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Board of Directors *Meeting Minutes*

September 17, 2021

Attendees: Veronica, Brad, Elaine, Linden, and Heather

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
- Site additions
- Housing page
- Article: Service dogs in first responder situations
- Flyers
- Texas House Bill 801
- Michigan HB 4256
- Virtual meetups
- ISO/ANSI—now Canadian/SCC—Assistance Dog standard
- DOT meeting
- Meme contest
- Priorities survey
- Convention
- Treasury

• **Next regular meeting**

Friday, November 12th at 11:30 PT/2:30 ET.

Semi-open board meeting with advisors and PSDP leadership.

• **Site additions**

We are continuing to develop more ideas for expanding our site's new training section with useful articles.

Among these ideas is an article Linden drafted about learning to train at your dog's pace. This will be posted soon in the training section.

• **Housing page**

We put the accommodation procedure tool at the top of the housing page, since it is what interests most people. However, our exemption checker tool continues to be surprisingly popular.

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

• **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.

• **Flyers**

Linden and Veronica updated the language for some of our flyers and Brad redesigned the layout. We are working on these and hope to get them out soon.

We may ask the list for help refreshing the translations on our French and Spanish flyers.

• **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.

• **Michigan HB 4256**

We have drafted a response to Michigan's HB 4256, which would give only those affiliated with ADI or IGDF access to no-pets places with a service dog in training.

• **Virtual meetups**

A list member organized a virtual (Zoom) meetup for Peer Guidance Group members. Everyone who participated really enjoyed it! We're looking at doing another.

- **ISO/ANSI—now Canadian/SCC—Assistance Dog standard**

We defeated the IGDF attempt to impose an exclusionary/discriminatory international service dog standard on the world through ISO. Now the SCC (Standards Council of Canada) is trying to do the same thing, just like we stopped there a few years ago!

At that time, our alerting of Canadians to the issue (and our opposition) helped form a coalition there. Unfortunately, this coalition has become elitist, endorsing a hierarchy of disability by asking not that the standard-forming process cease, but only that guide dog users be exempt from any standard SCC creates!

We are appalled and incensed by this ableist behavior from our would-be coalition partners. In no uncertain terms, we told the Canadian guide dog coalition this, but they issued no response to defend their embarrassing position.

We have been working in opposition to this alongside our community members, and we will continue to do so.

- **DOT meeting**

Brad and Veronica have a meeting in late November with DOT, as part of their disability advocates advisory panel. We will solicit any flying-related feedback from community members in preparation.

- **Meme contest**

We issued prize sets to four meme contest winners. It seems we recently received the winners' pictures, so we plan to post pictures of them (or their dogs) with their prizes. Better late than never!

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

- **Priorities survey**

We are developing this year's Priorities survey.

- **Convention**

We have picked Long Beach, California for our 2022 convention, April 29–May 2.

- **Treasury**

We will be producing a financial report and budget.