

# SPJ/SDX Combined Meeting Minutes

## April 28, 2001 - San Diego, Calif.

**Meeting Date:** April 28, 2001

**Meeting Place:** The Radisson Hotel, San Diego, Calif.

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### Roll Call:

Board Members Present: 21 SPJ board members / 13 SDX board members

Ray Marcano  
Al Cross  
Robert Leger  
Kyle Niederpruem  
David Carlson  
Irwin Gratz  
Marcia Biggs  
Bruce Cadwallader  
Vicky Katz Whitaker  
David Aeikens  
Patrick Dobson  
Todd Gillman  
Jay Evensen  
Oren Campbell  
Mark Scarp  
Jamie Gonzales  
Jim Parker  
Charles Davis  
Robyn Eoff  
Brian Joseph  
Andrew Marra  
Paul McMasters  
Sue Porter  
Steve Geimann  
Howard Dubin  
Betsy Ashton  
Fred Brown  
Paul Davis  
G. Kelly Hawes  
Dori Maynard  
Georgiana Vines

Board Members Absent: 2 SPJ board members / 8 SDX board members

Julie Asher  
Lisa Rollins  
David Boardman  
Lou Dobbs  
Frank Gibson  
Jane Kirtley  
Hoag Levins  
Tony Mauro  
Russell Pulliam  
Paul Steinle

(Ray Marcano, Kyle Niederpruem, and David Carlson sit on both boards)

Staff Members Present: 4

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

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## Call to Order

Society of Professional Journalists President Ray Marcano called the meeting to order. SPJ President-elect Al Cross called the roll.

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## Approval of Minutes from October 2000 Meeting

Motion by Robert Leger to approve the minutes of the October 2000 joint board meeting as submitted. Second by Steve Geimann. Motion carried.

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## Update on Grants Funded

SPJ President Ray Marcano reminded board members that the combined board book for the April 2001 meeting contained updates on the following grants previously funded by the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation:

- The Associated Student Press, Citizens League Research Institute
- SPJ International Journalism Committee
- SPJ Legal Defense Fund
- The Media Leaders Forum at the Manship School of Mass Communication at Louisiana State University
- The National Freedom of Information Coalition
- The Student Press Law Center

Marcano asked for questions related to the grants funded.

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## New Grant Requests — SPJ Consideration

SPJ President Ray Marcano suggested that the SPJ board handle its recommendation of the grant request as a block and pull out any that need to be further discussed. There are \$410,000 in requests from SPJ and \$150,000 in requests from other organizations. The total amount available for distribution is \$272,750. From that, \$85,000 should be subtracted for the transfer the Foundation approved in its earlier meeting to fund the SPJ Web page and occupancy expenses.

**Motion by Charles Davis that the SPJ board not recommend funding of the following two proposals: seminar for editorial writers produced by the Hechinger Institute on Education and the Media, and “Silent Screams,” a documentary on suicide and the media coverage of it. Second David Carlson. The motion carried.**

### *SPJ Requests*

The group briefly discussed the Foundation’s funding of two membership requests by SPJ. There were questions about whether SPJ or the SDX Foundation would be the member if the Foundation funded the requests.

**Motion by Kelly Hawes to reject grant request for funding memberships in AEJMC and IFEX. Second by Paul Davis. (No vote was taken on this motion.)**

**Motion by Al Cross that SPJ recommend to the SDX Foundation board the funding of all six of the SPJ requests -- ACEJMC and IFEX dues, the Development Director position, the Pulliam Fellowship, the Web Fellowship, the Quill reader survey, and the professional development request. Second by Jay Evensen. The motion carried.**

During the discussion about the six grants, the group pointed out that the one-year cost for the SPJ programs is \$224,150. Additional years add another \$186,000 making a total of \$410,000 for the six SPJ

requests. The SPJ board simply recommends funding the requests; the Foundation board decides what the priorities are for funding.

