# **Pine Tree Guide Dog Users**

# **Annual Fall membership meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, November 1, 2023**

## **Presentation**

Pauline opened the membership meeting at 6:31 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Jim introduced our guest speaker, Lukas Franck, COMS, GDMI, and recent recipient of the prestigious Ken Lord Award (the highest honor bestowed by the International Guide Dog Federation). Before starting his presentation, Lukas offered words of condolence to all those affected by last week’s tragic shooting in Lewiston.

He then went on to review the history of traffic control changes that have impacted the blind and low vision community. These changes have included the introduction of right turn on red in the 1970's and the computerization of intersection controls, resulting in as many as 16 control phases in each light cycle with the addition of many more road sensors. These sensors are now charged with making intelligent decisions for traffic movement.

Although a mandatory federal standard for the installation of accessible pedestrian signals (APS) has been developed, it has yet to be fully adopted. These standards require that all new construction using intersections include the installation and correct placement of APS. They also apply when alterations are made to existing intersections that are not accessible but there is still debate as to what constitutes an alteration. Even with APS, pedestrians are still required to interact with the intersection controls by pressing the pushbutton, which will change the timing on the light cycle to a longer pedestrian phase to allow the pedestrian to cross more safely. Lukas also suggested taking such personal safety measures as making a large arm motion to alert drivers of your presence and intention and wearing bright clothing or adding lights to your dog's harness.

Lukas Franck is well known to a number of the attendees of this meeting and his informative presentation was well received. A recording of the presentation will be available on our website in the Educational Corner.

## **Business Meeting**

Pauline called the business meeting to order at 7:34p.m. via Zoom.

### **Attendance**

1. Board Officers & Directors

Pauline Lamontagne - President

Gil Whitmore - First Vice-President

Linda Porelle – Secretary

Merrill Barter – Treasurer

Sadie Donnell – Director

Patty Sarchi – Director

Christina Brino – Director

Ginger Kutsch – Director

1. PTGDU Members

Carolyn Bebee, Cheryl Peabody, Linda Richards, Bruce Archer, Nick Giudice, Jim Kutsch, Steve Lambert, and Michael Moran.

1. Guests

Two guests were present.

**Remembrance for Leona McKenna and Marjorie Awalt**.

Pauline recognized the valuable contributions made to PTGDU and beyond by Lee and Marj and called for a moment of silence in their memory.

### **Additions to and adoption of proposed agenda**.

Pauline called for any additions or changes to the agenda. She stated that Merrill had requested time to discuss ways to receive interest on PTGDU’s restricted emergency veterinary fund. It was moved by Linda and seconded by Sadie to approve the revised Agenda. The motion carried.

### **Board Meeting Minutes for august 2023/Email Votes**

1. The August 2023 minutes were accepted.

**Summary of Email Vote:** On Sep 20, 2023, Ginger sent an email to the board to make a motion to accept the August 2023 minutes as presented. Sadie seconded the motion and the vote passed with one abstention.

1. Ellis – McKenna Memorial Fund

the new name and policy for the Ellis – McKenna Memorial Fund was accepted.

**Summary of Email Vote:** On August 6, 2023, Ginger sent an email to the board to make a motion to accept the proposed changes to the Patricia E. Ellis Memorial Scholarship Fund policy. Sadie seconded the motion. On August 17, 2023, Pauline proposed a friendly amendment to Ginger's motion to change the name of the fund to the Ellis - McKenna Memorial Fund. Ginger agreed and Sadie seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Merrill reviewed the year-to-date income statement and balance sheet as of October 31st. He shared that we received two donations totaling $600.00 for the Ellis – McKenna Memorial Fund. It was moved by Ginger and seconded by Gil to accept the treasurer’s report as presented. The motion carried.

### **Mary T. & Curtis D. Lovill Trust Emergency Veterinary Fund**

Merrill recommended that we move some, or all, of the designated funds in the Lovill Trust account to an interest baring account. After a lengthy discussion, Pauline appointed Merrill, Sadie, Jim & Gil to serve on a Special Investment ad hoc committee to determine the best way to manage the fund and put forth a recommendation to the board in the next few weeks.

### **Proposed changes to the PTGDU Constitution & Bylaws & Elections**

Quorum Established

13 of the 30 PTGDU members were present throughout the entire voting process. This constituted a quorum.

Proposed Change One

As a result of member feedback regarding the proposed change to remove the second Vice-President position and to create an immediate past president position, a parliamentarian was consulted prior to the meeting. She recommended that the amendment be divided so that each position could be voted on separately. Pauline asked if anyone objected to dividing the proposed amendment. There were no objections.

Second Vice-President Position

A motion was made by Ginger and seconded by Christina to eliminate the Second Vice-President position from the board. The motion carried with one abstention.

Immediate Past President Position

A motion was made by Jim and seconded by Sadie to approve the recommendation to create an Immediate Past President position. The motion received no affirmative votes and failed to pass.

Proposed Change Two

The proposed bylaw change to clarify that meetings may be held in person and/or by teleconference was not addressed during the meeting and will need to be sent out again prior to the next membership meeting.

Elections

Cheryl, who was serving as chair of the nominations committee had to leave prior to elections so Steve, a member of the committee, stepped up to read the slate of candidates and conduct the elections.

President

Sadie Donnell was named as the nominee. There were no further nominations from the floor. Steve moved that Sadie be elected President by acclamation and the motion carried unanimously.

Vice-President

Ginger Kutsch was named as the nominee. She declined the nomination stating that she wished to run for the office of Secretary. Sadie nominated Pauline who accepted. There were no further nominations from the floor. Steve moved that Pauline be elected Vice-President by acclamation and the motion carried unanimously.

Secretary

No nominees were named. Gil nominated Ginger who accepted. There were no further nominations from the floor. Steve moved that Ginger be elected Secretary by acclamation and the motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer

Merrill Barter was named as the nominee. There were no further nominations from the floor. Steve moved that Merrill be elected Treasurer by acclamation and the motion carried unanimously.

Two-year Director (term ends 2025)

Linda Porelle was named as the nominee. There were no further nominations from the floor. Steve moved that Linda be elected Director by acclamation and the motion carried unanimously.

Two-year Director (term ends 2024)

Steve explained that this position had been held by Sadie Donnell and now that she would be serving as President, we would need to fill the rest of her term. Gil volunteered to serve in the position. There were no further nominations from the floor. Steve moved that Gil be elected Director by acclamation and the motion carried unanimously.

One-year Director

Christina Brino was named as the nominee. There were no further nominations from the floor. Steve moved that Christina be elected Director by acclamation and the motion carried unanimously.

One-year Director

Roger Fuller was named as the nominee. There were no further nominations from the floor. Steve moved that Roger be elected Director by acclamation and the motion carried unanimously.

### **Committee updates and discussions**.

1. Website

Gil shared that the new member and renewal forms on our website are working very well. Pauline reminded everyone to renew their membership before December 31, 2023.

1. Fundraising

Christina shared that the committee has been exploring the possibility of holding a Maine-made wreath fundraiser. The committee will find out more details and report back to the board.

### **Announcements**

1. Linda gave a brief overview of the agenda for the ACB Maine fall convention to be held via Zoom on November 11th.
2. Pauline asked the board to start thinking about PTGDU’s needs for the 2024 budget.
3. Pauline shared that Steve will be distributing backup digital copies of the PTGDU logo files to ensure business continuity.
4. The next quarterly board meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 7, 2024.

The annual fall membership meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Porelle

Secretary