AGENDA

SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

DATE: SEPT. 26, 2020
TIME: NOON EDT

JOIN VIA ZOOM AT https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81428803505

(Meeting ID # 814 2880 3505)

1. Call to order – Hall

2. Roll call – Davila-Richards
   • Matt Hall
   • Rebecca Aguilar
   • Ivette Davila-Richards
   • Lauren Bartlett
   • Erica Carbajal
   • Taylor Mirfendereski
   • Rafael Olmeda
   • Claire Regan
   • Yvette Walker

3. Approval of minutes from Sept 5, 2020 board meeting.

4. Executive Session
   • Legal Responsibilities of the Board – Mark Bailen
   • Events Consultant Contract Approval

   EXPECTED TO RETURN TO OPEN SESSION AT 1 P.M. EDT

5. Executive director’s report
   • Report on SPJ2020
   • Report on Elections
   • Updates from the SPJ Foundation

6. SPJ Sponsorship Policy

7. Public Comment Period

8. Appointment Process for Open Positions

9. Review of Strategic Plan
•  SPJ Core Four
•  2021 Annual Strategic Plan

10. Goal-Setting Session

11. Meeting and Events Calendar

12. Adjournment
CALL TO ORDER

President Patricia Gallagher Newberry called the meeting to order at noon.

ROLL CALL

Secretary-treasurer Rebecca Aguilar called roll. Those present were Newberry, President-elect Matt Hall, Aguilar, Directors At-Large Lauren Bartlett, Taylor Mirfendereski, Mike Reilley, Yvette Walker. Not present were Directors At-Large Tess Fox and Erica Carbajal. Also present were Parliamentarian Andy Schotz; and staff Executive Director John Shertzer; Director of Communications and Marketing Jennifer Royer; Manager of Membership and Chapters Caroline Escobar; and Controller Jake Koenig.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The board considered the draft minutes of the June 27 meeting. Bartlett made a motion to consider the meeting minutes. Hall seconded. Hall noted that Mirfendereski’s and Carbajal’s last names were misspelled in the draft minutes. Bob Shapiro’s name was also misspelled. Bartlett sent corrections to HQ via email. Newberry had a couple typos that she will send to HQ that don’t change meaning of the content. Motion passed.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Newberry referred to her report in the board meeting materials but thanked exiting board members Reilley and Fox for their service. She also noted that Mirfendereski and Carbajal will be rotating off the board as the two appointed members, but will stay until their appointed replacements are selected. She complimented the board on a successful year, pointing out that the board took the concerns of members and implemented them, including quickly planning a successful 2-day virtual conference and providing an informational session on the new member database to members who are interested.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Shertzer also referred to his report in the board meeting materials and agreed with Newberry’s assessment of the year and thanked staff for attending the board meeting on a Saturday and working the virtual conference the next weekend.
MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Escobar pointed everyone to the memo in the board meeting materials and requested action be taken on the chapters listed.

Bartlett moved to deactivate all the chapters on the list except IUPUI, Baylor and Minnesota State. Reilley seconded. Bartlett said she asked the RCs to report any chapters they thought could be saved. She said IUPUI recently contacted RC Amy Merrick about restarting the chapter. RC Kathryn Jones wants to contact Baylor. And RC Joes Radske reported that Minnesota State was on the verge of getting back on its feet when the pandemic hit and hopes to help bring it back in the spring semester.

Hall asked what efforts were made to see if the chapters were active and what the procedure is for reactivating them if they choose to do so on their campus. Escobar said in addition to Bartlett reaching out to the RCs, Escobar investigated websites to see if she could get contact information on chapter advisers, she checked the database and tried however she could to find a contact. Escobar said to reactivate, they have to follow the requirements outlined on the website, but she will make it as easy as possible by waiving the application fee. Otherwise, they need to submit a list of 10 members of the chapter, hold an election of three or four officers. They are also asked to update their bylaws and give a copy to Escobar. She also requests a plan of action.

Bartlett said she would like to add a friendly amendment to her motion that adds the University of Missouri to the list of schools not deactivated yet. Reilley accepted friendly amendment. Motion was to deactivate 16 student chapters and keep 4. Motion passed.

Staff requested a second motion to accept the University of New Hampshire to activate a chapter. Hall moved, Bartlett seconded. Motion passed.

SPJ2020 UPDATE

Newberry reported as of now there are 451 registrations and asked that everyone register promptly if they haven’t already and promote the conference within their circles. She said there is a remarkable lineup and she is excited we are highlighting the Fellows of the Society this year. Super Sessions are very well populated and there are great breakouts and a couple of film opportunities this year. She added that staff has been working non-stop to put the pieces together. Schotz asked what the process is for paying for students to attend? Shertzer said if anyone wants to pay for multiple students, they should reach out to him, preferably with names of the students who will be attending. Then HQ can send them a comp code. Hall said he had 10 students reach out to him after he tweeted that he would pay someone’s way to the conference. He said it is a big way to get student journalists into the organization. The 10 students he sponsored are mostly women, mostly journalists of color from all over the country. He encouraged everyone else to sponsor students because it can really make an impact in a student’s life.

SPJ 2020 VOTING
Newberry called on Shertzer to walk through how voting will work at this year’s virtual conference. Shertzer said it will all be done electronically this year via the same software we’ve used for several years. Candidates were asked to prepare videos of them giving their campaign speeches and those were shared via Election Central on spj.org. Members will receive login credentials to participate and voting opens at noon Friday and closes at noon Sunday during SPJ2020. Hall made a motion so everyone is clear on what the bylaws say about voting and the unusual nature of the election, so we have the ability to handle the election how we are going to do it. Bartlett seconded. Motion passed. There was discussion about how resolutions would work in the virtual business meeting. Michael Savino, chair of the resolutions committee, said there were 13 resolutions submitted, the same number as the year before. He said the one resolution that could be considered controversial is the sponsorship policy resolution.

