

MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
SEPT. 7, 2014
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
STREAMED LIVE AT WWW.SPJ.ORG
AND ON GOOGLE + AND YOUTUBE

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

With president Dana Neuts presiding, the meeting of the board of directors of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 9:05 a.m. on Sunday, Sept. 7, 2014 at the Gaylord Opryland in Nashville, Tennessee.

In addition to Neuts, the following were present: President-Elect Paul Fletcher; Immediate Past President David Cuillier; Secretary-Treasurer Lynn Walsh; Vice President for Campus Chapter Affairs Sue Kopen Katcef; Directors at-Large Bill McCloskey and Alex Tarquinio; Campus Advisers at-Large Mike Reilley and Becky Tallent; Student Representatives Brett Hall and Jordan Gass-Poore; Regional Directors Rebecca Baker, Andy Schotz, Michael Koretzky, Patti Gallagher Newberry, Deborah Givens, Joe Radske, Rob McLean, Eddy Gallagher, Tom Johnson, Pia Hallenberg, Matthew Hall and Tony Hernandez.

Staff members present for the meeting were Executive Director Joe Skeel, Chapter Coordinator Tara Puckey and Communications Strategist Jennifer Royer.

INTRODUCTIONS AND RECOGNITION

Because this was the first meeting for the newly-elected board, each member introduced themselves.

Neuts presented Cuillier with a gift from the board for his services as president. The board chipped in to donate to the newly created endowed legal defense fund.

PRESIDENTS GOALS AND BOARD EXPECTATIONS

Neuts shared her goals for the coming year, which included:

- Implementing the new Code of Ethics.
- Working to entrench and start communities.
- Keeping the advocacy rolling.
- Work on completing some of the Futures task force items.

Neuts also shared expectations she has of other board members, which included:

- Attendance at board meetings is important. (Dates of the upcoming meetings provided).
- Please come to the meetings prepared. Ask questions in advance.
- Please actively participate in conference/Skype calls.
- Expect that any group email could be made public.

- Board members to send agenda items.
- Board should avoid "shoot-first" mentality.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Kopen Katcef, respectively, Joe Radske was nominated to serve on the Executive Committee.

Upon proper motion and second by Fletcher and Baker, respectively, Bill McCloskey was nominated to serve on the Executive Committee.

Upon proper motion by Gallagher and second by Tallent, the board voted to close nominations.

Upon proper motion by Kopen Katcef second by Tallent, Radske and McCloskey were voted to serve on the Executive Committee.

SDX FOUNDATION APPOINTMENTS

In addition to herself, Neuts appointed Cuillier, Fletcher, Walsh, Kopen Katcef, McCloskey, Hernandez and Baker to serve on the SDX Foundation Board of Directors.

RATIFICATION OF SDX FOUNDATION ELECTIONS

Upon proper motion by Schotz and second by Kopen Katcef, the board voted to ratify the elections of Fred Brown, Jay Evensen, Jane Kirtley, Dori Maynard, Mac McKerral, Sally Lehrman, Kevin Smith, Kelly Hawes and Sonny Albarado to the SDX Foundation Board of Directors.

FINANCE COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Upon proper motion by Fletcher and second by Schotz, the board voted to ratify Neuts' appointments of Gallagher and McCloskey to the SPJ Finance Committee.

EIJ 2017

Skeel presented staff's recommendation to return to the Anaheim Marriott for SPJ's 2017 convention. Skeel explained the rationale behind recommending Anaheim, which was, in part:

- Good room rate.
- Return to West Coast after four years removed.
- Ideal meeting space.
- Cost savings in planning, since staff knows the space.
- Proximity to entertainment.
- Support from RTDNA and NAHJ.

Board discussed the factors in choosing sites, including willingness to seek properties and cities that might have a higher room rate, but less expensive food options.

Staff took that information under advisement and will consider it in future Request For Proposals.

Upon proper motion by Tallent and second by Kopen Katcef, the board voted to give staff permission to negotiate a hotel contract with the Anaheim Marriott.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION

Discussion centered around the fact that some didn't feel there was enough time to review the evaluation and make informed comments. The group also discussed making the evaluation more in line with common human resources standards.

Some pointed out that including it as part of the packet would make it public. Others felt having it emailed in advance, separate from the meeting packet, would suffice.

Neuts then explained the process of the evaluation, and said the executive committee would set down procedures for how to conduct the evaluation.

Fletcher, who will be leading the evaluation process next year, asked if a deadline of Sept. 4, 2015 would suffice. The board said yes.

Before the vote on the original motion, Fletcher committed to e-mail the evaluation to the board no later than Sept. 4. The board supported this approach.

Upon proper motion by Gallagher and second by Baker, the board voted to include the executive director evaluation as part of the meeting materials that are sent to the board for its first meeting of convention.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Upon proper motion by Koretzky and second by Baker, the board voted that all SPJ committees will meet at the EIJ site. Moving meetings to other rooms will be noted on the convention app if possible, but signs in the new and old meeting rooms are mandatory. Committees will have agendas available at the meetings.

McCloskey voted no.

The board discussed that it is important for SPJ's committee meetings to be open and welcoming to all those in attendance. The board asked that all promotions for the committee meetings indicate the public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

AWARDS SELECTION

Koretzky moved that all SPJ awards will be debated and bestowed by a vote of the entire board in executive session, except for those that honor board members themselves (i.e. regional director of the year). Board awards will be bestowed by the executive committee. And to direct

the executive committee to come up with procedures for implementation. The motion was seconded by Gallagher Newberry.

Members discussed the pros and cons of having the full board make the decisions. Some of those concerns were:

- Having the executive committee choose all the awards perpetuates an image of an exclusive club.
- Having the 23-member board keep the Wells Key a secret is unrealistic.
- Asking the board to vote by secret ballot might solve the problem of the winner's name getting out.
- The work this would require of the board may be unmanageable.
- Perhaps the Executive Committee could develop a short list for board consideration.
- SDX Foundation President Robert Leger (who is also a Wells Key winner) asked that the decision remain with the officers.
- Having a system with more board input could lead to a better diversity among all award recipients.
- The board wants to be involved in the process, so it can better explain to members how the selections are made.

Neuts took a vote by show of hands. The motion was voted down 10-9.

Upon proper motion by Koretzky and second by Gallagher Newberry, respectively, the board voted to charge the Executive Committee to develop a plan in which the entire SPJ board will vote on all SPJ awards, except for those that honor board members themselves (i.e. regional director of the year). The board will present a plan during the April meeting.

McCloskey voted no.

BOARD ORIENTATION

Upon proper motion by Cuillier and second by Fletcher, the board voted to enter executive session at 11 a.m. for the purposes of meeting with legal counsel for board orientation.

Upon proper motion by Kopen Katcef and second by Brett Hall, the board voted to exit executive session at 11:54 a.m.

Before adjourning, some board members asked if we could address the following issues:

- Give out circle of excellence awards during opening business session.
- Better educate delegates as to what is happening during business meetings.
- Share individual vote totals during closing business meeting.
- Discuss programming as a board during board meetings.

No action was taken on any of the above.

Upon proper motion by McCloskey and second by Schotz, the board voted to adjourn at 12:05 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 7.