

**AGENDA**  
**THE SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**  
**TIME: 9 A.M. DATE: JAN. 16, 2010**  
**ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.**

1. Call to Order – *Smith*
2. Roll Call – *Lunsford*
  - a. Smith
  - b. Limor
  - c. Ralston
  - d. Albarado
  - e. Lunsford
  - f. McCloskey
  - g. Aeikens
3. Report of the SPJ President – *Smith*
4. Report of the SDX Foundation President – *Geimann*
5. Staff Report – *Skeel* [page 1]
6. Approve Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
  - a. June 27, 2009, Minneapolis [page 6]
  - b. Sept. 29, 2009, Conference Call [page 11]
  - c. Nov. 18, 2009, Conference Call [page 12]
7. Discussion Items
  - a. Update on 2010 convention (including sponsorship update) – *Vachon*
  - b. Update on 2011 convention with RTDNA – *Vachon*
  - c. Discussion on 2012 convention – *Vachon*
  - d. Spring Conferences – *Smith*
  - e. High School journalists as members – *Ralston*
  - f. Grant/outside funding committee – *Skeel*
  - g. Updated History Book – *Leger*
  - h. Harper Memorial event – *Skeel*
  - i. Annual Report/Star Rankings – *Skeel*
8. New Business
9. Adjournment



tax relief, and as the state and county are struggling financially, they are less lenient on granting those exemptions. In an effort to get that exemption back, we will work with a tax expert to better present our case for the following year. He is confident we can get the exemption back, but doing what we always have in terms of our request won't be enough.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Hopefully I prepared you well enough for the drop we expected at the beginning of the year. 7,600 members is a long way from where we were two years ago. The reasons for that drop have been hashed out, debated and contemplated: Our economy stinks and the upheaval in journalism is even worse. While the economy may rebound, I expect our membership will remain rocky in the near future. Over time, however, I am confident we can rebuild it.

To make that happen, we need to focus on different types of products and services to meet the needs of perspective members. For example, as the freelance ranks grow, we need to investigate ways to help them run their business, not just be great journalists. We need to make training available online, so that those without a regular income can take part when the money is there. We need to partner with other groups so we can cater to all different niches of journalism. Keep an eye out for these types of programs, partnerships and services in the future.

To help stem the bleeding in the short-term, however, we are embarking on a few different campaigns. Hopefully you have all heard about our ambitious "2010 in 2010" membership drive. We have challenged our chapters to restore (and/or build) their ranks and are offering free 2011 Convention registrations for the top three large and small chapters.

In addition, we will be sending a marketing piece to every inactive member in our database within the next few months. The mailing, made possible by a donation from Howard Dubin, will focus on SPJ's advocacy efforts. Even though the people have left us, we are asking them to rejoin so that we can continue to fight for journalism and the important role it plays in Democracy. We're hoping that even though they are no longer members, they still hold tight to – and will support – the beliefs that brought them to our profession and SPJ in the first place.

Lastly, by the end of January we will have sent a letter to nearly every accredited journalism school in the country – more than 300 total. We are encouraging them to join as a Collegiate Institutional Member. For those schools on the list without an SPJ presence, the letter also encourages them to start a chapter. Thanks to Neil for writing this piece. If we can convince just five percent to sign up, that would be an extra \$6,000 in membership revenue.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The hottest potato cooking right now is the onslaught of our training season. In the next six months, we will:

- Manage Spring Conferences for Regions 2, 5 and 7.
- Conduct at least two more Narrative Writing Workshops (one in D.C. the other in San Jose.). We recently conducted one in Portland, Ore. and I'm happy to report that 48 people attended.
- Put on two Reporters Institutes.
- Conduct eight Newsroom Training Programs. So far, we have booked:

- Feb. 20 (Community Media Workshop, Chicago).
- Feb. 25 (Bloomington Herald-Times, Bloomington, Ind).
- March 9 (Community Media Workshop).
- March 16 (Times Daily, Florence Ala.).
- April 30 (The Oklahoman, Oklahoma City).
- June 5 (Wyoming Tribune Eagle)
- Put on our annual Scripps Leadership Institute.