Schotz asked, because the process is only a few years old, if someone could go over the process of adding regional delegates for unaffiliated chapters. Escobar said only one person came forward in five regions to be a delegate. The deadline was extended. Newberry said the goal is to make sure there is representation for all 12 regions. Bartlett said HQ reaches out and puts information into Leads and it has been out there pretty frequently but there has not been a large amount of interest. Newberry asked if that work should be assigned to a committee? Bartlett said the regional coordinators are probably the best group to recruit delegates.

FUTURE CONFERENCE OPTIONS

Reilley made a motion to move this item to discuss right before the public comment period to allow those from the public on the call to comment. Walker seconded. Motion failed.

Newberry referenced the memo in the board packet, highlighting the consideration of the SPJ conference being in Washington, D.C., for the next three years after New Orleans in 2021. Benefits would include efficiency, cost and negotiating power. Shertzer presented slides with other background, stressing that convention does not equal membership growth, nor should it. Rather, it is an opportunity to carry out the mission of the organization. He said the annual conference could be taken to all sorts of new heights once the organization rebuilds its muscle. He can’t honestly say if we continue to rotate around the country that we aren’t going to keep getting the same results, he said. He then pointed to the slides and information about where most of SPJ’s membership is located, among other reasons making the case for the conference staying in D.C. for three years.

Bartlett said she appreciates Shertzer’s innovative thinking but would like more information before a decision is made. What would the cost savings be with one hotel chain in multiple cities? She said she has a lot of concerns with the conference being in D.C. three years in a row. Yes, a strong presence there is important, but during convention time is not a time when staff or officers have the time to meet with lawmakers, etc. That should be done during a different time of year. She is also concerned about the extra time off people in the west need to take when the conference is in the east. She is not looking for equality in the number of times convention is held in the west vs. east, but it is about accessibility to members. She would also like to look at different dates. At this point, however, she is in favor of a multi-city approach.
Walker said from a financial point of view, doing something different than what membership is used to, and the statement it could make are all valid points for being in D.C. three years in a row. But journalists are not used to going to the same city for three years. NAB does it, but other journalism organizations move around. Some may really find it appealing, but we have to make sure it’s part of our strategic plan that we are going to use this as a statement, as an opportunity, to be in D.C. more.

Hall said if we eventually have a staffer doing advocacy work in D.C. there are a lot of synergies there with having the conference there as well. We can survey the membership and ask them if they would go to D.C. for three straight years. That makes the decision even easier. He is leaning toward this being a brilliant idea and a smart risk.

Shertzter said there is no exact formula and it would be smart to make a decision between now and the end of the year so we have a full year knowing where we will be in 2022 and maybe 2023 at the same time.

Newberry asked about partnerships. Next year SPJ is solo in New Orleans. If we make a decision without a partner, then we’re asking someone to follow our lead. If we are open and interested in having partners, how would this affect them?

Shertzter said in his opinion, we should strive to be the journalism conference to end all journalism conferences. We should be open to having many partners and if we know we’re going to be in one place for the next few years, where many organizations are already headquartered, it’s an easier sell in his mind. But it is all theoretical.

Mirfendereski, agreed that seeing the financials of being in the same hotel chain in different cities in consecutive years vs. in D.C. for consecutive years would be helpful.

Bartlett made a motion that HQ send a member survey on the SPJ conference being in D.C. three consecutive years and that HQ staff get information from at least three hotel chains about the cost savings of using the same chain in different cities three consecutive years. And if needed, we obtain information about different dates in D.C. over the three years. Shertzter said he could get the info to the board within one month. Walker seconded the motion. Mirfendereski asked to see financials for being in D.C. for three years as well. Aguilar added that it may be possible to collaborate with other groups who may already be booked and have a deal. Bartlett amended her motion to find out the cost of being in D.C. for two years. Walker accepted the amendment. Motion passed.

Newberry said they will return to the discussion in executive session to look at the attached dollars with the three years in D.C. model.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Shertzter reported that SPJ is now in the black to a positive $20,000 after predicting we would be at a negative $60,000 at this point in the year. Newberry asked about the financial impact of a virtual conference and Shertzter said it should be a net positive event. Reilley pointed out that the figure did not include the $25,000 Google gives for the conference every year. Shertzter also pointed out the board expenses for the last two quarters were zero because of no travel due to the pandemic. He pointed the board to the reports in the packet.
STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

Shertzer presented the Strategic Plan, which was created by the task force who spent the last two years gathering input from members, collecting data and doing research. The plan will define the future of the organization and help to understand who SPJ is. He went through the first year, the 2021 annual plan, but stressed that staff would get started immediately on the plan if it is approved. They would not wait until 2021.

Newberry asked if the board should make a recommendation to the incoming board, or should the current board vote on it.

Hall, as chair of the task force, thanked everyone involved in the multi-year process. Hall made a motion to approve the strategic plan. Reilley seconded. Newberry said the one-year plan is ambitious but doable. Will we hit every mark? Maybe not, but let’s aim high, she said.

Aguilar agreed it is a wonderful plan, and it is very empowering and encouraging. She suggested that included in “champions for journalists” we include mid-career journalists because they never stop learning.

