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PSDP Board of Directors Minutes  
5/4/18, 12:00 p.m. PT/3:00 p.m. ET

### Attendees

Veronica, Elaine, Heather, Brad, & Chanda

### Agenda

- Next regular meeting
- Outreach opportunities
- Convention
- Website
  - GreatNonprofits badge
  - Easy advocacy how-to
  - Laws FAQ
  - Ask an Expert
  - Pictures
  - Relationship article
- Fundraising
  - PSDP sponsorship
  - Donation conduits
  - Grant Committee
- Advocacy
  - Canadian standard development withdrawal
  - New airline policies
  - Data for DOT
  - Flowcharts for airline employees
  - Burr bill
- Housing clarification
- Revision of emergency card
- 2015 FAQ flyer translation
- Community Spotlight addition
- Treasury report



This regular meeting was called by verbal agreement during the prior meeting, or by intermediate written reasonable notification made in good faith and agreed to by a majority of board members through email or phone, and was held through videoconferencing.

- Next regular meeting  
Friday, June 8th at noon PT/3:00 ET. Semi-open meeting for broader PSDP leadership.
- Outreach opportunities  
On March 10th, Veronica and Brad hosted a display at a "Hero Run". The run was to raise support for veterans and first responders and was located on the campus of Winthrop University. It's now listed under our "Exhibitions":

<https://www.psychdogpartners.org/board-of-directors/board-activities/presentations>

- Convention  
Our 2018 convention was a great success! Its overall survey rating average was 4.815.

<http://www.psychdogpartners.org/resources/convention/2018-convention>

Thanks to can-do donors, we were able to offer scholarships to seven individuals! We had about that same number of sponsors at the bronze level this year.

We've added a \$5 application fee to the scholarship application and moved the deadline from January 31st to January 1st. The deadline move is so that we can get applicants an answer in time for them to purchase tickets at a decent price. The fee addition is to make sure applicants are serious and invested in their psychiatric service dog journey.

<https://www.psychdogpartners.org/resources/convention/scholarship>

#### •Website

##### -GreatNonprofits badge

We are still soliciting reviews on GreatNonprofits that will help us earn our 2018 GreatNonprofits badge. We need around seven more new, positive reviewers.

##### -Easy advocacy how-to

We're continuing work on our micro-advocacy development, making it easier for everyone to help out. This project takes a general approach, designed in part with step-by-step instructions for a menu of expandable options. We hope this will make it easy for community members to find their advocacy niche.

Linden and Brad have been making steady progress on this long-term project, taking breaks for other projects as needed. It is nearing completion, but will now incorporate ideas from the recent convention session on advocacy.

##### -Laws FAQ

Brad is still drafting an entry for the Laws FAQ on religious entities, private clubs, and the ADA, since the ADA service dog regulations generally don't apply to places operated by religious entities.

##### -Ask an Expert

We have a couple of "Ask an Expert" entries in the works. We started soliciting questions from the list to then curate and pass along to the experts in particular fields. We're focusing now on the dog trainer questions.

##### -Pictures

We are still in the process of curating pictures for our 2017 Community Photos page, so the other photo library idea is on hold until this is complete.

Concurrently, we have convention photos and videos in the queue.

On hold:

We are working toward building a library of quality PSDP photos for future use. This library would include pictures of teams in specific situations or locations, rather than generic pictures. For instance, we might request that folks send in team pictures from their dog training class or their doctor's office. We might also request a staged photo, such as of a service dog working on a computer or "driving" a car.

We will ask submitters to include a text description of the photo. This way, it will be easier for us to make our online pictures accessible to people who are blind (or low-vision) and use screenreaders to know what's going on.

We are now working on refining our initially brainstormed list of ideas.

##### -Relationship article

We're considering producing an interview-based article with the title "How does a service dog affect romantic relationships?".

#### •Fundraising

##### -PSDP sponsorship

Our convention sponsorship program had a decent start with various in-kind donations at the bronze level. We are still executing the benefits of 2018 convention sponsorship, most recently having thanked the rest of our sponsors via social media.

<https://www.psychdogpartners.org/sponsorship>

We are now looking toward sponsors for our 2019 convention in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

-Donation conduits

We reviewed donor source proportions under our Giving Groups, noting that donation consolidation methods and individuals' Facebook fundraisers have been very helpful:

<https://www.psychdogpartners.org/donate/giving-groups>

On our donation station page, we added easy instructions for adding the donate button to a Facebook post and how to start a Facebook fundraiser:

<https://www.psychdogpartners.org/donate>

Facebook's "Create a Fundraiser" link is:

<https://www.facebook.com/fundraisers/PsychiatricServiceDogPartners>

-Grant Committee

We've just organized a grant committee in order to find and procure grant funding for PSDP. Members include: Veronica, Heather, Linden, Kyrie, and Brad.

