Executive Council Meeting Minutes

Village Inn 78th & Dodge Omaha NE

August 28, 2017

President Mark Bulger called the meeting to order at 6:37pm. In attendance were Mark, Chris, Jim, Dale and Barb. Guests were Becky and her two children.

Reading of Minutes from last meeting: Becky read the minutes of the February 4 meeting. They were unanimously approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report: Dale reported a checking account balance of $568.44, a savings account balance of $100.27 and our investment account $42,105.89. We currently have 3,968.51 shares at $10.61 per share. The report was approved as presented.

2017 State Convention Recap: Mark thanked the board for stepping up to ensure the convention ran smoothly in his absence. The board seemed impressed with the concept of a luncheon speaker and thought one should be considered for 2018. Becky remarked that she thought that the hospitality room seemed underutilized and questioned whether we needed one in the future. ACBN made approx. $400 on the auction despite the fact we had slim pickings.

Chapter Updates: Chris reported Lincoln’s June 17th chapter picnic was poorly attended. Carol, Barb and John were in attendance from Omaha. Lincoln hasn’t had many meetings but does have a garage sale scheduled for September. Chris also reported they made $175 during May’s Lincolngives online event. Give A Lift’s life expectancy is projected to be short lived. Current available funds are approx. $4,300, which may last another 6 months given current book distribution levels. The idea then was discussed about Share A Fare assuming the daily operation of Give A Lift given Happy Cab is in both cities. Barb reported that Omaha had a June picnic and is planning a picnic for students September 15 from 4 to 7:30pm at Seymour Smith Park.

Membership: Mark reported that he had spoken with the President of North Dakota Association of the Blind while at the national convention in July. Mark mentioned that North Dakota’s membership is primarily comprised of an at large membership. With the exception of a well-attended yearly state convention, all business is conducted via conference call. It is Mark’s belief that Nebraska needs to adopt a similar methodology to grow membership in the western part of the state then encourage attendance at the state convention.

Fundraising: Realizing ACBN’s dwindling assets, Mark emphasized the importance of generating revenue. He hinted that funds could easily be raised at Wal-Mart by distributing literature about ACBN and offering suckers for a suggested donation of $1. Dale reported that he was in possession of a fund raising endeavor whereby ACBN auctions off vacation destinations. The highest bidder pays ACBN who, in turn, issues a certificate to the winner to redeem for their purchased vacation. After some discussion, Dale will follow up with our insurance agent to determine whether any additional coverage is needed prior to undertaking this project.

2018 State Convention: Jim reported that he had initially secured two bids; one from the Kearney Holiday Inn and the other from the Ramada Inn Convention Center in Columbus, formerly The New World Inn. (As a meeting had not been scheduled, given numerous inquiries on a decision from the Kearney representative, the space being held was released.) Jim reviewed the Kearney bid. Consensus was to have Jim secure a more detailed proposal for review at a conference call early in September.

NCBVI Commissioner Update: Mark indicated that he has been actively promoting the NBE program and testifying before the Unicameral on budget matters when necessary. He also reported that Dr. Pearl Van Zandt provided notice of retirement to all staff and the commission board in May. Carlos Servan was then named interim Executive Director at a special commission board meeting held June 17. A total of 14 applications were received from the circulated job posting. Of those 14 applications, 3 were interviewed August 14. The job was offered to Carlos, who accepted. Jim expressed concern that he hoped that the best candidate was hired for the position and that the board did not hire Carlos based on the wishes of staff and their own personal biases and desires.

Midwest Leadership Conference: Jim indicated the conference was a success. The plenary committee had hoped for 50 attendees. Only 38 registered. The special account housing the funds has a current balance of $31.15. Jim will close the account August 31 and reimburse himself this amount to aid in offsetting personal expenses not covered by the conference.

ACB Website: The ACBN website is current, but not in a format that is pleasing to Jim. In order to be relevant and competitive in today’s non-profit world, major changes need to be incorporated including the ability to process online memberships, convention registration and the ability to accept online donations. Jim will reach out to the president of BITS to see if someone from that ACB special interest affiliate can provide tech support to bring the website up to where it needs to be.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 8:11pm.

Respectfully submitted

Jim Jirak

Secretary