While all of this is going on, we will continue work on long-range projects – most notably the next two conventions. Chris met this weekend with Hagit and John Ensslin to go over programming ideas for the Las Vegas Convention. Furthermore, Chris and I met with a couple key RTDNA staffers in New Orleans this fall and got the ball rolling on what we feel will be a great partnership in 2011 and beyond.

Sometime this year, we also hope to take our first steps into the world of online training. We are working to develop an “on-demand” platform that will make our tried-and-true training available online to any person at any time. This is more than just webinars (although that might be part of the equation). We are shooting for a platform where folks can shop for and receive SPJ training any time of the day.

Lastly, in an effort to ensure our professional development programs continue to grow, we will turn the heat up on our efforts to seek funding outside of SDX.

### **SPJ.ORG**

Within the next few months, we will begin unveiling parts of a new and improved Web site. Billy is currently working on the background stuff so that when the launch is complete, it will make it easier to add bells and whistles. Just a few of the things we are working to add or improve include:

- The coding necessary to read our site with mobile phones and other hand-held devices.
- A new calendar that utilizes Google Calendar, making it compatible with blogs, hand-held devices, Facebook, etc.
- Better integration of social media applications, and scratching out ideas how to take that even further. You may have already seen our Youtube, Facebook and Twitter pages.
- A new search function for the overall site.
- The ability to create a social network on our Web site for members only.
- A “marketplace” for journalists to come and find the latest training, books, SPJ merchandise, etc. Think of it as our own little SPJ.org “Amazon.com.”

### **MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

The biggest change to our communications efforts since Convention 2009 has been in the social media arena.

- Our new SPJ Facebook Fan Page has allowed us to connect with members and non-members, bringing them breaking industry or SPJ news, related links and SPJ

network blogs. As of Jan. 5, we had 829 fans. We will continue to publicize this in Leads, Quill and SPJ.org.

- SPJs Twitter account, “spj\_tweets,” had 1,582 followers as of Jan. 5. “Spj\_tweets” is also on 124 Twitter lists, a feature that allows users to organize or group together other users on Twitter. One of the exciting followers who began to track us in 2009 is Senator Arlen Specter (D-Pa.). Specter began following our account after headquarters provided live tweets of one of the Senate Judiciary Committee Meetings about the federal shield law bill. The live tweets were very successful as several followers re-tweeted the messages and Clint Hendler of Columbia Journalism Review posted our live tweets, along with his own, on the CJR Web site.
- The SPJ YouTube Channel is still under construction. We hope the channel, which will have its own Web page on the SPJ site (also under construction), will be used by headquarters and local chapters to share programming ideas; discuss industry issues; and be another way for our members to connect to one another through SPJ.

We think these platforms, in addition to our regular practices of issuing press releases and fulfilling several interview requests (most all done by Kevin), is all helping to spread SPJ’s Name. Between Aug. 1, 2009 and Dec. 31, 2009, there were more than 1,600 mentions of the grouping “Society of Professional Journalists,” according to the Google Advance News Search.

## QUILL

Aside from production of regular issues of Quill, the past several months have involved considerable brainstorming and initial design of a new Quill-specific Web site and social media presence. This will allow us to focus more on timely content for industry issues. To accomplish this goal, we have been:

- Developing early content and layout designs for the new Quill site that will “stand alone” and feature more Web-only content. With Editor & Publisher out of the mix, the opportunity is there to capture more readers.
- Making a concerted effort to deliver Quill content to more people when it’s initially released. This has been primarily accomplished through Twitter and Facebook, the two distribution platforms that make sharing content extremely easy.
- Working to build a multimedia dimension to Quill stories. This will be a slow process. However, our goal is to associate more video presentations with print Quill pieces. For example, the January/February issue will feature two videos associated with print pieces, one feature and one Toolbox column.
- Brainstorming ways to involve more SPJ student members in Quill (print and online). One idea that is emerging is to streamline a process that involves student members writing and producing print and Web-only stories about industry issues. As SPJ is a major supporter of students, this can be one more way we give student members value while helping them build more diverse, widespread clips. We’ve already had one Web-only story written by two Virginia Commonwealth

University students, In that regard, anyone on the committee or otherwise willing to offer input/feedback on this idea is encouraged to contact Scott Leadingham.

## **AWARDS**

As most of you know, we are hot and heavy into awards season. And as most of you also know, this is the first year we have taken our contest to an online entry platform. Furthermore, we stratified the Mark of Excellence Awards to include 2-year colleges and we stratified the SDX Awards to allow smaller news outlets to compete against each other.

I'm proud to say that because of Lauren Rochester's hard work and incredible preparation, the online entry process and the new categories seem to be leading to a positive outcome. By and large, the comments from those entering have been positive and a few folks from other journalism organizations have even inquired about our platform. More on that in a moment.

As of July 5, we received 224 entries into the MOE contest, which is about 100 more than we received by that time a year ago. The deadline is Jan. 27. We had also already received 26 entries for SDX. In the past, we haven't tracked SDX entries so early because the deadline isn't until Feb. 12. But Lauren is confident we didn't have this many at this time last year. Overall, 340 people have registered to use the awards site.

We are now looking into the possibility of "packaging" our awards platform for resale. We have already had discussions with the developer and they are interested in partnering with us to make it available to our local chapters and other journalism organizations. Once our contests are over, they will evaluate the performance of the software and determine if it's something that can be adapted fairly easily for others to use. At this point, we believe it is.

**MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS  
JUNE 27, 2009  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

With President Dave Aeikens presiding, the meeting of the executive committee of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 9:05 a.m. on Saturday, June 27, 2009, at the Minneapolis Star Tribune in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

**ROLL CALL**

In addition to Aeikens, the following were present: President-Elect Kevin Smith; Secretary-Treasurer Hagit Limor; Vice President, Campus Chapter Affairs Neil Ralston; Immediate Past President Clint Brewer; Director at-Large Bill McCloskey; Region 3 Director Darcie Lunsford; SDX Foundation President Steve Geimann; Interim Co-Executive Directors Chris Vachon and Joe Skeel.

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVED**

**Upon proper motion and second by Brewer and Limor, respectively, the board approved the minutes from the following executive committee meetings:**

- January 10, 2009
- February 20, 2009
- April 17, 2009
- June 1, 2009

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Aeikens reported that the recent Citizen Journalism Academy held in Minneapolis received positive evaluations from its attendees.

He reminded the group about the upcoming lobbying trip to Washington, D.C.

He acknowledged the absence of Executive Director Terry Harper.

**MEMBERSHIP EXTENSION UPDATE**

Eight members have taken advantage of the membership waiver since its inception in April. The extension has been promoted heavily and we will continue to promote it.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

An update on the following programs was provided: Narrative Writing Workshops, Newsroom Training Programs, Reporters Institute, Scripps Leadership Institute, Town Hall programs and Regional Conferences.

**ANNUAL REPORTS**

A report was received from the Regional Directors with a proposal for changes to the annual report and star ranking system.

