AGENDA
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, THE SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
TIME: 9 A.M.  DATE: JUNE 21, 2014
NATIONAL PRESS CLUB, WASHINGTON D.C.

1. Call to Order – Cuillier

2. Roll Call – Fletcher
   a. Cuillier
   b. Neuts
   c. Fletcher
   d. Kopen-Katcef
   e. McCloskey
   f. Meyers
   g. Albarado

3. Approve Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
   a. Jan. 18, 2014 (Page 2)
   b. Feb. 20, 2014 (Page 7)

4. Report of the SPJ President – Cuillier

5. Report of the SDX Foundation President – Leger

6. Discussion Items
   a. SPJ Vision – centralization trend – Skeel/Puckey (Page 8)
   b. Future locations for SPJ spring board meeting – Skeel
   c. Regional Director speeches – Skeel

7. Old/New Business
   a. Ethics Code Revision update – Cuillier
   b. Advocacy Fund update – Cuillier
   c. Freelance Community update – Neuts
   d. Nominees for national board – Albarado
   e. Staffing update – Skeel
   f. EIJ14 update – Skeel
   g. Shield Law update – Fletcher
   h. Futures task force recommendations – Cuillier (Page 10) – 10 A.M.
   i. Update on SPJ/SDX division of labor – Leger/Skeel

8. Public Comment

9. Awards selection
   a. D.L. Eshelman Outstanding Campus Adviser
   b. Distinguished Teaching in Journalism
   c. Ethics in Journalism
   d. Fellows of the Society
   e. Historic Site in Journalism
   f. Howard S. Dubin Outstanding Pro Members
   g. Julie Galvan Outstanding Graduate in Journalism
   h. Regional Director of the Year
   i. Sunshine
   j. Wells Memorial Key – officers only

10. Adjournment
The Society of Professional Journalists

Executive Committee Meeting

Date: June 21, 2014
Time: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Location: National Press Club, Washington D.C.

Improving and Protecting Journalism

The Society of Professional Journalists works to improve and protect journalism. The organization is the nation’s largest and most broad-based journalism organization, dedicated to encouraging the free practice of journalism and stimulating high standards of ethical behavior.

Founded in 1909 as Sigma Delta Chi, SPJ promotes the free flow of information vital to a well-informed citizenry, works to inspire and educate the next generation of journalists, and protects First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and press.
MINUTES
MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
JANUARY 18, 2014
NASHVILLE, TENN.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER
With President David Cuillier presiding, the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 9 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 18, 2014, at the Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee.

ROLL CALL
In addition to Cuillier, the following were present: President-Elect Dana Neuts; Secretary-Treasurer Paul Fletcher; Vice President for Campus Chapter Affairs Sue Kopen Katcef; Immediate Past President Sonny Albarado; Director at-Large Bill McCloskey; Region 9 Director Don Meyer (via Google Hangout). SDX Foundation President Robert Leger was in attendance along with Executive Director Joe Skeel, associate Executive Director Chris Vachon and SPJ Webmaster Billy O’Keefe.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVED
Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Albarado, respectively, the committee approved the minutes from the June 22, 2013 executive committee meeting.

Upon proper motion and second by Kopen Katcef and Fletcher, respectively, the committee approved the minutes from the January 15, 2014 executive committee meeting.

Upon proper motion and second by Albarado and Neuts, respectively, the committee approved the minutes from the following delegate meetings:
- August 24, 2013, Anaheim, Opening Business Session
- August 26, 2013, Anaheim, Closing Business Session with the following addition:
  - Add the resolutions to the minutes

PRESIDENT’S REPORT
President Cuillier reported that the SPJ name-change task force recommends no change to the organization's name, but instead recommends the task force shift its focus to engaging younger members. He mentioned that Fletcher has taken an active role in our advocacy efforts and that there may be movement regarding the federal shield law in the coming weeks and we should be prepared. Cuillier indicated that Neuts has taken the lead in the area of membership. He reported that the Ethics Committee is still working on possible updates to the Code of Ethics. The Freelance Community is making progress in its transition from a committee to a community and the digital media committee is disbanding for the time being. Cuillier discussed his desire for SPJ to communicate better with the public, its members and prospective members by hiring a new communications person.
SDX FOUNDATION PRESIDENT REPORT
SDX Foundation President Robert Leger reported that the stock market has been good to the Foundation. Investments rose $1.3 million in 2013.

