

SPJ/SDX Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 26, 2000 - Columbus, Ohio

Meeting Date: October 26, 2000

Meeting Place: The Adams Mark Hotel, Columbus, Ohio

Roll Call:

Board Members Present: 16

Paul Steinle
Paul McMasters
Georgiana Vines
Howard Dubin
Betsy Ashton
David Boardman
Fred Brown
David Carlson
Paul Davis
Steve Geimann
Frank Gibson
G. Kelly Hawes
Hoag Levins
Tony Mauro
Kyle Niederpruem
Sue Porter

Board Members Absent: 5

Phil Record
Lou Dobbs
Jane Kirtley
Dori Maynard
Russell Pulliam

SPJ Staff Members Present: 4

Jim Gray, SPJ Executive Director
Julie Grimes, SPJ Communications Director
Catherine Davis, SPJ Director of Finance
Stephanie Berry, Development Director

Others Present:

Numerous guests were present during portions of the meeting.

SDX President Paul Steinle called the meeting to order. Secretary Georgiana Vines called the roll.

The meeting began with instructions from Development Director Stephanie Berry regarding the sorting of prospective donor files. Berry explained that the organization was seeking supporters, not just donors. Board members were to highlight individuals they would be willing to contact about supporting the organization. The files were to be completed and returned to Berry by the end of the meeting.

Approval of Minutes from April 2000 Meeting

Motion by Steve Geimann to adopt the minutes of the April 2000 board meeting as amended. Second by Frank Gibson. Motion carried.

The only amendment was to remove Jane Kirtley and Dori Maynard from the list of new Foundation board

members approved at the April meeting. These two board members were elected in October 1999.

Treasurer's Report

SPJ Finance Director Catherine Davis explained the statements of financial position for each of the Foundation's funds. The statements were distributed at the meeting. Howard Dubin provided a treasurer's report and explained current allocation of funds.

Development Director's Report

Development Director Stephanie Gayle Berry explained that she officially took this position July 1, 2000. Her first priority was bringing order to the filing system. She also explained that a fund-raising component had been added to the computer system.

Berry reported that she had established "The Account," a quarterly newsletter report of finances of the Foundation's funds and an update of development department activities. She plans to distribute the first newsletter in November. It will go to about 1,000 members, leaders and donors and will keep the lines of communication open.

Berry explained that there had been resistance to the membership invoicing forms with optional donations (President's Club and SDX Voluntary Contributions) listed and totaled in the payment option. This will be clarified on the form to make sure members realize these are voluntary contributions and not requirements. New "Join the Legacy" cards also will be inserted in future membership renewal mailings.

Board members expressed frustration about the current Foundation staffing situation. They want to see a fulltime Foundation employee, not someone supplementing Society projects. Executive Director Jim Gray explained that the legal view of the Foundation is that it is a supporting Foundation, and there is no prohibition to funding SPJ programs, as long as they also benefit the journalism community. The group discussed appointing a task force to examine Foundation staffing and make a recommendation to the board in April 2001. For now, the group will work with the development director dividing her time 70 percent to Foundation work and 30 percent to Society work.

Berry explained that she would continue updating and creating files and learning the computer system and would get the donor information being worked on today out to board members in the next two weeks.

Review of Grant Requests

Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press Grant

Motion by Paul McMasters to approve a grant in the amount of \$25,000 to the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, contingent upon the Reporter's Committee getting total funds to pursue the project. These funds would come from the Foundation's FOI Fund. Second by Paul Davis.

The Reporter's Committee seeks funding to prepare the fourth edition of "Tapping Officials' Secrets," a 50-state compendium of open government laws. The complete description is available in the board packet for the joint board meeting.

The group discussed revising the Foundation's grant guidelines to require organizations to make clear what else has been requested from other organizations and what the status of total funding is, so the Foundation board can make a well-informed determination about funding. People who seek grants also should explain how they plan to acknowledge grants.

Upon a vote, the motion carried. Two board members abstained (Tony Mauro and Steve Geimann).

"KENTUCKY COLONEL" PLAY BY LARRY MUHAMMAD

Louisville Pro Chapter member Larry Muhammad is seeking \$5,000 to help fund "Kentucky Colonel," a play about First Amendment challenges to the Negro Press during World War II. The complete description is available in the board packet for the joint board meeting.

Board members decided that without having read the play, there was insufficient information to make a funding decision.

Motion by David Carlson to have a three-person committee review the play and make a decision regarding SDX funding of the play. The Foundation would delegate the final decision to the committee. Second by Georgiana Vines.

Some members explained that this would be the first time the Foundation has given money to an individual rather than an organization.

Upon a vote, the motion carried with 10 for, one against and two abstaining.