Bartlett commended the task force and Shertzer on a wonderful job. She knows how hard he has worked and thinks the board should adopt the overall plan and the 2021 plan and start the work immediately.

Hall moved to adopt the overall strategic plan and the 2021 plan. Bartlett seconded. Motion passed.

BADGE PROPOSAL

Newberry referenced the badge proposal from the Freelance Community. Hilary Niles of the Freelance Community stressed it is an enhanced membership card, not a press credential, which simply shows that someone is a member of SPJ. It would include member photos and would hopefully help convince authorities that the person is a journalist. Bartlett said she understands and supports the idea of a photo ID card, but SPJ has tried for many years to avoid defining a journalist. She is also hesitant to support including wording on the card that says “member in good standing.”

Niles said NPPA issues a similar type of card and said the reason this issue came up was because freelancer and member Haisten Willis was detained while covering protests in Atlanta and had a difficult time convincing police that he was press and not subject to the curfew.

Bartlett moved to adopt the concept in the proposal of an enhanced ID card that would include SPJ members’ photo and other details to be worked out between the freelance community and staff based on guidance from the board. Mirfendereski seconded. Hall asked if associate members would be able to purchase them. Niles said the proposal says pro, retired, post grad and college student members would be eligible. Newberry said other details such as cost would need to be worked out later. Today’s vote is whether to move the concept forward. Vote was taken with Reilley abstaining. Motion carried.
LOCAL NEWS MEMO

Newberry referred to the Rebuild Local News Memo in the packet. The group is looking for support and participation. Bob Becker said he is among people who are very troubled by government funding or sponsorships of media. Hall said there are good ideas in the memo, but too many ideas, some of which are troubling to him. Mirfendereski said she doesn’t support it and thinks SPJ should pass because of how the public would perceive the relationship between journalists and the government and journalists’ ability to cover the government. Newberry offered to connect Hall with Steve Waldman to pick up the discussion.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Newberry referred everyone to the committees and communities reports in the board packet and briefly mentioned highlights from each one. Niles asked to bring to everyone’s attention the AB5 bill in California and how it affects freelancers. She said the bill makes it illegal for freelance journalists to run their businesses. She said the freelance community could use some guidance and also a unified response from organizations as a whole, not just the freelance community. Hall said he and Shertzer will work with Niles on a proper response on the issue.

Primerano said the Regional Coordinators didn’t think the pandemic would go on long enough to not only cancel regional conferences in 2020, but possibly 2021 as well. She said the RCs are discussing that possibility now. Aguilar said as SPJ talks with hotels about contracts for the conference, it would be helpful to share with RCs what they find out regarding how the pandemic is changing the way contracts are written to help those who are thinking of having conferences next years.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Deb Krol said she agrees that it is good to look at ways to save money when it comes to the annual conference, but having it on the west coast three years in a row makes it even more difficult for people living west of the Mississippi.

Colin DeVries said he is still hearing that members are worried about dues and chapters are concerned they might have a dip in membership due to the pandemic and employment reasons. He would like to see members able to renew at last year’s promotional rate or renew at some type of discounted rate due to the pandemic. Newberry said the next board can take that up with the FY2021 budget, which will have a line for membership revenue. It would also give leaders time to consider how that lost revenue would be replaced.

Schotz said Newberry has thanked a lot of people be he thinks she deserves thanks as well for all she and the board accomplished this year.

Hazel Becker said she was please by the support for freelancers during the discussion and she hopes the new board will stay at the forefront of that discussion because there are going to be more freelancers because of circumstances and also by choice. She hopes SPJ will be there for freelancers.

ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION

Reilley moved to enter executive session. Bartlett seconded. The board entered executive session at 2:45 p.m. EDT.
EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board exited executive session at 3:08 p.m. EDT. Newberry said no additional action was taken about future conference, but the board did discuss the financials related to it.

ADJOURNMENT

Newberry adjourned the meeting at 3:09 p.m. EDT.
MEMORANDUM

Date: September 21, 2020
To: SPJ Board of Directors
From: John Shertzer, Executive Director
Re: Report on SPJ2020

The organization successfully held its first-ever virtual conference September 12-13, 2020. The event, dubbed SPJ2020, was remarkable for many reasons, including a better-than-expected turnout and higher revenue than we anticipated. Once all participant survey data has been reviewed, we will issue a report on how attendees evaluated the event and suggestions for the future. This report is focused on statistics only.

**SPJ2020 By the Numbers**

831 the total number of registrants, divided into these categories:
- 375 Professional Members
- 91 Student Members
- 120 Professional Non-Members
- 76 Student Non-Members
- 141 Comps (includes staff, award winners, EIJ Newsroom, attendees paid for by another attendee, and some invited guests)

$35,000 Expected revenue from registration (estimate)

$30,728 Sponsorship income

$3,635 Conference expenses, including EIJ Newsroom stipends and additional Zoom accounts

$62,093 Total estimated profit

550 Attendees during the general session on day one

375 Attendance peak for any general session, which was for Beyond the Protests: Inclusive Newsrooms / Inclusive Coverage
365
Attendance during the general session on day two

179
Attendance during the closing ceremony

36
Lowest attendance at any breakout session

3,400
Social media posts that used #SPJ2020

10.2 Million
The social media reach of posts with #SPJ2020

Top 10 Breakouts/Skill Sessions by Attendance*:
1. Setting Yourself Up for Success as an Independent Journalist: 143
2. Talking to Strangers: How to Get the Eager, the Reluctant and Even the Haters to Give a Good Interview: 142
3. Words Matter: 135
4. Mobile and Digital Tools for Your Newsroom and Classroom: 130
7. Don't Bury the Lede: Resume Clinic and Job Search Hacks: 96
8. Upping Your Election Coverage with Google Tools: 91
9. Getting the Story: Foreign Correspondence During the 'New Normal': 89
10. Face-to-Face with Facebook: 83
*Does not include views of the session recordings
SPJ held elections for its Board and Regional Coordinator positions September 11-13, 2020. Voting was held for 48 hours via simplyvoting.com. There were no major technical issues with this year’s election. Only a handful of members contacted the office and needed to correct their email address in order to receive a ballot. Overall, it was a success.

