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Board of Directors *Meeting Minutes*

April 2, 2021

Attendees: Veronica, Brad, Elaine, Linden, Heather, Katie, Travis, and Avery

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.

Agenda

- Next regular meeting
- Successful amicus brief
- NASCAR fundraiser
- Site additions
- Article: Service dog training for the flying context
- Article: Preparing for no-pets places
- Article: Exposures checklist
- Article: Service dogs in first responder situations
- Texas House Bill 801
- Virtual meetups
- Efthimiou Award
- ISO/ANSI Assistance Dog standard
- Meme contest
- Mask design contest
- Media

• Next regular meeting

Friday, May 28th at noon PT/3:00 ET. Meeting medium: Zoom. Today's meeting is a semi-open board meeting, with non-board community leaders invited.

• Successful amicus brief

We are a party to a recently successful amicus brief in C.L. v. Del Amo on the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. The ruling clearly affirmed that owner-training is a perfectly legitimate way to create a service dog, with no certification being required.

The defending hospital's side tried to argue that the expert witness contradicted herself in saying both that she assessed the dog to be a service dog under the law but also that she would not be able to use her own ADI-based standard to certify the dog as a service dog by those optional community criteria.

The details of the case are a good reminder to owner-trainers to: make a training plan, keep training records about public access training and work or task item training, and be very clear about what the work or task items are, how you trained them, and how they mitigate your disability. Incidentally, the ruling also affirmed that service dogs are not required to have more than one trained work or task item.

- **NASCAR fundraiser**

A racetrack in Darlington, North Carolina invited us to fundraise by selling tickets to a race, then getting on stage before the race to make a speech. It would be four hours total of driving for Brad and Veronica, and we don't have a lot of local people who would be interested. This does not seem like the best use of our time, so we will decline.

- **Site additions**

We are developing ideas for expanding our site's new training section with useful articles.

- **Article: Service dog training for the flying context**

Veronica drafted an article on preparing to fly, with some assistance from Brad and input from Elaine. This is now posted on our site in the new training section.

<https://www.psychdogpartners.org/resources/training/service-dog-training-for-flying>

- **Article: Preparing for no-pets places**

Community member and Peer Guidance Group moderator Katie Jesseph drafted an article to help people make transitions in their public access training. We have edited the final text and are preparing to post it with pictures (and possibly video) from the community.

We are very grateful for Katie's and our other fellow volunteers' contributions to PSDP. We expect this article to help a lot of people once it's posted in our site's training section.

- **Article: Exposures checklist**

With some excellent community contributions, Veronica drafted and Brad edited an article and exposures checklist. These twin website entries are in the board approval process and should be ready soon.

- **Article: Service dogs in first responder situations**

Brad is contemplating fleshing out an article based on his recent response to an inquiry. He was consulted about what a municipality's service dog policies should be when the service dog can't accompany their disabled user in a first responder situation (either emergent or non-emergent). This article would be in the "For professionals" section of our site, likely under a "first responders" heading, but would also be helpful for service dog users.

- **Texas House Bill 801**

We plan to write to Texas legislators to oppose Texas House Bill 801. It is unnecessary in the context of federal law and onerously burdensome to disabled people.

This bill would set up bureaucratic and financial hurdles for those with assistance animals other than service dogs (including service miniature horses and ESAs, and by extension, service dogs in training). This seems to have been written without the benefit of a disabled or disability rights perspective, or a non-rich-person perspective.

The certification requirement contains an obedience class requirement that may end up stopping disabled people from being able to get an animal as an ESA or SDIT. It also seems to ignore that ESAs can be non-canine species. It's hard to imagine a goldfish, snake, or cat in an approved obedience class. But for a housing-based disability accommodation, an obedience class requirement seems excessive from the start, since not everyone can afford classes or the time, energy, and transportation needed to attend them.

In addition to paying for an obedience class and veterinary checkup, each year those subject to the law would have to obtain and pay for the Texas certificate. They would also have to be part of a publicly available registry.

- **Virtual meetups**

A list member organized a virtual (chat) meetup for Peer Guidance Group members. This may progress to a video/audio-optional chat.

- **Efthimiou Award**

Starting in 2021, we will have a new designation for convention scholarships in honor of a donor who has been a strong supporter of our scholarship program. The plan is that this designation will be attached to a scholarship for a first-time convention-goer who is likely to make a positive contribution to the convention.

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

- **ISO/ANSI Assistance Dog standard**

The ISO develops international standards for things like consumer electronics. A member group in the Netherlands proposed that the ISO develop standards for service dog breeding, feeding, training, etc.

ANSI is the US member of ISO. ANSI got US stakeholders together in case the Netherlands proposal is approved. ANSI would then need to have a committee to contribute to the international standard.

The proposal is written from a program's perspective, as we expected, with owner-training apparently tacked on as an afterthought. This proposal does not center disabled people or disability rights and it mentions IDs too much for our comfort.

ISO and ANSI are not even the kinds of organizations that should be setting service dog standards. We plan to be involved, because lawmakers may use any ISO/ANSI standard to craft harmful legislation.

PSDP organized a group of 18 international and US organizations through USAUSA coalition. These organizations signed on with our statement against the proposal. AAPD (the American Association of People with Disabilities) posted it on their site to spread the word.

ANSI drafted a detailed statement to ISO against the proposal, taking a lot of our points on board. We also sent our message to 163 of the ISO member organizations around the world. A few have gotten back to us with neutral responses: Singapore, Cypress, Australia, and Mauritania. However, some have replied to us with an intended “no” vote on the proposal, including Belgium and the UK.

We were surprised to learn that Assistance Dogs International (ADI) opposes the proposal, strongly encouraging its member organizations and individuals to write in their opposition. We were aware that ADI’s fellow accreditation agency, the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF), was responsible for the proposal. However, we did not know that IGDF did not collaborate with ADI as much as ADI wanted, and ADI does not necessarily want the expense of an ISO standard or its creation, especially since there’s currently a European service dog standard in development that this would disrupt.

We credit our community members and coalition partners for giving our human-rights-based voice the volume it needed to reach ANSI and other ISO member organizations. We are hopeful the proposal will not have the votes it needs to pass. If it does, we will stay on it to ensure the interests of disabled people are not ignored.

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

- **Meme contest**

We issued prize sets to four meme contest winners. If we are able to, we will post pictures of them with their prizes once they receive them. We are still waiting on a recently placed order to arrive.

<https://www.psychdogpartners.org/board-of-directors/board-activities/advocacy/service-dog-memes/2020-submissions>

- **Mask design contest**

We ran a mask design contest in December. The winner designated a friend to receive their prize of a mask with their design, once it’s ready.

Pup’parel will sell the design, along with a basic PSDP logo design. We are waiting to receive samples.

- **Media**

Veronica and Brad were on “The Flea Circus” radio show at 10:05 a.m. ET on February 19th.

<http://www.pawsitivevarietyshow.com/new-page-1>