The group briefly discussed the Quill survey and its purpose to develop a reader profile.

*SPJ FOI Committee Request: "Open Doors"*

Board member Kyle Niederpruem questioned the structure of the proposal and suggested tabling the discussion until the fall.

**Motion by Kyle Niederpruem to defer an SPJ board vote on the request until the annual meeting in the fall. Second by Jim Parker. Motion carried.**

*The Free Press Initiative (The First Amendment Project)*

Paul McMasters spoke on behalf of the Free Press Initiative and indicated that it somewhat duplicates proposals from elsewhere.

**Motion by Patrick Dobson to defer an SPJ board vote on this project until the annual meeting in the fall. Second by Oren Campbell. Motion carried.**

The board encouraged the group to provide more information about the uniqueness of the program at board's fall meeting.

*NFOIC Request*

Board members agreed that the National Freedom of Information Coalition is a terrific organization doing outstanding work. The group asked for \$25,000, the same amount it requested in its last proposal funded by the Foundation.

**Motion by David Carlson to pass this request on to the Foundation board with a favorable recommendation that it fund the request at some level and that NFOIC be informed that this is likely to be the last year for Foundation funding. Second by Irwin Gratz. The motion carried.**

Mark Scarp and Kyle Niederpruem abstained from the voting, noting that they are members of their own state FOI groups that are a part of NFOIC.

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New Grant Requests -- SDX Foundation Consideration

SPJ Membership Dues Request: ACEJMC and IFEX

**Motion by Kelly Hawes that the SDX Foundation reject the ACEJMC and IFEX memberships request. Second by Howard Dubin. The motion carried. (See next vote below.)**

SPJ board members suggested separating the two memberships into separate votes. There were questions about whether an ACEJMC membership could be transferred since membership has to be approved. Foundation members said there were many things the Foundation can fund for SPJ within its budget. This is not one of them. Hawes said this vote was in no way a statement that SPJ should not be involved with these organizations, simply that SPJ should fund the memberships.

The groups discussed which organization would hold the membership, and SPJ members said they understood that the membership would be in the name of the Foundation.

**Motion by Howard Dubin that the SDX foundation take over membership under the SDX name in the accrediting council and AEJMC council of affiliates, contingent upon SDX's acceptance as a member. Second by David Carlson. The motion carried. (Funding will come from the Pulliam General Fund.)**

**Motion by Ray Marcano that the Foundation fund the IFEX membership. Second by David Carlson. The motion failed.**

*SPJ Development Director Position*

Foundation President Paul McMasters said there was money left in the original position grant. The Foundation approved \$160,000, and approximately \$74,000 remains. The grant was to be for two years.

**Motion by Sue Porter that the current funding continue past the two-year original grant until those funds are completely used. Second by Georgiana Vines. The motion carried.**

*SPJ Pulliam Editorial Fellowship Program Manager*

The group discussed having Executive Director Jim Gray reconfigure and resubmit the grant in at the fall meeting.

**Motion by Howard Dubin to defer this request to the annual meeting in the fall. Second by Kelly Hawes. The motion carried with two opposed: David Carlson and Kyle Niederpruem.**

*SPJ Web Fellowship Funding*

Executive Director Jim Gray explained that no funds remained in the original \$40,000 grant for the Web fellowship position.

**Motion by David Carlson that the SDX Foundation fund this grant (a total of \$92,000 over two years to fund the salary, expenses and benefits for the SPJ Web Fellow position), with the funds coming from the Pulliam General Fund. Second by Howard Dubin. The motion carried.**

Board member Kelly Hawes stated, for the record, that the SDX board should consider any SPJ funding recommendations, but the Foundation board may choose to fund a request without the SPJ board's recommendation.