This year there were 5529 electors, and 1098 cast ballots, resulting in a 20% participation rate in the election. Here is how that compares to prior years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Year</th>
<th>Electors</th>
<th>Voters</th>
<th>Participation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPJ Board of Directors/Regional Coordinators 2020-2021</td>
<td>5529</td>
<td>1098</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPJ Board of Directors/Regional Coordinators 2019-2020</td>
<td>5407</td>
<td>1001</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPJ Board of Directors 2018-2019</td>
<td>6026</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPJ Board of Directors 2017-2018</td>
<td>6389</td>
<td>1039</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPJ Board of Directors 2016-2017</td>
<td>6315</td>
<td>1016</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The election results, as reported as the SPJ2020 Closing Ceremony were as follows:

**President-Elect**
Rebecca Aguilar – 674 votes (62.3%)
Sue Kopen Katcef – 407 votes (37.7%)

**Secretary-Treasurer**
Ivette Davila Richards – 473 votes (44.7%)
Andrew Schotz – 458 votes (43.3%)
Elle Toussi – 91 votes (8.6%)
Bernadette Garden – 35 votes (3.3%)

**At-Large Director (two open seats)**
Claire Regan – 538 votes (29.8%)
Rafael Olmeda – 497 votes (27.5%)
Andrew M. Seaman – 347 votes (19.2%)
Haisten Willis – 219 votes (12.1%)
Alex Veeneman – 205 votes (11.4%)
Region 1 Coordinator
Ann-Marie Adams – 130 votes (60.5%)
Jane Primerano – 85 votes (39.5%)

Region 4 Coordinator
Ginny McCabe – 77 votes (100%)

Region 5 Coordinator
Amy Merrick – 99 votes (82.5%)
Nicole DeCriscio – 21 votes (17.5%)

Region 8 Coordinator
Kathryn Jones – 65 votes (100%)

Region 9 Coordinator
Ed Otte – 45 votes (100%)

Below are some suggestions and considerations for future years:

- Simplyvoting works smoothly enough for us to continue using it as our platform.
- Fewer issues are encountered when we have accurate email addresses in our member database. We expect to have better data next year due to Impexium. In addition, we will push for members to ensure their email address is correct in the weeks leading up to the election.
- Should we be able to meet in person for SPJ21, our timeline for candidates will match better to what we did in 2019 and earlier.
- The Nominations Committee should review campaign rules and election guidelines in the first quarter of 2021, and any proposed changes should come to the board at their April 2021 meeting.
MEMORANDUM  
Date: Sept. 12, 2020  
To: SPJ Board of Directors  
From: Nominations Committee  
Re: Nominations Committee Report

Summary

We’ve been asked to make a Nominations Committee report. Despite the obvious headwinds this year, we are pleased to present a strong slate, with multiple candidates for many of the offices. So far, we’ve heard that the voting process has been running smoothly. Voting closes tomorrow at noon, so it’s not too late to get the word out to your chapter members to vote.

The Nominations Committee this year included myself, as the committee chair, Liz Enochs, Joanna Hernandez and Becky Tallent. We drafted this report together and agreed by consensus on these recommendations. We’ve indicated where there were differences of opinion. My fellow committee members are all present, either as delegates or guests.

The committee’s major challenge this year has been finding volunteers to serve as Regional Coordinators. Unfortunately, we were unable to recruit someone for Region 7 after contacting at least a dozen potential candidates. The Region 7 coordinator, the RC Caucus Chair, members of the Nominations Committee and other SPJ leaders all attempted to recruit someone. But it’s never too late. If you or anyone you know from the region wishes to volunteer, contact incoming national president Matt Hall.

However, the Nominations Committee’s key concerns involved complaints that have been raised by some candidates and other SPJ leaders that it favors incumbents and other insiders. We believe that some improvements in the campaign policies and procedures would make the process fairer and more transparent. The main issues we identified were, broadly speaking, the use of the membership email list for campaign purposes, the vetting of campaign statements, the neutrality requirements for SPJ leaders in key positions, and the timing of the delegate business meeting.

Three out of four of the committee members favored an independent task force to review the campaign policies, with Becky Tallent preferring to have the nominations committee work with the national board. Joanna Hernandez noted that the Nominations Committee is generally led by members who may have benefited from the existing campaign policies so an independent review may have more credibility. Liz Enochs suggested that the task force include chapter, committee and community leaders, and a member who is unaffiliated with any chapter.

Details

1. Use of the membership email list for campaign purposes
The SPJ campaign guidelines clearly state, and have done so for many years, quote: “No candidate may use the membership database for campaign or political purposes.” A key consideration is creating a fair and level playing field for those candidates without direct access to the membership database. SPJ does not share member contact information with candidates, but clearly some candidates will have access to some data through current or previous SPJ positions. The committee unanimously recommended that SPJ not share the membership database more widely, but that it look into developing additional creative ways the national office could share the campaign messages. For example, SPJ has added advance campaign videos to SPJ Election Central because members were unable to meet in person this year, and those videos might be worth keeping in future years. More pointedly, we felt there should be a real penalty when a candidate ignored this prohibition. As one committee member said, the rule has no teeth because there is no penalty clause.

