**Wyoming Council of the Blind**

**Minutes from March’s regular board meeting held via phone on March 11, 2024**

**The March regular board meeting was called to order by President Cheryl Godley at 7:03 PM. Roll call indicated that there were eight board members present, thus a quorum.**

**Officers present:**

**President – Cheryl Godley**

**Vice President – Tom Lealos**

**Treasurer – Tom Smyth**

**Secretary – Sherry Leinen**

**Directors present:**

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

**The minutes from February’s meeting were emailed to the board by Sherry Leinen prior to the meeting. Debra made a motion to accept the minutes as sent, second by Sarah. M/C**

**Treasurers report: Tom S**

**Checking Account Balance: $6287.24**

**Certificate of Deposit Balance: $5029.29**

**Total Funds: $11,360.53**

 **Income Checking: $120.75**

 **Expenditures Checking: - $126.95**

**Ending Checking Account Balance: $6281.04**

**Certificate of Deposit Balance: $5044.24**

**Total Funds: $11,325.28**

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

**Membership: Tom S reported that there are 14 members at this time.**

**Tom S stated that ACB needs an email address from everyone so they can vote during the ACB convention. If you don’t have an email address you won’t be able to vote for ACB.**

**The deadline for registering with ACB is March 15.**

**Cheryl and Sherry will call individuals on the membership list that haven’t registered yet, to find out if they received their application.**

**Tom S brought up a few financial issues that he wanted the board to be aware of. He sent an email with these issues before the meeting.**

1. **AT&T our carrier for the WyCB cell phone is now charging us a $5.00 convenience fee to pay their bill. This brings the total for the phone to roughly $36 a month, an extra $60 a year if we keep doing what we’re doing. He had issues with AT&T adding charges to his account each month and switched to Consumer Cellular over a year ago and has been very happy with their service. If WyCB switches to Consumer Cellular the bill would be roughly $26 when we enroll to auto pay.**

**Tom S made a motion to move our phone plan from AT&T to Consumer Cellular for $26 a month, second by Tom S. M/C**

**David Leinen might need to be on the call when the switch is made since his name was on the original AT&T plan.**

**Tom S stated that will need to go to auto pay.**

1. **WyCB credit card.**

**Tom S suggested that since WyCB does not have much income, and no credit, that WyCB open up a savings account at Hilltop Bank. We could transfer most of our checking account into savings. We would keep like $300 or $400 in the checking account and use the debit card from that account for online bill paying. We already have a debit card. Cheryl and Tom S would have to open the savings account and transfer the money. They will have to check to see if there are any fees involved. Tom S stated that he can transfer money online.**

**Tom L made a motion to have Cheryl and Tom S open a savings account at Hilltop Bank in Casper for WyCB. Cheryl and Tom S will decide on the amount in which to transfer from the already existing checking account at Hilltop Bank in Casper, second by Debra. M/C**

1. **Tom S stated that it had been brought to his attention that WyCB needs to supply Annette with a 1099 tax form reporting what we paid her in 2023. He emailed Annette a paper copy of this completed form. The IRS still needs to receive this information. The IRS has made it extremely difficult to do this, but he is working on accomplishing this difficult task. The IRS deadline was February 28, so we will be late and might have to pay a penalty which may be around $50. The threshold for reporting on a 1099 is $600 and WyCB paid Annette $1275 in 2023 which included her services for the last three months of 2022.**

**Old Business**

**Sightings (Tom L and Tom S). Tom L would like the articles for the next Newsletter by May 15. Please send them to Tom L in Word format.**

**WyCB Roundup. The roundup is held every fourth Wednesday of each month at 7 PM. The next roundup will be March 27, 2024. Tom L sent everyone a report on February’s meeting. Cheryl asked Tom L to change the wording in the last sentence of his report.**

**Scholarship (Debra)**

**No applications at this time. Gary will help with the WDE school information. Cheryl received an email that she felt had important information for the scholarship, she will forward this to Debra.**

**Convention (Tom L)**

**The convention is scheduled for September 28, 2024 in Casper. The convention committee consists of Tom L, Gary, and Sherry. WIL will let us use the same room as last year, and Jenna Rector will host for Zoom and record the convention. So far one presenter has been confirmed. Claire Stanley, who is the ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, will speak on advocacy.**

**We are working on possible speakers from DVR, NLS, someone on technology, and a motivational speaker. We are working on a theme. Tom L came up with “New Horizons”. He asked Gary and Sherry to bring some suggestions to the next meeting.**

