

**MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
APRIL 17, 2010
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

With President Kevin Smith presiding, the meeting of the board of directors of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 9:03 a.m. on Saturday, April 17, 2010, at the Westin Indianapolis.

ROLL CALL

In addition to Smith, the following were present: President-Elect Hagit Limor; Secretary-Treasurer Darcie Lunsford; Vice President for Campus Chapter Affairs Neil Ralston; Immediate Past President Dave Aeikens; Director at-Large Bill McCloskey; Campus Advisers at-Large Sue Kopen Katcef and George Daniels; Student Representatives Tara Puckey and Andrew Seaman; Regional Directors Luther Turmelle, Brian Eckert, Jenn Rowell, Jeremy Steele, Liz Hansen, Amanda Theisen, Holly Edgell, Scott Cooper, John Ensslin, Dana Neuts, Jodi Cleesattle and Sonny Albarado.

Staff members present for the meeting were Executive Director Joe Skeel; Associate Executive Director Chris Vachon; Director of Development Amy Posavac; Professional Development Coordinator Heather Porter; Membership Coordinator Linda Hall; Quill Editor Scott Leadingham; Communications Coordinator Karen Grabowski; Awards Coordinator Lauren Rochester; Graphic Designer Tony Peterson; Controller Jake Koenig; Bookkeeper Rhonda Harris and Web Administrator Billy O'Keefe.

Others in attendance were SDX Foundation President Steve Geimann; SDX Foundation Vice President Robert Leger and SDX Foundation board members Fred Brown and David Carlson.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Smith commented on the efforts to stabilize and increase the Society's membership numbers; he discussed the organization's involvement with conversations around the country regarding the future of journalism; the state of the shield law legislation was also provided.

Smith expressed his appreciation for the work of the board and the staff during his tenure.

SDX FOUNDATION PRESIDENT'S REPORT

SDX Foundation President Geimann opened the floor for comments or questions on the report he submitted previously for the board's review. No comments or questions were posed to Geimann.

FY2011 BUDGET

Upon proper motion and second by Smith and Limor, respectively, the board approved the 2010-11 budget for the fiscal year ending July 31, 2011.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVED

Upon proper motion and second by Aeikens and Turmelle, respectively, the board approved the minutes, with edits, from the following board of directors meetings: March 4, 2010; Nov. 10, 2009; Sept. 21, 2009; Aug. 30, 2009 and Aug. 27, 2009.

The following edits were requested:

- McCloskey noted the Roll Call list was not included Nov. 10, 2009.
- On p. 30 the board voted to exit and not enter.
- Puckey noted she was present for the Sept. 21 conference call (p. 30).
- For the executive committee elections on Aug. 30, 2009, the word "nominated" should be changed to "appointed" (p. 32).
- Daniels noted he was not in attendance at the March 4, 2010 board meeting (p. 26).

— Minutes reflected a motion to adjourn the Aug. 27, 2009 meeting, but did not show the motion passing (p. 38).

— Turmelle noted he was in attendance at the Sept. 21, 2009 board meeting (p. 30).

CHAPTER ACTION

Upon proper motion and second by Aeikens and Lunsford, respectively, the board approved provisional chapter status for the following chapters:

Kennesaw State University

Texas A&M University

DePaul University

Central Connecticut State University.

A request from Richard Roth, member and professor working for Northwestern University in Qatar, to begin a campus chapter in Qatar was introduced. The board discussed the concept of international chapters. Regarding Roth's request, the board wanted the documentation required for all chapter applications before they voted.

Regarding international chapters, the board agreed to continue discussion at a later date.