2. Accuracy of campaign statements

Two of the Committee members were on the national board when we discussed whether the Nominations Committee should be actively involved in vetting candidates, with some board members referring to this as the “good housekeeping seal of approval.” The board ultimately rejected this idea. However, the committee does see a need for more vetting to assure the accuracy and transparency of candidate campaign statements. One committee member suggested we put the onus on candidates to provide SPJ with work examples to post on Election Central. These may be published articles, links to audio or video, or academic papers. If there is no recent work, candidates may include a statement of explanation. Furthermore, we believe the gathering and checking of this information should be done by staff.

3. Neutrality of SPJ Leaders

National board members could not endorse in the past. Because of policy changes, the national board, the regional coordinators and the nominations committee may all endorse candidates in national campaigns. Given some recent dissension about a Regional Coordinator Caucus endorsement during the actual voting process, the wisdom of endorsements by any insiders at the national level warrants study and debate.

The concerns about RCs being allowed to endorse were shared by three of the four committee members. Becky Tallent disagreed. Joanna Hernandez preferred either total or partial neutrality, for example, perhaps allowing endorsements within the RC’s own region. Liz Enochs preferred not to allow RCs to endorse at all.

4. SPJ delegate business meeting is occurring during voting

This final point may be particular to this year, but we noted to the SPJ President and Executive Director that the delegate business meeting typically takes place after voting has closed. We raised two potential concerns: first, that this might give a platform to some candidates but not others based on delegate status, and second, that the delegates should be able to freely discuss long-range planning knowing who would be on the incoming board.
In conclusion, we respectfully submit this report to the delegate business meeting, and we would be happy to respond to any of your questions.

Alex, Liz, Joanna and Becky

Addendum

SPJ campaign guidelines can be found on this page: https://www.spj.org/elections-call.asp

Campaign Guidelines

These election campaign guidelines should be followed by all candidates for the SPJ national board of directors and regional coordinators. Candidates with questions should ask the SPJ Nominations Committee Chair or the Executive Director.

Headquarters staff will format and send to members emails compiling messages from all announced candidates three times during the election cycle for the announced candidates. The Executive Director will determine the timing of the staff campaign transmissions. The preferred timetable is four weeks, two weeks and one week before the convention.

No candidate may use the membership database for campaign or political purposes.

Candidate speeches will be no more than three minutes in duration and will be delivered during the opening business meeting. Those speeches will be streamed live and made available on the election home page as soon as possible after they are delivered. The order in which candidates give speeches will be based on the alphabetical order of their last names.

While candidates, because of hotel contract restrictions, may not post signs in the convention hotel, fliers, buttons and other literature may be distributed.

Contact the SPJ Executive Director (or designee) to arrange for display space near the convention’s registration area or trade show. All candidates will receive information about board and committee meetings before the convention.

Candidates are encouraged to attend board and committee meetings that are applicable to their prospective position. Candidates may purchase advertising space in Quill, the convention program or SPJ’s convention electronic publication at rates discounted 50% off the current rate card. Contact SPJ Executive Director (or designee) for information.

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MEMORANDUM

Date: September 26, 2020
To: SPJ Board of Directors
From: John Shertzer, Executive Director
Re: Changes to the SPJ Foundation’s Granting Procedures

At the request of board member Lauren Bartlett, this memo serves to analyze a recent change in the SPJ Foundation’s granting procedures.

The SPJ Foundation issues grants to organizations that apply and will now do so in two cycles. SPJ typically submits grant requests to be considered in this process. Some of those requests have included funding for EIJ and for the Scripps Leadership Program.

It should be noted that the recent grant to SPJ for the Director of Education and educational programming fell outside of the normal grant cycle and guidelines. Hence, it would not have been impacted by the recent changes and the SPJ Foundation will still consider special requests.

The biggest change to the procedures is this: **No more than 50% of the funds available in a grant cycle may be awarded to applications from Society of Professional Journalists at a national level.** This is a new policy, as there was not a cap before.

The SPJ Foundation Board, upon recommendation from the Grants Committee, made this change in order to try and broaden the reach of the Foundation and so that funds can be reserved for other organizations and initiatives outside of SPJ.

One contextual note: The SPJ Foundation already shares in costs for SPJ staff and building expenses. That figure was $650,000 in 2020. The Foundation’s annual budget includes these expenses. Once the budget for the Foundation is approved the remaining surplus is what the Foundation has to grant to other programs and organizations.

Below is the amount that the Foundation has issued in its grant cycle since 2017, including the amount given to SPJ and what percentage that accounts for. In 2020, the Foundation included a special grant cycle for election-related requests. In addition, the Foundation gave $198,700 to SPJ in a special request in May 2020 (not reflected below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Granted</th>
<th>Total to SPJ</th>
<th>% to SPJ</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$60,000.00</td>
<td>$35,000.00</td>
<td>58%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$53,995.00</td>
<td>$43,000.00</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$30,691.00</td>
<td>$19,691.00</td>
<td>64%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>$82,138.00</td>
<td>$22,438.00</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$226,824.00</td>
<td>$120,129.00</td>
<td>53%</td>
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If the new procedures had been applied since 2017, SPJ would have received $6717.00 less over this span. From my perspective as executive director of SPJ, this change in procedures does not cause any major disruption to our operations.
SPJ Sponsorship Policy
Submitted by SPJ Sponsorship Task Force on Jan. 27, 2020

The Society of Professional Journalists — at conventions and other events — will seek sponsors, partners, exhibitors and advertisers that are consistent with its mission to encourage the free practice of journalism, foster diversity and stimulate high standards of ethical behavior.