*NFOIC Request*

**Motion by Howard Dubin to fund the NFOIC request in the amount of \$15,000. (The request was for \$25,000.) To fund the request, \$5,000 will come from the FOI Fund and \$10,000 will come from the Pulliam General Fund. The \$15,000 should be used as seed money for the formation of new FOI groups in states where none currently exist. Second by Kelly Hawes. The motion carried.**

Board members discussed the need to fund SPJ FOI projects.

*“Open Doors” and Free Press Initiative Requests*

**Motion by Paul Davis to defer these requests until the board receives additional information. Second by Georgiana Vines. Motion carried.**

*Quill Readership Survey*

**Motion by Steve Geimann to approve this request in the amount of \$6,000 so that SPJ may undertake a Quill readership survey. Second by Betsy Ashton. Motion carried. (Funds will come from the Foundation's Quill Endowment.)**

*SPJ Professional Development Program*

Executive Director Jim Gray explained that major sponsorships from media organizations are becoming more difficult to secure and asked the Foundation to fund these programs as the major sponsor of SPJ's professional development workshop series. SPJ would seek additional sources of minor funding for the workshops. The grant is for \$30,000 per year for the coming two SPJ fiscal years and would cover the cost of five workshops each fiscal year.

**Motion by Kelly Hawes to approve funding in the amount of \$30,000/year for two years. Second by Steve Geimann. The motion carried.**

Foundation board member Paul Davis explained that if SPJ came to the Foundation with projects like this one, the Foundation would definitely consider sponsoring them. Betsy Ashton said it was important to take the things that were SPJ's and make them "bigger and better." The group briefly discussed a new name for SPJ's "Writers Workshop" series. Some members thought the name was too specific and might detract from attendance.

At this point, the group had allocated \$148,150 in available funds.

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## **New Business**

### *Jackson Fellowship Request*

SPJ Diversity Chair Sally Lehrman distributed information about The Jackson Fellowship. The fellowship would provide funding to send three mid-career journalists each year to attend one of the three training programs at the Robert C. Maynard Institute for Journalism Education. Lehrman asked that the Foundation make a \$5,000 donation to the fellowship, making the Foundation a founding contributor.

Board members discussed their involvement in a program where they would have no choice about the selection of a participant. SPJ is not seen as an organization that is involved in diversity, said Ray Marcano. This is one way SPJ can change that impression. Paul Davis recommended deferring action until the Foundation develops a policy on such uses of its funds for scholarship-type programs for participation in other organizations' projects.

Board member Dori Maynard abstained from the discussion (Maynard is President of the Maynard Institute).

**Motion by Al Cross that the SPJ board recommend a donation to this fellowship in the amount of \$5,000. Second by Todd Gillman.**

**Motion by Jim Parker to table. (Motion died because of no second.)**

**Upon a vote, the motion to recommend funding carried.**

The SDX Foundation board then considered the funding request under the leadership of Vice President Sue Porter. President Paul McMasters had to leave the meeting to catch a plane.

**Motion by Georgiana Vines to approve this request in the amount of \$5,000. Second by Steve Geimann. Motion carried with one abstention (Dori Maynard) and one no vote (Paul Davis).**

Davis asked that the record reflect that all funding proposals should go through the complete grant process, meaning they should be submitted for review 60 days in advance of a scheduled Foundation board meeting.

Headquarters should distribute a news release indicating SPJ's support of this diversity fellowship.

### *Ward Neff Stipend Request*

**Motion by David Carlson that SDX Foundation provide \$1,500 to pay for the Society's Ward Neff intern's trip to the SPJ National Convention. Second by Kelly Hawes. The motion carried.**

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## **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned quickly as the SPJ board prepared for its meeting.

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## **Action List**

## **SPJ Headquarters**

- Post the October 2000 Joint Meeting minutes to the Society's Web site.
- Draft letters to all grant requesters noting any board decisions about the grant requests.

## **Foundation Board Members and Volunteers**

- Consider developing a policy on the uses of Foundation funds for scholarship or fellowship programs assisting individuals with participation in other organizations' projects and programs.