**We discussed the lunch issues that we have each year. We decided that we need one hour for lunch, so we may need to start earlier or a little later.**

**Gary suggested that we order pizza. We would put on the registration form three different choices of pizza. There would also be a box to check if you don’t want pizza and you will provide your own lunch. We will provide pop and water. We discussed having two different registration fees.**

**Fees: in person-$25 includes lunch, $20 you provide your own lunch. On zoom – $20.**

**Tom L made a motion that for our 2024 convention we will have a two tiered registration fee. $20 for virtual and $20 for in person individuals providing their own lunch. $25 for in person that will eat the provided lunch, second by Sharon. M/C**

**It was decided that we would give away 4-$25 gift certificates from Walmart again this year. Tom L suggested that we give two away at the end in order to get more individuals to stay until the end. Debra will get the gift certificates from Walmart.**

**Sherry will get the water and snacks for the convention.**

**New Business**

**Grant Proposal (Cheryl and Tom S)**

**A grant proposal was submitted to Natrona Collective Health Trust on 2-21-2024 for the resource page on our website. The following items were submitted.**

 **Letter of Introduction**

 **Inclusivity Statement**

 **Updated financial proposal from Annette**

 **History of WyCB**

 **Financial records**

**Cheryl and Tom S had a meeting with NCHT on 2-26-2024. They stated that the meeting went well and they will find out about the grant on April 17.**

**Tom S stated that he needed an inclusivity statement and so he wrote one up and modeled it after theirs. Tom S read the following inclusivity statement.**

**Wyoming Council of the Blind inclusivity statement.**

**The mission of Wyoming Council of the Blind is to inform, educate, encourage, and support those with visual impairments or blindness. WyCB holds the belief that people with vision loss should be accepted, valued, and respected for their individual accomplishments. We encourage people to strive to be all they can be. WyCB actively seeks to promote access and inclusivity and opposes any discrimination based on race, creed, religious beliefs, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or for any other reason.**

**Gary made a motion to accept the inclusivity statement as read, second by Tom L. M/C**

**The new resource pages won’t be posted on our website until we find out about the grant. We would use the grant money to pay Annette to get our website updated. Tom S will send a list to Sarah of the resource pages that he has received so far so she can check to make sure all of them have been sent.**

**White Cane Day**

**Committee Members: Sarah Sexton, Tom Lealos, Gary Olson, Laurel Henry, and Ginny Chidsey.**

**The first meeting was held Friday, March 8 at 4 PM.**

**The committee was put together to help spread awareness about White Cane users and guide dog users. There will be a conference that will be happening in Lander on October 14th, 15th and 16th. Since this conference falls on white cane day and involves most of the O and M people and vision outreach specialists in the state an event might be able to be worked out. Tom and Gary will contact Gov. Gordon to see about signing a proclamation for white cane day. It was discussed that new drivers need education on white cane users so it is important to educate students of all ages, especially those in high school. Laurel will find out how many high schools still offer drivers education in school. The more media coverage for a white cane day event the better. Local TV and radio stations will be contacted. They will also be contacting Wyoming PBS and NPR of Wyoming for coverage. The committee meetings will be the first Monday of each month at 4 PM. Meeting minutes were sent to the board.**

**Social Media**

**Sarah sent an email to the board before the meeting that included several different types of Facebook page options.**

**The best option for WyCB is: Company, organization, or institution: if you don’t necessarily need foot traffic to come to your location and you have several locations across the region, this would be a good choice. This page is also a good fit for services based agencies and nonprofits.**

**If we receive the grant it will pay for Annette’s work. A committee was formed. The committee members are: Sarah Sexton, Sherry Leinen, and Debra Thompson. Cheryl will ask Mikaela Piasecki and one other person to see if they would be interested in helping. Annette would do the set up and then there would need to be administrators who will monitor the page throughout the day. Sarah will call the committee members and set up dates and times for a meeting.**

**Archiving data (Cheryl)**

**Cheryl spoke with Annette about keeping the WyCB information in one place. There would be a central place where the board could access this information. We would include things like: a list of presidents, meeting minutes, scholarship information and lots more. The grant would pay Annette to set this up.**

**Meeting was adjourned at 8:52 PM.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Sherry Leinen – Secretary**

**The next regular board meeting will be Monday, April 8, 2024 at 7 PM. Please mark your calendar.**