The goal of such arrangements will be to enhance, and not to tarnish, SPJ’s credibility and image. As the nation’s premier professional journalism organization, SPJ seeks to protect the First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and of the news media.

Sponsorships, partnerships, exhibitors and advertisers from both media and non-media entities will generally be accepted from individuals, corporations, foundations or other entities, with the following limitations:

- Any funds that violate federal, state or local laws, statutes or ordinances.
- Any funder and/or closely affiliated entity that promotes or supports acts against journalism, journalists or freedom of expression.
- Any funder and/or closely affiliated entity that does not properly investigate claims of discrimination or harassment involving the entity.
- Any funder and/or closely affiliated entity that actively and intentionally engages in disinformation or propaganda campaigns against journalism or journalists.

Sponsors, exhibitors and advertisers may propose program ideas but not panelists or speakers. No sponsor, exhibitor or advertiser shall provide speaking fees or cover expenses for participants. SPJ may choose, in certain circumstances, to fund in part or whole speaker fees or expenses. Ultimately, the SPJ board will assume responsibility for participants and topics.

SPJ’s executive director will review each contract before it is accepted.

SPJ reserves the right to refuse any proposed sponsor, partner, exhibitor or advertiser for any reason.

This policy applies to national SPJ events, whether SPJ is a sole sponsor or a co-sponsor. Local and regional SPJ leaders will be encouraged but not required to apply it to their programs and conferences.
MEMORANDUM

Date: Sept. 14, 2020
To: SPJ Foundation Board of Directors
From: Hagit Limor
Re: Nominations Committee Report

The Nominations Committee submits the following names for officers and directors of the Society of Professional Journalists Foundation.

Officers

President: Irwin Gratz (for a 2-year term)
Vice President: Hagit Limor for a one-year term
Secretary: Sonny Albarado for a one-year term
Treasurer: Howard Dubin for a one-year term

Board Members

Sonny Albarado, Fred Brown, Jay Evensen, Kelly Hawes, Jane Kirtley, April Bethea, Michael Bolden and Paul Fletcher graciously accepted our invitation to continue on the board with new three-year terms through the fall of 2023.

Sally Lehrman has served nobly on this board but has chosen to step away. We appreciate her insight through the years. She was never a passive member but always ready with smart, critical questions and advice. We wish her the best of luck and will miss her.

We’re proud to invite two new members for full three-year-terms after initial one-year appointments representing SPJ. Patti Gallagher Newberry led SPJ through a year unlike any before and the Society emerges in a better place as a result. Andy Schotz demonstrated a superb work ethic in his first year on the Foundation board, especially on the Grants Committee, and we welcome his energy there and in other facets of the Foundation.

The chair will entertain a motion to approve the appointments of Albarado, Brown, Evensen, Hawes, Kirtley, Lehrman, Bethea, Bolden, Fletcher, Newberry and Schotz to 3-year terms ending in fall of 2023, and to approve the SPJ appointments as follow:
### Current Foundation Board Members / Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board Members</th>
<th>Expires</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Term length</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sonny Albarado</td>
<td>9/14/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fred Brown</td>
<td>9/14/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jay Evensen</td>
<td>9/14/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly Hawes</td>
<td>9/14/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane Kirtley</td>
<td>9/14/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>April Bethea</td>
<td>9/14/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Bolden</td>
<td>9/14/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paul Fletcher</td>
<td>9/14/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patricia Newberry</td>
<td>9/14/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andy Schotz</td>
<td>9/14/23</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Howard Dubin</td>
<td>9/6/22</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Russel Pulliam</td>
<td>9/6/22</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Battinto Batts</td>
<td>9/6/22</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Tarquinio</td>
<td>9/10/22</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Todd Gillman</td>
<td>9/28/21</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irwin Gratz</td>
<td>9/28/21</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Jones</td>
<td>9/28/21</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill Ketter</td>
<td>9/28/21</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hagit Limor</td>
<td>9/28/21</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<td>Evelyn Hsu</td>
<td>9/28/21</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<td>Sonya Ross</td>
<td>9/28/21</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<td>Dave Cuillier</td>
<td>9/28/21</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frank Lamonte</td>
<td>9/28/21</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3-year term</td>
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*SPJ Appointments for term expiring 9/21:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPJ Appointee</th>
<th>Expires</th>
<th>SPJ</th>
<th>Term length</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matt Hall</td>
<td>9/14/20</td>
<td>SPJ</td>
<td>1-year term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Aguilar</td>
<td>9/14/20</td>
<td>SPJ</td>
<td>1-year term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivette Davila-Richards</td>
<td>9/14/20</td>
<td>SPJ</td>
<td>1-year term</td>
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*Italics* indicates SPJ appointees for one-year term.
Expiration terms are approximate, determined by annual convention.
SPJ 2020-21 committee chairs and appointments

Awards & Honors Committee chair: Andy Schotz
Bylaws Committee chair: Bob Becker
Diversity & Inclusion Committee chair: Rebecca Aguilar
Ethics Committee chair: Danielle McLean
Finance Committee chair: Ivette Davila-Richards
FOI Committee chair: Haisten Willis
Journalism Education Committee chair: Yvette Walker
Legal Defense Fund Committee chair: Paul Fletcher
Membership Committee chair: Emily Bloch
Nominations Committee chair: Patti Gallagher Newberry
Regional Coordinator Caucus chair: Debra Krol
Resolutions Committee chair: Michael Savino