INACTIVE CHAPTERS

The board discussed the process of making chapters inactive and they reviewed a list of chapters that should be considered inactive as outlined by the bylaws. The board decided to take no action at this time on the inactive chapters introduced. The board will revisit the issue and discuss it at a later date.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

The new website design was previewed for the group and new Web initiatives were introduced, such as the Google Calendar Application, social networking tools and the SPJ mobile website. A preview of the On Demand Training video was provided. The projected release date is early May after the SPJ Digital Media Committee is asked for input. Highlights of the Strategic Plan were reviewed. Board members discussed the issue of inclusiveness and how to work on including more diverse members, i.e. ethnic and community newspaper staffs.

NOMINATIONS REPORT

Nominations Chair Aeikens provided the most recent slate of officers for the October national board elections. The slate is as follows:

President Elect:

— Darcie Lunsford, Miami, Fla.; secretary/treasurer, former Region 3 director.

Secretary-Treasurer:

— John Ensslin, Denver; Region 9 director, former Denver Pro president; former membership chair.

— Lawrence "Sonny" Albarado, Little Rock, Ark.; Region 12 director; Regional Director Caucus leader.

Advisor at large:

— Kym Fox, San Marcos, Texas; advisor, Texas State University.

— Rick Brunson, Orlando, Fla.; advisor, University of Central Florida.

Director at large:

— Michael Koretzky, Hollywood, Fla. at-large director.

— Lauren Bartlett, Culver City, Calif.; chairwoman public outreach, former LA chapter president.

— Holly Fisher, Charleston, S.C.; membership chairwoman, former Region 3 director, former convention chairwoman, former vice chairwoman of LDF.

Campus Reps at large: (Two seats)

— Michael Elter, University of Memphis, Tenn.; Memphis.

- Kevin Hurd, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN.
- Tara Puckey, Indianapolis; IUPUI-Indianapolis.
- Andrew Seaman, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.; Columbia University.

Region 1: Luther Turmelle, New Haven, Conn.

Region 4: James Pilcher, Cincinnati.

Region 5: Liz Hansen, Richmond, Ky.

Region 7: Kelsey Volkmann, St. Louis, Mo.

Region 8: Scott Cooper, Norman, Okla.

Region 9: Donald Meyers, Provo, Utah.

ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

STAR RANKING AWARDS

Skeel announced that the contract SPJ has with its merchandiser does not allow for Star-ranked chapters to receive discounts on SPJ merchandise. Brief conversation followed, but all agreed the discounts should be removed.

Upon motion and second from Albarado and Steele, respectively, the board approved to delete the language and policy from last August that gave star-ranked chapters the ability to receive discounts on SPJ merchandise.

Regional directors said that there needed to be at least 120 days between national convention and the due date of the annual reports. After the board discussed whether or not a set number of days were necessary, they agreed that a time limit is needed but it need not be four months. The board settled on 90 days as the least amount of days needed between the annual reports due date and convention.

Upon motion and second from Albarado and Steele, respectively, the board approved to eliminate the June 1 deadline for submitting the annual reports, giving staff the freedom to decide the deadline as long as it is at least 90 days (as amended from the original 120 days) prior to the convention and will become effective in 2011.

REGIONAL DIRECTOR REPORTS: SPRING CONFERENCES

All 12 Region Directors gave a brief summary of their regional conferences, except for Region 11 Director Jodi Cleesattle whose spring conference occurs after this board meeting.

Smith noted that over 1,300 journalists, collectively, attended all of the regional conferences that occurred prior to the board meeting. Vachon announced that the maximum number of regional conferences headquarters will manage next year will be three conferences and it will be on a first come, first served basis. Regions need to confirm their request for national assistance by July 31.

DISCUSSION REGARDING TRANSITIONAL/HARDSHIP MEMBERSHIPS

Smith discussed that the six month membership waivers did not produce the expected, or hoped for, results referring to the fact that 31 members took the offer. Edgell mentioned that the program should not be ended yet due to the goodwill it provides.

Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Eckert, respectively, the board voted to continue the program that allows six months of membership dues waived for members who lose their jobs.

