB is working on. Raffle tickets will be sold during the event and the proceeds will go to WyCB.**

**Suzie Mahon sent to Cheryl an email about the 2024 Northern Rockies AER conference which will be October 15th and 16th in Lander. She works with Leslie Van Orman with VOS. She asked if Cheryl would be interested in being a vendor. It would include being able to speak with people between sessions about the Wyoming Council of the Blind. The cost to be a vendor is $150. The conference is at the Lander Community Center. There will be free transportation available between the community center and the hotels. There are room blocks at the Holiday Inn and Travelodge. The Holiday Inn room block is $109 per night and the Travelodge is $90 per night. She would need two nights in a hotel.**

**Gary mentioned that there will be instructors there that work with the blind and visually impaired, it is exposure and would be a win-win situation for WyCB to cover the cost. Everyone else agreed.**

**Tom L made a motion that Pres. Cheryl Godley attend the NRAER conference in Lander as a vendor and that WyCB pay for registration fees, travel, lodging, and food expenses not to exceed $500, second by Debra. M/C. Cheryl can use the the table covering and hand out brochures.**

**Archiving Data**

**Everyone needs to work on sending Annette WyCB information so that it can be archived.**

**Tom S sent the financial records from 2019 to the present. Tom S has some minutes and convention information that he got from D’Anna. Tom S and Sherry need to go over the information that they both have to make sure duplicates are not sent.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**ACB Convention (Sarah)**

**The National Mint will have a tactile $10 bill by 2026. ACB is working hard to find younger people to join. Sarah stated that regardless of its members life choices ACB stands by its members. Their focus is on vision.**

**Assist: Transportation in Casper (Cheryl)**

**Cheryl, Sarah, Tom S, and Sherry will get together to put a letter together about the transportation in Casper.**

**Counterfeit Service Animals (Sarah)**

**Sarah has spoken with several agencies and has found that issues with counterfeit service animals are not documented by law enforcement. She is looking into the Public Forum. She will be talking to local people and vet clinics to see if there is proof of any issues. Cheryl stated that a vet wrote an article about a dog getting attacked. Cheryl stated that her guide dog was attacked. Cheryl suggested that Sarah check with GDUI for any documentation on attacks.**

**The legislators want to know if this is a problem in Wyoming**

**Sherry mentioned the American Braille Flag Project.**

**Randolph Cabral, President of the Kansas Braille Transcription Institute (KBTI) and the son of a World War II blind veteran created the tactile/Braille American flag to honor his father. In February 2008, through the combined efforts of the Blinded Veterans Association (BVA), KBTI and U.S. Congressman Todd Tiahrt, the US Congress unanimously authorized placement of a bronze monument of the Braille Flag at Arlington National Cemetery as a tribute to blind veterans of all wars, and other blind Americans. In April 2008 the Braille flag was officially installed at the cemetery representing a Braille replica of the United States American flag. Literally thousands have found their way into the hands and hearts of many sighted and blind civilians, veterans, veteran’s hospitals, Memorial Park’s, offices of elected officials, schools for the blind, and many other places. The Blinded Veterans Association alone has given hundreds of framed Braille flags as appreciation awards to blind veterans not only to American veterans but also to blind veterans in other countries.**

**Gary mentioned that VOS had a cooking activity. They had everyone make tacos and pasta salad. Laurel Henry talked about the stages that blind and visually impaired individuals go through while losing their sight.**

**Meeting was adjourned at 9:29 PM.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Sherry Leinen – Sec.**

**The next regular board meeting will be Monday, August 12, 2024 at 7 PM please mark your calendar.**