Paul McMasters, Betsy Ashton and Sue Porter were named to the review committee. Executive Director Jim Gray will get play to them by Tuesday, Oct. 31.

Rainbow Sourcebook

As a preview to the discussion of funding for the Rainbow Sourcebook, Executive Director Jim Gray introduced Ben Everson, SPJ's Web Fellow. The Web Fellow position was funded by the Foundation. Everson explained current problems with getting the sourcebook online, including service provider problems, compatibility issues with a Filemaker Pro database, and a general need for training on how to publish databases to the Web.

Board members suggested partnering with other organizations to get the sourcebook on the Web and available. Paul Davis suggested working with FACS, and David Boardman explained that Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) hosts Web pages for several journalism organizations. IRE Executive Director Brant Houston was a guest at the meeting and offered complimentary help from IRE to deal with this database issue as well as other Web site questions.

Board members David Carlson, Hoag Levins and Paul Davis will work with Everson to find a location and develop a plan for dealing with databases.

SPJ Diversity Committee Chair Sally Lehrman explained her request for additional funding to complete the project.

Motion by Frank Gibson to approve up to \$10,000 for the Society's Rainbow Sourcebook Project, in consultation with the newly named SDX advisory committee (listed above). Second by Ashton. Motion carried.

SPJ's incoming president, Ray Marcano, should be copied on any activities of the advisory committee.

International Journalism Committee

SPJ's International Journalism Committee seeks \$1,500 to complete and distribute the "Guide to International Journalism Program," a resource for students and mid-career journalists seeking to prepare for assignment overseas. The complete description is available in the board packet for the joint meeting.

Motion by Kelly Hawes to approve this funding request. Second by Georgiana Vines. The motion carried.

Foundation Awards Discussion

Pulliam Editorial Fellowship

Paul McMasters discussed the Foundation's Eugene C. Pulliam Editorial Fellowship and suggested the need for increased promotion of the fellowship. McMasters recommended that the Foundation set aside \$15,000 to \$25,000 to hire a consultant or contractor to develop and promote this fellowship and return it to in the leadership role it has enjoyed in the past. He also suggested increasing the award by \$5,000.

McMasters said the suggested outsourcing the promotion of this program so that it becomes somebody's job. Currently, the fellowship is not a SPJ staff priority. He suggests outsourcing the job and getting it on a footing with a system and a guide. Then the staff can follow through the guide in the future. McMasters explained that if the board was going to award this amount of money with the expectation of enhancing editorial writing in the United States, the board has a responsibility to do sufficiently promote it. He said entries a few each year, and we must determine why those entries aren't there and what can be done to increase entries and visibility in the future.

Possible issues a consultant or contractor could address:

- Creation of a brochure that highlights past fellowship work.
- Review of the fellowship guidelines.
- Possibility of expanding the universe of applicants. Currently, the fellowship is constrained to fulltime editorial writers at daily U.S. newspapers.
- Developing a guide for running and promoting for future years.

Board members discussed the thought that this problem goes back to Foundation staffing issues. Kyle Niederpruem explained that a marketing and communications director was on board and should be given a chance to complete this project.

Motion by Paul McMasters to approve an expenditure of up to \$25,000 for the hiring of a contractor to work with the Executive Director and his staff on promoting the Pulliam Editorial Fellowship and developing recommendations to the board to make this a better promoted, more visible award. The funds will come from the Pulliam Editorial Fund and the process will last not more than one year. Second by Sue Porter. The motion carried with one opposed (Kyle Niederpruem).

Executive Director Jim Gray will prepare a job description and seek out a contractor.

First Amendment Award Discussion

Paul McMasters explained the history behind this Foundation award of \$10,000. The Foundation approved the award and guidelines were developed. Judging would come from the SPJ FOI Committee Chairman (also chairman of the selection committee), a member of the Pulliam family and a nationally known FOI expert. McMasters said no staff time had been devoted to implement the award.

McMasters encourage headquarters to have a staff member review the guidelines and begin publicizing this award. No money has been set aside for publicity. This year, the award should be publicized through Quill and in member mailings. Staff should work with FOI Chairman Ian Marquand to begin this process this year.

Robert Lewis Award Discussion

This was another Foundation award the group discussed that was not awarded this year.

SDX Foundation President Paul Steinle asked Executive Director Jim Gray to prepare a list of all Foundation awards and plans for staff support and a calendar for each award.

Foundation Bylaws Discussion

Executive Director Jim Gray pointed out the model Foundation bylaws available in the board packet. He explained the need for revision to the Foundation's current bylaws. Kelly Hawes, who had been chairing a bylaws committee, explained that he hadn't been able to develop a report but would get his committee together and report to the board in April. Hawes said there may be modest bylaws changes to make, but a wholesale change is not suggested.