CONVENTION 2010

Convention sponsorship is at \$45,000 so far, including commitments from Google, Demand Studios, Lilly, Scripps Howard Foundation and Geico. Convention fees will remain the same as 2009 and the meal prices will be finalized soon. Sept. 8, 2010 is the deadline for early bird registration. Board members should be present at the morning meeting on Oct. 3, 2010 and may depart after the meeting on Wed. Oct. 6, 2010. Also introduced were some changes to the convention schedule.

CONVENTION 2011

A partnership agreement with RTDNA has been signed for one year with the option to commit to 2 years or more. Both organizations will continue looking into 2012 when RTDNA has completed its 2010 convention wrap-up. The 2011 Convention will be Sept. 25-27 at the Sheraton New Orleans.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Smith reported that members will see more outreach to other journalism organizations. SPJ solidified a relationship with RTDNA through the joint convention plans and with CPJ, with whom Smith and Skeel reached out to with the hopes that the two organizations will collaborate on international matters. The organization has also reached out to the journalism organizations for convention ad swaps; and to ONA regarding programming and membership benefits.

SPJ'S ROLE IN WORK VISA APPLICATIONS

Skeel explained that HQ is receiving calls from attorneys requesting that SPJ approve/credential/vouch for international journalists. Currently, SPJ is declining all requests, as recommended by the Executive Committee.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

ETHICS BOOK UPDATE

Skeel discussed the marketing of the fourth edition of the Ethics Book. Smith thanked the Ethics Committee, with a special thank you to Fred Brown, the book's editor.

NEW BUSINESS

Smith announced SPJ is officially 101 years old today.

Theisen presented the "Good Question: Why should I join SPJ?" video from the Minnesota Pro Chapter.

Ralston and Katcef presented information regarding two issues. The first is the probationary time period for chapters. The second concerns the membership, or lack thereof, of campus advisers. Katcef sent a survey to campus leaders and she received, as of the day of the meeting, 35 responses, which were answered predominately from campus advisers. Katcef reported the findings that resulted from the survey, including criticisms about the cost of events/programs and misinformation or lack of information. Survey and research will continue and Ralston and Katcef will bring those results to the board in the future.

The group was alerted to the fact that a police raid of the James Madison University student newspaper, The Breeze. Board members planned to write a letter supporting the publication and condemning the raid.

Legal Defense Fund chairman Clint Brewer requested \$2,500 for journalist Christopher Elliott. Elliott, a travel blogger, has been sued for defamation, false light and tortious with contract by the travel company Palm Coast Travel. The agency took issue with a post related to the state's investigation of the agency, which Elliott wrote in March on his website, www.elliott.org.

Upon proper motion and second by Smith and Ensslin, respectively, the board approved a LDF grant to Elliott for \$2,500.

Richard Roth sent a formal petition to begin a chapter in Qatar. More information is needed from Roth. Smith will work with Roth and begin the required, formal process of enacting the campus chapter.

The IUPUI (Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis) students completed the paperwork required to become a campus chapter of SPJ.

Upon proper motion and second by Hansen and Theisen, respectively, the board approved the provisional status of the student chapter.

Dave Carlson presented a gift from the North Central Florida Pro Chapter. It is a mural for the headquarters' Dubin conference room wall.

Upon proper motion and second by Limor and McCloskey, respectively, the board approved to accept the generous gift from the chapter.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Smith commended all the committees on their outstanding work. He briefly summarized committees' activities.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION

The board went into executive session to complete the evaluation of the Executive Director.

Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Albarado, respectively, the board voted to enter executive session to discuss the 6-month evaluation of Executive Director Joe Skeel.

Upon proper motion and second by Aeikens and Ralston, respectively, the board voted to exit executive session.

Upon proper motion and second by Aeikens and Seaman, respectively, the board voted to adopt the recommendation of the Executive Committee and move forward with the continuation of Skeel's contract as Executive Director.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Lunsford, respectively, the board voted to adjourn at 5:15 p.m., Saturday, April 17, 2010.