

**MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SIGMA DELTA CHI FOUNDATION
APRIL 19, 2009
GREENCASTLE, INDIANA**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

With President Steve Geimann presiding, the meeting of the board of directors of the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation was called to order at 9 a.m. on Sunday, April 19, 2009 at the Walden Inn in Greencastle, Indiana.

ROLL CALL

In addition to Geimann, the following board members were present: Vice-President Robert Leger; Secretary Irwin Gratz; Treasurer Howard Dubin; Directors Dave Aeikens, Ann Augherton, Fred Brown, David Carlson, Al Cross, Todd Gillman, Bill Ketter, Jane Kirtley, Sue Kopen Katcef, Al Leads, Hagit Limor, Darcie Lunsford, Mac McKerral, Sue Porter, Neil Ralston, and Kevin Smith.

Staff members present included Assistant Executive Directors Joe Skeel and Chris Vachon; Director of Development Amy Posavac; and Controller Jake Koenig.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Cross requested some corrections to the minutes of the September 6, 2008 board meeting: make note that a grant to the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues was made before he joined the SDX board; change www.ruraljournalism.com to www.ruraljournalism.org; and clarify that the SPJ board ratified the SDX board appointments of Aeikens, Brewer, Smith, Limor, Ralston, Lunsford, Augherton, and Kopen-Katcef.

Upon proper motion and second by Dubin and Brown, respectively, the board approved the amended minutes of the September 6, 2008 board of directors meeting.

BUDGET

Koenig gave an overview of the 2009-10 budget. There was some concern about the possible sale of assets and “dipping into the corpus” during the current economic climate. There was a general discussion regarding the 5% rolling average and a general consensus was reached that since we only spend 5% in the more prosperous years, it allows for us to spend what we need to during downturn years.

In response to a question from Gratz, it was discussed and agreed upon that SDX should have an allocation for the maintenance of the headquarters building.

Upon proper motion and second by Aeikens and Carlson, respectively, the board approved the 2009-10 budget.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Geimann discussed the need for a new roof, repair of the ramp, handrail and flagpole at the headquarters building. Subsequent to the memo distributed by Terry Harper regarding use of unused grant money to be used to make the necessary repairs, it was discussed and agreed that surplus grant money being held by SPJ will be returned to SDX.

Half of the cost of the capital repairs are the responsibility of SDX Foundation, with the other half being SPJ's responsibility. If SPJ is unable to cover their portion, SDX will be able to loan them what is needed.

McKerral suggested a 5-year plan for building maintenance, and it was further suggested that a joint committee be formed to assess and create a potential plan instead of simply emergency reactions.

Upon proper motion and second by Aeikens and Gratz, respectively, the board approved the capital expense to pay for one half of the building repairs and for the creation of a building maintenance committee.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Geimann reported that while our endowment is "under strain" we are not alone. U.S. colleges and universities are reporting an average loss of 24% to their endowments.

Geimann reported on the Wells Centennial Editorial project. There had been "zero interest" from those who had been invited to write and draw for the book. After some discussion, it was agreed upon that the project should continue with an expanded list of writers and cartoonists.

SPJ PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Aeikens reported that from the April 18th meeting, the following was accomplished: the 2009-10 budget was approved, a 6-month membership extension was created for laid-off journalists, five new chapters were approved, Las Vegas was chosen as the location for the 2010 SPJ Convention, a partnership with RTNDA for the 2011 Convention was established, a stand was taken against The Fairness Doctrine, and a new branding statement was approved.

The SPJ Executive Committee decided no 100th Anniversary history book will be produced but the current Truth, Talent, and Energy book will be updated with regards to the historical index.

Aeikens reported that he will be heading up a lobbying trip to Washington, DC on July 13-15, 2009 and encouraged SDX board members to join him. Also, the SDX Awards will not be held at the Press Club in DC as in previous years, but instead will be awarded at Convention at the Friday night reception.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Dubin reported that SDX has "stayed put" on its investments, and that management of the endowment has been pulled back in-house and being managed by the finance committee.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Vachon reported that \$50,000 in sponsorship money has been secured, and traditional programming will be offered at this summer's Convention.

Skeel reported membership numbers are holding steady at 8,500 members

Skeel also reported on the expansion of the Sigma Delta Chi and Mark of Excellence Awards by opening the contests to junior and community colleges. This year, however, there was a 4% loss in award revenue.

With regards to Quill, Skeel was pleased to report on the addition of Graphic Designer Tony Peterson to the staff. The magazine will be condensed to six issues a year, therefore redirecting staff time to www.spj.org in an effort to make it a true member benefit.

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT'S REPORT

Posavac reported on the success of this year's fundraising efforts, citing an almost 100% increase in number of donors and a 32% increase in funds raised. While traditional "appeal letter" efforts are tending to garner less income, new and innovative methods must be implemented (i.e. handwritten mail, e-mail appeals, newsletters).

She also reported on the Centennial appeal, which includes a commemorative lapel pin to \$100+ donors. This appeal was rolled out at the Centennial Celebration this weekend, and will be in full force at the summer Convention.

GRANTS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE'S REPORT

Leger reported that the Grants and Awards Committee recommends funding all the SPJ requests:

SPJ National Journalism Conference Education: \$53,128
SPJ Reporters Institute: \$56,050
SPJ MOE Staff Support: \$27,680
SPJ Training Programs: \$63,140
TOTAL: \$199,998

The committee further recommends to fund:
Ethics Hold 'Em Cards: \$2,500
NFOIC Convention (1/2 of grant request): \$5,000
TOTAL: \$7,500

Grand Total: \$207,498

The final grant request the committee considered was the University of Idaho JAMM summer program for high school students. The program would require 30% of the grant to go to the University of Idaho. Cross suggested, and it was widely agreed, that the SDX Foundation create a policy against paying overhead to universities.

Kirtley led a discussion about paying honorarium to those people who serve SPJ as trainers. Leger replied by saying there was a marked difference between someone who speaks for an hour off the cuff, versus someone who spends significant amounts of time preparing for a training event. It was suggested that the terminology be changed from "honorarium" to "trainer fee."

Dubin has asked the staff to prepare a document which explains which funds the grant monies are coming out of.

Upon proper motion and second by Brown and Smith, respectively, the board approved the grants for SPJ, the Ethics Hold 'Em Cards, and the NFOIC Convention with, Carlson abstaining from the vote.

Upon proper motion and second by Brown and Smith, respectively, the board did not approve the grant request from the University of Idaho JAMM Summer Program, with McKerral abstaining from the vote.

Upon proper motion and second by Cross and McKerral, respectively, the board approved the creation of a policy prohibiting the use of grant money to be used for college or university overhead expenses.

ETHICS BOOK UPDATE

Brown provided an update as to the status of the impending Fourth Edition of "Doing Ethics in Journalism" with the goal being to have the book published and ready for distribution by this summer's Convention.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Kirtley reported on the SPJ Town Hall meeting she is heading up in Minnesota. Although the program has strayed a bit from its originally intended purpose, she feels they acted in good faith, and hopes the board will consider future requests from her chapter.

MEETING ADJOURNED

With no further business to come before the board, Geimann declared the meeting adjourned at 11:20 am on Sunday, April 19, 2009.