Associate Executive Director Vachon supplied an update on the recent projects being funded by the Foundation, such as the NPPA workshops, For Journalism and the IRE workshops. All projects are moving along and the workshop contacts are communicating with Vachon on a regular basis.

GRANT REQUESTS TO SDX FOUNDATION
Region 3 Director Michael Koretzky submitted a proposed grant request for the Executive Committee's review. See Appendix A.

Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Albarado, respectively, the committee voted to support the grant request being submitted to the SDX Foundation.

ETHICS CODE UPDATE
Cuillier reported that the Ethics Committee has been hashing out ideas for possible updates to the code and they have been soliciting feedback from members. The plan is to have something to present to the board in April and to the membership in August. The executive committee suggested that something preliminary be prepared for members to review at the spring conferences. Cuillier is to pass this request along to Ethics Committee Chairman Kevin Smith.

SPRING CONFERENCES
Executive Committee members assigned officers to attend the SPJ spring conferences.

NAME CHANGE UPDATE
Cuillier reviewed the extensive work of the task force, which was outlined in a memo from task force chairman John Ensslin. Between a survey, focus groups, a blog talk radio show and many discussions, ultimately, the task force found little support for a name change at this time, particularly among long-time members. The task force's work did inspire the group to shift their focus to current, and potential, young (under 30) members and how the organization can better serve that age group. The task force will look to add younger members to the group and then begin working on ideas to present to the board.

FREELANCE COMMUNITY UPDATE
Neuts reported that Freelance Community leader Michael Fitzgerald and Webmaster O'Keefe have been working closely to create a place on spj.org for the community. So far they have created a community chat area, a job board and some other features of interest to this group. The hope is this will serve as a prototype for future communities. The Freelance Community will seek official approval from the SPJ board of directors in April.

MONTHLY AUTO DUES UPDATE
Skeel updated the group on the status of the implementation of the online monthly auto dues feature. The new server has been ordered. After installation of the server, the database will be upgraded. Next, the two tech companies, with which we work, have steps they need to complete
and finally, testing will need to take place. Skeel estimates the process to take about 10 weeks and will cost $8-10,000.

WEBSITE UPDATE
O'Keefe provided a visual overview of the web site redesign and an explanation of the work that goes into such a project. He projects the redesign will be ready in March.

SCRIPPS LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE ANALYSIS
Skeel provided an overview of the newly formatted Scripps Leadership Institute. The new format involves four programs being offered each year (as opposed to the one program/year in the past) and smaller groups at each program. Because of the increased quantity of programs, more members are being trained each year. Staff’s overall analysis is that the smaller size is more beneficial because it leads to a stronger sense of community among the participants, and the fact that we are reaching more members is, of course, a benefit. Chapter Coordinator Tara Puckey, who created a memo on the topic, also suggests that the program has a broader reach beyond chapter leaders. It could be used to train national leaders, newsroom leaders, etc.

STAFF SUCCESSION PLAN
Skeel provided a memo outlining a succession plan for staff member’s positions. Over the course of the past three years, he has realigned the staff positions so that each staffer has responsibility over a specific area rather than multiple areas. With the exception of a few positions, most positions can be filled by posting a job opening, interviewing, hiring and training. During that process, there is at least one other staff member that can do each of the positions on staff. With the current staff, in the event that the Foundation position should become vacant, Skeel will fill that role. In turn, if the Executive Director position becomes vacant, Vachon will fill that role.

BOARD MEMBER STIPENDS
Fletcher was asked to conduct a review of the current system of stipends and make any recommendations to the executive committee and the board. Currently, the stipends total $46,500. Fletcher suggests that some stipends increase for a total stipend amount of $52,000 and they would be as follows:

President $10,000
President-elect $4,000
Secretary-Treasurer $4,000
Past President $2,500
VP, Campus Chapter Affairs $2,500
Campus Reps (2) $1,500
Regional/At Large on Exec Comm $2,500
Regional Directors $1,500
At Large Directors $1,500

The Executive Committee discussed that the philosophy is that stipends are not intended to fully reimburse all costs of a board member. They are intended as a baseline and to help to defray the costs of required board service.
Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Neuts, respectively, the committee voted to propose the revised stipends to the board at the April board meeting.