President Paul Steinle instructed board members to send thoughts and proposals to Hawes who will work with the committee and have a recommendation available before the April 2001 board meeting.

The committee reviewing the bylaws: Kyle Niederpruem, Paul Davis, Frank Gibson, Steve Geimann and Kelly Hawes (committee chairman). Executive Director Jim Gray will serve the committee in an advisory role, and Paul McMasters also will work with the committee. A report will be prepared for the Foundation board by March 1. The report will include an explanation of any proposed changes and rationale behind those changes.

Update on Previously Awarded Grants

SPJ Web site Grant

Executive Director Jim Gray asked Web Fellow Ben Everson to update board members on the current situation with the Web site and provide information the direction of the site. Everson explained that he had been with SPJ since August and had worked to bring consistency and accuracy to the current site. He has organized the Society's prison access project and instituted the chapter Web site program. Procedures have been developed for chapter Web sites and more than 10 are already using the space. Regions can also have Web sites, and board members are being assigned spj.org e-mail addresses.

Everson said he is now look towards a site redesign with the help of a consultant who should be on board by the first of the year. The site will allow for e-commerce, database capabilities and a members only section. The Jobs for Journalists newsletter will be placed online, as will the Diversity Sourcebook.

President Paul Steinle instructed Everson to provide the board with brief, quarterly Web activity summaries. These would provide updates on what has been done, including additions and deletions to the site.

Board Member and Officer Elections

The nominating committee presented the following officer nominations:

Sue Porter, vice president
Howard Dubin, treasurer
Steve Geimann, secretary

Motion by Paul McMasters to elect these officers. Second by Betsy Ashton. The motion carried.

Motion by Paul McMasters to elect the following individuals to one-year terms on the Foundation board of directors:

Kyle Niederpruem
Hoag Levins
Tony Mauro
David Boardman

David Carlson

Second by Betsy Ashton. The motion carried. (Those being voted on abstained from voting.)

Motion by Paul McMasters that Georgiana Vines, Kelly Hawes and Frank Gibson be re-appointed to three-year terms on the Foundation board. Second by Fred Brown. The motion carried.

New Business

Motion by David Boardman to consider a resolution supporting the authors of "Doing Ethics in Journalism," the Society's ethics handbook. Second by Frank Gibson. Upon a vote, the motion carried. The resolution is listed below.

Resolution in support of the authors of "Doing Ethics in Journalism"

Ralph Barney, Jay Black and Bob Steele donated thousands of hours writing, editing and overseeing the SPJ ethics handbook, "Doing Ethics in Journalism." The SDX Board reaffirms its gratitude to these scholars.

Motion by Frank Gibson to present Past Presidents Keys and plaques to Paul Steinle and Howard Dubin in recognition of their years of work on behalf of the Foundation. Second by Georgiana Vines.

Discussion followed. The group talked about appropriate awards and the possibility of designing keys or other recognition awards specifically for SDX Foundation board leaders.

Upon a vote, the motion carried.

Selection of Foundation President

Paul Steinle explained that Paul McMasters was elected vice president of the Foundation with the understanding that he would be president when Steinle left office in two years. Steinle announced that he would be leaving one year early and that McMasters would complete Steinle's term as president. McMasters will then be up for reelection as president one year from now. Steinle will continue to serve on the board for at least one more year.

McMasters explained that he will be examining structural and staffing issues with the Foundation. He also will look hard at the structuring and management of Foundation funds and will focus on organizing the Foundation's awards programs and other projects and getting them back on the front-burner in regard to priorities. He also will look at the separate accounts for Foundation funds and examine how those are used. funding from separate funds. McMasters said he will look at conducting periodic journalism forums and examine other possible partnerships.

Steinle expressed his gratitude for the board's commitment and said he was pleased to work with each board member. Board members complimented Steinle on his hard work as president of the board.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Paul Davis. Second by Frank Gibson. The motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Action List

SPJ HEADQUARTERS

The April board meeting minutes should be revised to reflect the correction listed in these minutes.

Headquarters will notify the following grant recipients:

Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press
SPJ Diversity Committee
SPJ International Journalism Committee

The board approved an expenditure for an awards contractor to help with the Eugene C. Pulliam Editorial Writing Fellowship. Executive Director Jim Gray will prepare a job description and seek out a contractor. Staff should review guidelines for the First Amendment Award and begin publicizing and promoting the award.

Staff should review the Robert Lewis award and begin publicizing and promoting the award.

The Web Fellow will provide a quarterly update on Web site progress.

SPJ BOARD MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS

A three-person review committee was appointed to consider a funding request by Larry Muhammad. The committee will review his play and make a funding decision on behalf of the board of directors.

A bylaws committee will review the current bylaws and make recommendations before the April board meeting.