Parliamentarian: Bob Becker
Finance Committee members: Rebecca Aguilar, Eddye Gallagher, Matthew T. Hall, Bill McCloskey (with two more appointments possible)
LDF Committee members: Rebecca Aguilar, April Bethea, Matthew T. Hall, Haisten Willis
SPJ Foundation appointees: Rebecca Aguilar, Ivette Davila-Richards, Matthew T. Hall, Yvette Walker
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WE ARE CHAMPIONS FOR JOURNALISTS</th>
<th>WE ARE FIGHTERS FOR THE FIRST AMENDMENT</th>
<th>WE ARE STEWARDS FOR ETHICAL JOURNALISM</th>
<th>WE ARE PRODUCERS OF JOURNALISM’S FUTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We recognize the achievements of journalists and best practices of media organizations through our <strong>awards programs</strong>.</td>
<td>We monitor and fight against efforts to violate the First Amendment and suppress free press through a <strong>DC-based advocacy team</strong>.</td>
<td>We build public trust in the media and greater accountability in the profession via an <strong>ethics response team, ethics hotline, and other programming</strong>.</td>
<td>We proactively design initiatives that amplify <strong>new and diverse voices</strong> for both SPJ and journalism overall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We <strong>educate journalists</strong> on best practices, skills, and new innovations.</td>
<td>We defend journalists through <strong>legal defense funds</strong> and activate initiatives to protect the first amendment through our <strong>First Amendment Forever Fund</strong>.</td>
<td>We promote and advance ethics through a continuously updated <strong>Code of Ethics</strong> that is the prime ethics statement taught in Journalism schools and referenced in newsrooms.</td>
<td>We provide examination, thought leadership and resources that support a <strong>more sustainable future</strong> for journalism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We create <strong>products and services</strong> that help instill pride of vocation in journalists at all stages in their career.</td>
<td>We increase public awareness and support of the <strong>First Amendment</strong> through <strong>training and education</strong>.</td>
<td>As our Code of Ethics states, we assist journalists in their efforts to <strong>boldly tell the story of the diversity and magnitude of the human experience</strong>.</td>
<td>We help prepare the next generation of journalists through our <strong>student and young professional programs</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We encourage news organizations to <strong>build newsrooms that are diverse, equitable and inclusive</strong> and make staff and management demographic data public on a regular basis.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>We embrace, employ and educate journalists on <strong>technology and innovation</strong> to build journalism’s future.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2021 SPJ Annual Plan Goals and Objectives

Below is a draft of the annual plan for 2021. The budget would also be reflective of these goals. This listing is not inclusive of regular activity, including awards, Quill, webinars, LDF, etc. These only identify new or newly-configured priorities.

Staff will develop and work from a more thorough plan that includes tasks, timelines, metrics, etc. This will be available for the board to review, but not subject to approval.

Where it indicates “seek external funding” we will look for grants and sponsorships throughout the Fall. Work on some areas will also begin in the Fall, especially the internal SPJ matters.

The Four Focus Areas
1. We are champions for journalists.
2. We are fighters for the first amendment.
3. We are stewards for ethical journalism.
4. We are producers of journalism’s future.

Champions for Journalists
- Develop initiatives to advance diversity, equity and inclusion goals of news industry.
- Restore the annual training program for SPJ leaders.
- Assess SPJ’s volunteer structure with aim of restarting membership growth.
  - Identify and launch three new communities.
  - Create new onboarding process for new members.
  - Automate monthly membership reports for chapters.
  - Identify role of technology in advancing membership goals.
  - Identify one metro area for pilot “networking-driven” model.
- Create a J-Store to build a merchandise revenue stream.
- Explore the production of a podcast that highlights compelling journalism. (Seek external funding)
- Develop a training agenda targeting young journalists, focused on new tech skills.

Fighters for the First Amendment
- Create First Amendment focus on www.spj.org as part of a larger website redesign based upon our strategic plan pillars.
- Launch a webinar series on First Amendment issues journalists are facing. (Seek external funding)
- Support the development of the SPJ Press the Flesh program. (Seek external funding)
- Investigate a stronger and more active presence in DC, including a cost/benefit analysis. (Seek external funding.

Stewards of Ethical Journalism
- Create programming, in collaboration with the Ethics and Diversity committees, to highlight connections between ethics and diversity in the news industry.
- Design and deliver new methods to teach ethics, and ways to expand the use of the Code of Ethics.
• Produce a bolder Ethics Week.
• Catalog existing (and competing) ethics tools to determine future opportunities for ethics programming.
• Investigate creation of an Ethics Response Team. (Seek external funding)

Producers of Journalism’s Future
• Remove barriers and ease requirements to creating college chapters
• Establish 10 new college chapters, including at least three at institutions that serve underrepresented students.
• Realign the chapter adviser system, to simplify requirements, incentivize engagement and expand support.
• Build a student advisory board that addresses needs of student members as well as new graduates.
• Develop a program to showcase and support new business models and financial sustainability for journalism.

Internal SPJ Matters
• Restructure staff responsibilities to mirror the focus areas.
• Redesign www.spj.org to focus on SPJ’s Four Focus Areas and the SPJ brand with modern aesthetic appeal.
• Identify potential SPJ2022 and SPJ2023 conference locations and partners
• Add one additional external association client.
• Evaluate sale of HQ building and move to rental offices.
College Media Reinvention Fund project design

Summary
Independent, student-run newsrooms provide both an invaluable learning experience as well as, increasingly, the primary information lifeline for campus communities under-served by professional news organizations. The irreplaceable value of these news organizations has, belatedly, been recognized during the COVID-19 pandemic, as student reporters press secretive campus communities for essential public-health data that people need to make informed decisions. Student-run newsrooms are facing the same economic challenges as their professional counterparts, but there is no “Report For America/American Journalism Project” rescue effort underway to sustain them. The philanthropic community must step up and invest in student-run media or watch it disappear.