•Advocacy

-Canadian standard development withdrawal

PSDP's advocacy efforts under the USAUSA banner—along with many individuals—have helped disrupt the wrongheaded push to develop human-rights-violating SD standards in Canada. Here's our letter that 14 other organizations signed onto:

<https://www.psychdogpartners.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/USAUSA-comment-on-draft-Canada-SD-team-standard-062617.pdf>

While the standards process has stalled for now, advocates are still worried about other ways the standards contingent may push their agenda, and advocates would like to brainstorm positive ways to help the situation (like educating the public). To such ends, the grassroots Canadian group will hold a conference call on May 10th.

-New airline policies

Delta, United, and Alaska have new service animal policies that discriminate on the basis of disability type even worse than before. These policies further violate human rights concerns. We warned each of these airlines' representatives when they contacted us, but they have only made the problem worse.

Southwest plans to update its policies this summer. However, currently and in the future, Southwest policies do/will not treat psychiatric service animal users any differently than service animal users of other types. Our expectation is based on what Southwest representatives have recently told us when they reached out.

We laud Southwest's ethically-awake recognition that those with psychiatric disabilities do not merit worse treatment than others. We further praise Southwest providing a clear case in point that ACAA regulations do not *require* airlines to discriminate based on disability, but merely *encourage* them to. Other airlines cannot hide behind the fiction that DOT has forced them to discriminate. Southwest shows us that this is an active decision made by each airline one way or the other.

Southwest's policies do treat ESA users differently on the basis of the training and experience differentials. Southwest's ESA policy will tighten up, but not in the same harsh ways as other airlines'.

-Data for DOT

A community member asked an insightful question about the use of airline cabins' overhead luggage space for service dog users who buy the new "lowest class" tickets. These tickets do not (normally) allow a passenger to use the overhead bin space, yet the person would have the under-seat footspace for carryon luggage in non-bulkhead seats. The question is whether the overhead prohibition for this ticket would apply to a service dog user whose dog occupies the footspace, since the dog is a disability-mitigation device; would that person be entitled to overhead luggage space in lieu of the footspace the dog occupies?

We have asked our DOT contacts how they would enforce complaints in such a situation. In our request for a quotable, authoritative answer, we asked several questions related to such "Basic Economy" fares as American Airlines offers. DOT solicited answers from American Airlines, but we are still pushing them for their own definitive response that we could expect to govern their (DOT's) enforcement.

On April 4th, a DOT official replied to us with the following (excerpted): "With respect to whether the Department will be issuing guidance on basic economy seating programs, we traditionally decide whether or not to issue a guidance document when we receive a significant number of complaints about an issue or we have received data indicating that there is significant concern in the disability community about an airline policy or practice."

Since this is not the sort of thing we expect formal complaints about, it is incumbent on us to gather data that may demonstrate to DOT the need for guidance. Under the USAUSA heading, we have therefore initiated a survey of service animal users and ESA users on a variety of timely, flight-related issues:

<https://www.psychdogpartners.org/usausa/flight-access-survey>

This survey has been widely circulated and currently has almost 800 responses. We plan to run it between April 23rd and May 8th, 2018. The data we acquire will greatly assist us in making our case to DOT about what needs to change, both with the current regulations and with how DOT is allowing airlines to further discriminate.

-Flowcharts for airline employees

As a USAUSA project, we are looking into creating flowcharts for airline employees regarding animal behavior and what to do in different situations. We have been asked by an airline to assist with a similar project that is specific to their policies, but ours would be a template to be used by any airline.

-Burr bill

The text of Senate bill 2738 was just made public today. We are studying the bill and considering our response, but we are especially not keen to see section (3) become law. Its provisions appear to be an even worse incarnation of the standards development process that just failed in Canada due to Herculean consumer pushback.

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/2738/text>

•Housing clarification

The interplay of laws affecting housing situations is complicated. We updated our single FAQ answer on the topic to reveal more of this situation, and we are working toward putting out an article to help housing providers and seekers better understand the rules in play.

When we are able to attend to it, work on the Caring Connections conference presentation should help move this longstanding project forward.

•Revision of emergency card

We are revising our emergency card to be additionally available as a fillable pdf. A draft is in progress based on board input and is being revised.

We are also drafting a first-responder refrigerator notice, and will be doing so based on the 2016 convention's first responder discussion.

•2015 FAQ flyer translation

We are making progress toward creating a French version of our flyer (multiple ill-timed blizzards have gotten in the way). We have a Spanish version.

<http://www.psychdogpartners.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/2015-PSDP-FAQ-flyer-Español.pdf>

•Community Spotlight addition

We are working on another entry in our fairly new Community Spotlight section. We have an email-based interview still in the works.

•Treasury report

The treasury report includes changes to and progress in the categories of: income, expenses, current funds, the budget, earmarked funds, and fundraising.