

NFB of SC Board Meeting
December 7, 2019
2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Rocky Bottom

At 2:00 p.m., the meeting was called to order by President Frank Coppel, and opened in prayer by JW Smith. President Coppel observed a moment of silence to recognize the passing in November of Donald Capps and Ralph Ellenberg, who were both integral to the blind of SC.

The members present were Frank Coppel, Lenora Robertson, Debra Canty, Shannon Cook, Valerie Warrington, Jamie Allison, Ed Bible, Steve Cook, Linda Dizzley, Loretta Green, Tiffany Mitchell, Isaiah Nelson, Derique Simon, and JW Smith. Garrett Mosley was absent.

NFB Logo Item:

The following people did not have an NFB logo on them: Frank Coppel, Ed Bible, Tiffany Mitchell, Steve Cook, Shannon Cook, Isaiah Nelson, Loretta Green, and Linda Dizzley.

Treasurer's Report:

Valerie Warrington read the financial report for the past eight months. The ending Balance was \$3639.23. President Coppel pointed out that a lot of money went out to the Columbia Marriott. When he set the contract, he thought there would be much more in attendance at the 75th anniversary state convention than actually showed up. As a result, the NFB of SC still owed the Marriott for that block of rooms that were not reserved. Also, once the bill is paid to CC McGregor, the accounting firm that the NFB of SC has used, there will not be any further charges. The national office of the NFB has taken over the compilation of the financial records. That is a free service, and will save the affiliate about \$6000 per year. Approving the financial report was moved, seconded, and passed by the board.

Reading and Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from the April and August meetings were read, moved for passage, seconded, and passed by the board.

Federation Center Report:

David Houck reported on the updates, upgrades, and changes to the center staff, buildings, etc. The four blind instructors have worked with approximately 47 students, both in-house and through virtual training. The FCB held an employment application training on October 10, 2019. Mr. Houck acknowledged Ed Bible's hard work in getting that training done. Castle Brothers Heating and Air replaced two of the three AC units at the FCB for free. Columbia Chapter member Mike Sutton's nephew works for Castle Brothers, and he (Justin Easler) wanted to do something meaningful for the Federation, because he knows how much it has meant to Mike over the years. Having this done by the center, it easily could have cost \$5000 or more. In October, the old copper pipes running under the conference room burst, causing water damage. The repairs involved drilling into the concrete. The initial repairs were \$3600. The pipes had a secondary leak, costing another \$1200. The center was able to raise a lot of that money for repairs. The pipes will ultimately need to be replaced. Mr. Houck reported that the FCB has received approximately \$1400 in memorials for Donald Capps. The FCB received \$1000 from

the annual Greek Festival as well. The new server has been installed. New WiFi extenders have been installed, giving more WiFi capability throughout the center. Dondra Bible's office has been renovated with new flooring, blinds, furniture, etc. Mr. Houck reminded the board that the FCB offers Office 365 to its members at a discounted price of \$40 per year. If someone wants this, there is help available for installation. Mr. Bible attended the SC AER conference. Mr. Coppel and Mr. Houck both attended Dr. Marvin Efron's funeral in November.

Successful Transitions Report:

Jennifer Bazer reported on the progress of ST. She first thanked everyone for their donations for the assisted living residents that are being collected this weekend. Jimmy Masters will gather the items tonight to distribute them. ST renewed the contract/grant earlier this year. This is their 4th year in operation. They still work with ages 13 - 21 and offer three services. ST currently offers three services, and are negotiating for five more services. They are working with general VR to expand the caseload. They hope to have about 300 VR students per year, which is what they had previously. ST presented at SC AER on mindfulness by Jay Robinson. A group of students will attend both the statewide seminar and Washington Seminar. Mentoring is a big component of the program's focus.

Palmetto Blind:

Mr. Coppel suggested that a cost-cutting measure for the NFB of SC is to produce the *Palmetto Blind* in-house. The binding machine will be purchased. The cost for producing one edition is currently \$1700. This will reduce it to \$800 or so. Mr. Coppel is working to update the mailing list to eliminate duplicates, people who have moved, etc.

