2019 ACBN State Convention Minutes

Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church

15005 Q St Omaha NE

April 27, 2019

President Mark Bulger called the annual business meeting to order at 4:05pm.

Following the introduction of all members and guests in attendance, Sharon, for Jim, read the 2018 state convention minutes. They were approved as read.

Dale reported that as of April 25, the checking account had a balance of $3,896.45 and the bond fund had $36,754.07 having 3,646.237 shares at $10.08 per share. In 2018, the checking account had a beginning balance of $1,035.62 and the ending balance was $1,783.04. Dale also reported that the savings account containing $75.29 was closed in early January and the funds transferred to the checking account.

Jim mentioned that the upcoming national ACB Conference and Convention is taking place in Rochester NY from July 5-12. The Hyatt Regency Rochester and the Rochester Riverside are the two hotels being utilized. They are both connected to the convention center, where the majority of convention activities would be taking place. The nightly room rate is $82 plus taxes. Jim also mentioned that the 2020 convention is in Schaumburg IL, 2021 is being held in Phoenix AZ and 2022 is tentatively scheduled for Omaha. Following the fall board meeting, we will know whether Omaha is confirmed for 2022.

AS ACBN’s designee on NCBVI’s Board of Commissioners, President Mark Bulger reported that, resulting from budget constraints, effective March 1 NCBVI had implemented an order of selection process in service delivery. He also reported that tough decisions had to be made and that twelve staff was furloughed in a further attempt to reduce spending. Mark applauded the undertaken efforts of the Executive Director and also acknowledged that staff layoffs were only used as a last resort in spending reductions.

Jim reminded the convention that in 2018 our state website underwent a major redesign making it more visually appealing and user friendly for those with low vision and using screen reading technology. Soon after the redesign had been complete, we were notified that we had taken first place in the hackathon competition but fell short in some scoring criterion. On behalf of the organization, and consultation with Mark, ACBN entered into a 3-month contract with Annette Carter to continue the needed website maintenance and updates. Jim had requested Annette look at the website to determine whether the items identified in the scoring criterion could be improved upon. After a quick review of the site, Annette determined that given the website was done in Drupal 8 a downgrade to Drupal 7 would be the only way to fix the scoring criterion issues as well as other identified issues. The website is now functional as it should be and now meets accessibility issues for low vision and screen reading technology users. This is also the second year online convention registrations were processed.

Election of officers was held. Up for election this year are the offices of vice-president and secretary. We will also need to elect a corresponding secretary for a one year term due to the resignation of Kathy Fox. Chris Brennfoerder and Jim Jirak’s name were placed in nomination for the offices of vice-president and secretary respectfully. Both were elected by a unanimous ballot. As no nominations were made for corresponding secretary, Mark will appoint someone to fill out Kathy’s unexpired term.

Prior to adjournment, Mark recognized a change in ACBN structure and communication might help enhance membership recruitment and involvement. Mark suggested that he envisioned perhaps a statewide membership being implemented with perhaps monthly conference calls, web chats and/or social media and website communications to help spread the word about ACBN happenings. He also suggested that perhaps a show on ACB Radio could also be pursued.

The meeting adjourned at 4:58pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Jirak

Secretary