Upon proper motion and second by Fletcher and Kopen Katcef, respectively, the committee voted to make available, after completion of each fiscal year, an opportunity for board members to apply for additional expense reimbursement from any unused stipend money. The Executive Committee may award reimbursements of this money based on required travel.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE
Neuts outlined the work that is currently being done in the area of membership:

- reviving the member of the month program
- calling lapsed members (being done at HQ by a hired college student)
- calling new members to welcome them
- implementing the monthly auto dues program
- updating the membership web pages
- promoting the SPJ Solutions program
- revising the invoicing schedule

ADVOCACY EFFORTS
Fletcher met with Baker Hostetler attorney Laurie Babinski to discuss the issues and has been working with O'Keefe to update the web pages related to this topic. He would like to see SPJ get back its active advocacy efforts including at the local level. For example, during congressional recess time, congressmen typically hold town hall meetings. He would like to get members to these gatherings.

ADJOURNMENT
Upon proper motion and second by Neuts and Kopen Katcef, the committee voted to adjourn for lunch.

EXECUTIVE SESSION
Upon proper motion and second by Fletcher and Kopen Katcef, respectively, the committee voted to go into executive session at 1:40 p.m. to discuss personnel and strategic planning.

ADJOURNMENT
Upon proper motion and second by Albarado and McCloskey, respectively, the committee voted to exit executive session and adjourn at 4:30 pm.
To: SPJ executive committee and SDX board  
From: Michael Koretzky, Region 3 director  
Re: grant request for Zombie Stories

The weekend before Halloween, SPJ took over a grassy knoll on the banks of the Mississippi River in New Orleans. We invited 20 zombies to teach interviewing skills to 70-75 students. (It was hard to get an accurate count because it was dark and they kept moving.)

Instead of boring you with a recap, here are some links that explains the whole thing, each requiring only a minute to peruse...

- Zombie Stories preview
- Dave Cuillier as a zombie
- Zombie Stories results

We want to take Zombie Stories on the road, much like we do with the First Amendment Free Food Festival. That program has been held at more than 50 college campuses since SPJ debuted it in 2006, and one SPJ chapter even made national news on FOX and Friends. SPJ still assists today with these festivals, providing logistics and even T-shirts for the “goon squads.”

If you spend $3,000 on Zombie Stories, here’s what you’ll get...

- **240 T-shirts for $1,800.** I use a Christian T-shirt manufacturer in California, the cheapest I could find nationwide. I’m his only Jewish customer. But business is business.
- **12 micro-grants of $100 per school.** This defrays the cost of zombie makeup and mixing the fake blood, which is comprised of corn syrup, vegetable oil, and red dye.
- **A dozen Zombie Stories around the country.** We already have enthusiastic interest from three SPJ college chapters (including the one advised by board member Kym Fox), plus a community college (Lorain) and a private four-year school (Stetson) without chapters.

As with First Amendment Free Food Festival, costs of mailing the shirts will be paid by SPJ Florida, while step-by-step advice and troubleshooting will be provided by Region 3.

If you have any questions, holler. Thanks again for your past support of our crazy projects. Our goal is to teach journalism in creative ways, inspiring both students and the public. In this case, we settled on zombies.
MEETING CALLED TO ORDER
With President David Cuillier presiding, the Executive Committee of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 2 p.m. EST on Thursday, Feb. 20.

ROLL CALL
In addition to Cuillier, the following were in attendance: Secretary-treasurer Paul Fletcher, Vice President of Campus Chapter Affairs Sue Kopen Katcef, Immediate Past President Sonny Albarado and at-large member Bill McCloskey. Also in attendance was Executive Director Joe Skeel.

LDF FUND
The purpose of the call was to approve creating a separate sub-account for the Legal Defense Fund. The sub-account would be within SPJ’s existing investment account.

Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Kopen Katcef, respectively, the Executive Committee approved the creation of a sub account within the Society’s investments for the Legal Defense Fund, and authorized Joe Skeel and Chris Vachon to be signatories.

ADJOURNMENT
Upon proper motion and second by Albarado and Fletcher, the committee adjourned at 2:05 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 20.
MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 12, 2014
FROM: Tara Puckey, Chapter Coordinator
SUBJ: Centralization Concept
FOR: SPJ Executive Committee

A BIT OF BACKGROUND
Administrative red tape has always been a challenge for our chapters – from annual reports to filing 990s. The latter has become more problematic since 2006, when the IRS ruled that ALL chapters under parent non-profits file a 990. Previously, only those making more than $25,000 were required to file the 990.

The reality is: it isn’t getting done. Within the past year, more than 11 of our chapters have lost their non-profit status with the IRS. This occurs when chapters fail to file 990s for three consecutive years. What does this mean? It means they’re essentially operating as a for-profit company, which means they’re subject to income taxes and penalties, if applicable. And as a for-profit company, they are still required to file tax paperwork. In fact, it’s more in-depth than the e-Postcard they’re currently required to file as a subordinate chapter of SPJ.

Getting the status back is a long, expensive process, one that few chapters have the time, money or resources to take on when their ultimate goal is, in many cases, to do great journalism “stuff.” Once they lose their status, the IRS doesn’t allow SPJ national to simply “put them back on the rolls.”

SO WHAT DO WE DO?
SPJ is not alone. Since the IRS ruling in 2006, many organizations with a chapter structure are seeing this as a growing problem. Because of that, many are moving to a more centralized structure.

What does that mean? Organizations are disbanding the official chapter structure and instead have individuals or groups that simply do work throughout the country on behalf of the national organization. For us, it would mean we strip away the red tape and allow people with boots on the ground to do good journalism work in the name of SPJ.

These “groups,” for lack of a better term, might want to host a program about open records, or meet up and have a few drinks. They can do those things, and others that support the missions of SPJ, without a board, without an EIN and without having to worry about filing a 990.

HOW WOULD THAT WORK?
These “groups” are essentially a part of the national organization, so they’re doing work on behalf of SPJ. They won’t file annual reports, have bank accounts, raise funds, conduct elections, file 990s, conduct a contest or host an awards dinner.
At the same time, they won’t get delegates at the national convention and won’t be eligible for chapter awards or grants. They aren’t independent entities, so the national organization has the ability to make decisions when it comes to how and what they do.

Their ideas for programming would be funneled through HQ, where we’ll help negotiate space, manage any registration, sponsorship and pick up costs, if necessary. We’ll help promote it and recap the event, with the help of organizers, when it’s over. If the same group does another program, great. If not, that’s fine, too.

WHY IS THIS GOOD?

Reaching more members: Allowing pop-up programs and networking without the administrative and logistical headaches will help more members feel connected with SPJ. They would have the opportunity to attend programs and meet people near them even if there is no local chapter.

More passionate ideas: Often, our chapters struggle to plan events. It’s something they should do, so they figure out a way to make it happen. Sometimes if for no other reason than: “we’ve always done an FOI program…” This concept will allow people who are truly passionate about specific topics in journalism to pitch, plan and produce programs that are important to them, which leads to better programs.

Another option: With the changes and challenges facing membership associations, it’s important that SPJ put forth a buffet of options for the journalism community. Maybe someone doesn’t want to volunteer for board meetings and budgets, but they’re a valuable asset to SPJ in other ways. We’ve got to have something that meets these interests.

Help for struggling chapters: We currently have a few chapters on the books that are struggling to keep up with the minimum requirements, and a few that are fighting to get started. This is a viable option for them. Switching from a chapter to this model will take away a significant portion of their workload and allow them to focus all their energies on what they really want to do: programming and networking.

MOVING FORWARD

It’s important to remember that this concept isn’t replacing anything, it’s simply supplementing the options that members have in finding what works for them in their local area.

If they have an active board, no trouble financing their programs and like operating independently, then a chapter is probably best for them. If an organized group of people is interested in education reporting but they live all across the country, a community might be perfect for them.