Grand Strand Chapter:

This chapter had a brand new member who, in good spirit, set up a Federation fundraiser on Facebook. The wording was that the money would go to the NFB, not the Grand Strand Chapter of the NFB of SC. This person did not check with the chapter president, or anyone else in a role to approve or reject the language or project as a whole. The fundraiser raised \$1000. Mr. Coppel spoke with President Riccobono. The money was split between the national organization and the Grand Strand Chapter; however, it was not labeled as a donation to the chapter, but as a grant. The lesson is that chapter presidents should instruct their members to check with them first before they take it upon themselves to raise money in the Federation's name. With so many different entities within the NFB, it is very easy to unintentionally send the money to a different segment of the organization.

Zoom:

Zoom is a multi-platform teleconference service that allows users to either join by phone, through the Zoom app, or join online. The FCB has purchased a pro version of Zoom, which is available for all chapters and divisions to use to meet. The statewide seminar will be broadcast on Zoom. Mr. Coppel is planning to use it for some board meetings to cut down on travel expenses. Mr. Bible said that it can also be beneficial for training.

Call 'M All:

Call 'M All is a robo calling service that is now being used by the NFB of SC. It was used just last month to let people know about Mr. Capps funeral arrangements. It offers many ways for the

NFB of SC to keep members apprised of upcoming events, meeting updates, news, and more. The service can be specified for only certain chapters, divisions, or any subgroup that may be needed. ST paid for the cost of one year. The FCB reimbursed ST for one yearly quarter.

Washington Seminar:

Hotel reservations should be made by January 8, 2020. The cost is \$225 per night. The great gathering in is on February 10, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. President Coppel suggested only paying for the state officers' rooms and the \$40 per diem will be picked up by each individual. Mrs. Bazer stated that ST has a van that can be used for transporting some of the people. The trip will be from Sunday through Wednesday. The meetings with Congressmen will be on Tuesday, the 11th.

National Convention:

Dates changed to July 14-19, 2020 in Houston. So far, the number of tickets turned in is 155. Frank said that not many people have let him know of their interest in riding the bus, but there has not been an official question put to the membership. He has checked with several companies with several results. Some company's drivers would stay all week and the affiliate would have to pay for the driver. One company wanted to split up the trip, and have the trip last for 2 days. The price quotes were anywhere between \$10,500 and \$12,300. Because not many tickets have been turned in, and several other bus companies will be contacted, President Coppel decided to wait until the statewide seminar to determine whether or not to charter a bus for the national convention.

2020 State Convention:

Next year's state convention will be held in North Charleston. Laverne Addison did some research for the hotels. She learned that the Marriot has free parking, and a free shuttle to many attractions. She has gotten deals with the Charleston Museum, carriage tours, paratransit, and more to come. Mr. Coppel announced the room rates are \$115 per night plus applicable taxes. That rate is locked in for the next 2 years. Food rates are the same as the last convention. The dates are August 21-23, 2020 with room rates being honored on Thursday night too. There are 90 rooms in the room block for next year.

Plans are being made to put the registration form online for the convention next year.

Blind Merchants:

There will be an effort to reorganize the Blind Merchants' division at the 2020 state convention.

NFB of SC Cruise:

The dates are November 14-19, 2020. So far, 58 people have signed up with 28 cabins being booked. People can still sign up to go.

Ed Bible asked to give an update on sponsorship for Erica Powell. She asked the NFB of SC to sponsor her Paralympic team trials. The NFB of SC sponsored her with a \$1000 donation. She needed a little more, so the Salem Lions gave her extra funds. Erica did well enough to qualify for the Paralympic running team. The Lions sponsored her the rest of the way to the next level of competition. She broke her own personal record and now, the Paralympic team has chosen her to join them. They are now sponsoring her throughout this process.

The secretary asked to have those not on the board state their names for the minutes to reflect their attendance. Those people were Belinda Banks, Demetrius Williford, Kimberly Williford, Laverne Addison, James Byars, Jennifer Bazer, Julie Bible, Shelley Coppel, and David Houck.

Mr. Coppel asked Isaiah Nelson to close the meeting in prayer.

Submitted by,
Shannon Cook
NFB of SC Secretary