Need addressed / theory of change
Student-run news organizations are facing existential economic challenges. Although they operate on a fraction of the overhead of professional media, their revenue sources traditionally have been limited to (1) advertising and (2) subsidies from their campuses, both of which are declining precipitously. The advertising model remains largely dependent on a print product that is widely ignored by an audience accustomed to getting news through social channels. Independent student publications have gone out of business at campuses including Southern Methodist University and the University of Central Florida, and are in danger of doing so across the country.

Pockets of success exist -- and, with the benefit of coaching and expertise, might prove replicable. Campus newspapers at Duke and UNC-Chapel Hill have raised tens of thousands of dollars by staging an annual fundraising challenge pegged to their universities' basketball rivalry. Students at the University of Alabama started a fashion magazine, Alice, to bring in advertising revenue that helps sustain its sister newspaper, the Crimson White. Emerald Media Group at the University of Oregon supports the Daily Emerald newspaper with earned income from events management, public-relations services, and other sideline businesses.

The leaders of student newsrooms appreciate that their model of distributing, and paying for, news must evolve. But they need expert advice and some “bridge funding” to help them transition to a more sustainable model.

Investing in reinventing the delivery of local news at the college campus level will pay dividends not just for the sustenance of student publications, but for (1) building a more news-literate community and (2) piloting ideas, at relatively low cost and low stakes, that might scale to non-student media as well (particularly to online nonprofit startups that in many ways resemble college media).

The COVID-19 pandemic has only reinforced the irreplaceable public-service role that independent student-run media provide. College journalists have independently gathered the essential public-health data that their universities refuse to disclose, and have used their news
and editorial pages to call out institutional mismanagement. If student-run media dies off and is replaced by faculty-led "laboratory journalism," the campus community will lose its editorially autonomous watchdog.

**Project narrative**
Student-run media has unique and irreplaceable value. It is worth saving. Editorially independent student media can perform the watchdog accountability function that laboratory-based journalism courses cannot. Student media can expose fraternity hazing, investigate inadequate responses to sexual assault, and sue for public records of athletic scandals, none of which will occur if campus journalism is allowed to become the exclusive province of faculty-led "laboratories," which is the direction in which college journalism rapidly is evolving. Students who work in faculty-supervised laboratories get excellent training, but they do not build the leadership or entrepreneurship skills necessary to equip themselves for the reality of the 21st century media workplace. One learning experience is not a substitute for the other.

A sustainable future for student-run media requires modernizing (1) the way news is delivered, to emphasize mobile-first and to build audience for a mobile product, and (2) the way news is paid for, diversifying revenue through some combination of: Foundation support, alumni donations, sponsored specialty products (podcasts, newsletters), earned ancillary income (affinity events, logo merchandise), and supplemental product/service lines (the Emerald Media Group model at the University of Oregon).

A fund should be created to allow student-run news organizations to apply competitively for funding for three needs:

1. Consulting assistance in improving the digital delivery of news, in marketing the digital product to a college-age demographic, in grant-writing and business development, and in building and maintaining alumni support networks.
2. Compensation for the student newsroom leaders to work the additional hours that "reinvention" will require, along with money (where needed) to obtain training.
3. Expense money for marketing and alumni network-building events.

**Estimated direct project costs (excluding administration/overhead)**

1. Consulting/design assistance and training: $50,000/year for 3 years
2. Staff compensation for "reinvention" work: $35,000/year for 3 years
3. Expenses (new technology/software, etc.): $15,000/year for 3 years

**TOTAL:** $100,000/year, or $300,000 per publication over a 3-year project

**Project benefits**
College campus communities, many of which exist in near-"news desert" conditions without the benefit of a professional daily newspaper (e.g., Chapel Hill, N.C. and Ann Arbor, Mich.) will be better-informed, and their government institutions held more closely accountable.
Cultivating news consumption by college-age readers will pay lifelong dividends, as readers take those habits into adulthood and apply their current-events knowledge to be more civically effective, participatory citizens.

College journalists will learn the 21st-century entrepreneurship and leadership skills that prepare them for a career in which news increasingly is delivered by way of small, hyperlocal nonprofits run by jack-of-all-trades journalists.

**Potential partners and resources**
The College Media Association and the Associated Collegiate Press are nonprofit organizations that conduct training programs for college journalists and their faculty advisers at periodic conferences across the country. The Student Press Law Center is a nonprofit legal-aid organization with decades’ worth of perspective about the challenges faced by independent, student-led college newsrooms. The Western Association of University Publication Managers is (despite its name) a nationwide organization of the non-student business managers of the largest student news publications in the country. The Poynter Institute is a recognized industry leader in training, with a substantial college media component.

**Additional reading**
“We Must Save Independent Student Newsrooms,” Inside Higher Ed, Sept. 11, 2019


[https://apnews.com/5fe1a874e20c476d9d177f6628638b45](https://apnews.com/5fe1a874e20c476d9d177f6628638b45)

“College newspaper reporters are the journalism heroes for the pandemic era,” Washington Post, Sept. 19, 2020

“College Newspapers Aim To Keep Schools Transparent During Pandemic,” NPR.org, Sept. 17, 2020