If they’re a small group, or even one person, interested in conducting journalism training or networking – but not interested in paperwork, elections and bylaws – this might be just the ticket.
All great organizations need to renew themselves from time to time.

The Society of Professional Journalists has survived and thrived by adapting as needed in the past.

That time has come again.

The need to make SPJ more relevant to the next generation of journalists quickly became evident as the task force studied a potential name change.

Although we found no consensus on a name change, there was a surprising amount of agreement on the need to make structural and organizational changes geared to attracting and retaining younger members.

While we began by studying what would make SPJ more relevant to younger members, it is worth noting that many of these changes will benefit members of all ages.

Items such as more and improved training, better job postings and more effective communications benefit all of SPJ.

With that in mind, here are our recommendations:

**ORGANIZATION**

- Accelerate the process of building communities within SPJ. The Freelance Community was a good start, but the process is too slow. Set a goal of establishing 3-5 more communities of journalists within the next year.

- Extend the post-graduate membership by one year from three to four years. It's a tough job market out there for younger journalists. This would be a small way to help and retain younger SPJ members early in their careers. Keep in place the existing deal - approved by the board - that allows students one free year, if they pay for two of these years.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

- Redesign the look of SPJ's Leads. Use an email format that looks more like Muck Rack Daily, a five-day a week memo which has a breezy user-friendly style. When possible, use photographs and other visual elements – such as Vine – to make these message more interesting.
• Create a new email targeted specifically for student and post-graduate members. Enlist members of the Generation J committee to serve as contributors.

This can incorporate items from SPJ Leads, but would include at least one item per week that is geared toward younger members. The importance of this move was demonstrated in a survey of under-30 journalists. Nearly 62 percent of them listed email as their preferred method of getting information on SPJ.

• Actively market SPJ to non-members who apply for the Mark of Excellence Awards. Send follow-up emails to these folks encouraging them to join SPJ and alerting them to future SPJ events.

MENTORSHIPS, JOBS & NETWORKING
• Abandon the current model of the SPJ Job Bank, which clearly is not working. It currently features just five ads, two of which are not journalism-related. Many members are not even aware of the services.

• Instead, actively solicit free job and internship postings from employers and make that list available to SPJ members only. Tap into and include links to job listings maintained by local chapters such as the Headline Club and the Rio Grande and Long Island chapters. Feature one job at the end of each SPJ Leads email.

• Appoint a mentor-in-chief, a national volunteer who would write regular advice columns, do programs, tweet-ups, conference calls, podcasts and other regular forums to offer career advice to younger journalists.

Empower that person to recruit others, particularly from the Gen-J committee, to create an interactive webpage similar to The Daily Muse or Levo League.

• Offer a limited number of short-term mentorships during the national convention. Use the model that IRE has used at its convention. They make these mentorships competitive and try to match people up with appropriate mentors.

• Do everything possible on the national level to encourage regional directors and local chapters to host networking events and sessions focusing on career development.

Some of the training requested by younger journalists included: entrepreneurial journalism, personal branding, digital story-telling, code, video editing, blogging, and social events that put student journalists into contact with professionals.

PROGRAMS & CONFERENCES
• Offer more training. Stage a virtual SPJ conference over several weekends. Use the best of the spring regional programs. Offer it online for free to members and for a fee to non-members. Offer it on-demand after the conference.
• Offer convention programs that are less rudimentary and entry-level.

• Team up with other organizations to underwrite training. For example, approach the Kaiser Foundation for a training session for health care reporting.

• Collaborate with other journalism organizations to build bigger, better programs, especially on topics that are not SPJ’s specialty.

• Offer more webinars that are free to members but require a fee from non-members.

WHO WE ARE
The SPJ Futures Task Force (formerly known as the name change task force) consists of the following members:

Sonny Albarado, Carl Corry, Paul Davis, John Ensslin, Sue Kopen Katcef, Michael Koretzky, Hagit Limor, Andy Schotz, David Sheets.

We also enlisted help from a group of younger SPJ members. They are:

Anthony Johan Cespedes, Lindsay Cook, Monica Guzman, Brett Hall, Taylor Mirfendereski, Victoria Reitano, Andrew Seaman, Meg Wagner, Lynn Walsh.