**Upon proper motion and second by Brewer and McCloskey, respectively, the executive committee accepts the Regional Directors' recommendation of presenting the proposal to the board of directors for consideration.**

## **BOARD NOMINATIONS**

The chair of the Nominations Committee, Clint Brewer, provided the slate of candidates to date:

President-elect: Hagit Limor

Secretary/Treasurer: Darcie Lunsford

VP Campus Affairs: Neil Ralston and Shoshi Mabina

Region 2 Director: Brian Eckert

Region 3 Director: Michael Koretzky

Region 6 Director: Amanda Theissen

Region 10 Director: Dana Neuts

Region 11 Director: Jodi Cleesattle

Region 12 Director: Sonny Albarado

At-Large Director: Bill McCloskey

Campus Adviser At-Large: George Daniels

Campus Representatives: Brittany Patterson and Stephen Taylor and Andrew Seaman

## **2009 CONVENTION**

Some members had raised concern over a convention program about outsourcing prior to the meeting. The executive committee discussed the topic.

**Upon proper motion and second by Brewer and Lunsford, respectively, the executive committee decided to remove the outsourcing session from the convention program. Kevin voted no**

A general overview of the convention was provided by Vachon.

Skeel provided an update on the Centennial Yearbook and the executive committee was informed that the Foundation was covering all the expenses for the book.

The Executive Committee discussed the status of the amount of money in the Legal Defense Fund and the concept of repurposing the convention's auction for the Harper Memorial Fund.

**Upon proper motion and second by Smith and Limor, respectively, the executive committee indicated the money raised from the 2009 convention auction be directed to the Harper Memorial Fund.**

## **2010 CONVENTION**

The convention is scheduled for Oct 3-6 at the Planet Hollywood in Las Vegas (this is the same hotel where the SPJ convention was held in 2005, it just changed its name from the Aladdin to Planet Hollywood).

## **2011 CONVENTION**

Vachon has had a couple of call with the RTNDA Chair Stacey Woelfel to discuss some preliminary action items regarding the partnership.

## **HARPER MEMORIAL FUND**

The committee has met a few times and has come up with some preliminary ideas about the purpose of the fund. So far the ideas are:

- An award for professional excellence
- An award for online enterprise reporting
- Grants to help journalists attend our training programs



### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH**

A committee has been formed and they have been divided into two subcommittees:

- Research and writing: Lucy Daghish, Ian Marquand, George Daniels and Kevin Smith
- Job Search: Renee Petrina, Darcie Lunsford, Steve Geimann and Hagit Limor

The tentative timeline for the search was reviewed with the group.

The Executive Committee reviewed Harper's contract and discussed the fact that his contract includes the granting of 90 days of his salary in the event of his death.

### **STAFF RAISES**

Skeel and Vachon requested consideration of raises, due to the passing of Executive Director Terry Harper, from the FY08/09 budget.

The Executive Committee went into executive session to discuss.

**Upon proper motion and second, Brewer and Smith, respectively, moved to close the executive committee meeting.**

The Executive Committee met to discuss pay increases for Chris Vachon and Joe Skeel and decided to award 4% raises to each, retroactively to January 1, 2009.

The Executive Committee decided to award each Interim Co-Executive Director a one-time bonus of \$2,500 each, payable upon completion of those interim duties.

**Upon proper motion and second, Limor and Smith, respectively, moved to reopen the executive committee meeting.**

### **AWARDS**

#### **DAVID L. ESHELMAN OUTSTANDING CAMPUS ADVISER AWARD**

The David L. Eshelman Outstanding Campus Adviser Award honors individuals who have done an outstanding job serving as SPJ campus adviser and who have contributed to their chapters and the national organization over an extended period of time.

**Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Ralston, respectively, Beth Konrad, Loyola University Chicago, was awarded the David L. Eshelman Outstanding Campus Adviser Award.**

#### **DISTINGUISHED TEACHING IN JOURNALISM AWARD**

The Distinguished Teaching in Journalism Award honors an outstanding journalism educator who has made a significant contribution to the profession and/or journalism education.

**Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Smith, respectively, Max Branscomb, Southwestern College, was awarded the Distinguished Teaching in Journalism Award.**

#### **ETHICS IN JOURNALISM AWARD**

The Ethics in Journalism Award honors reporters, editors or news organizations that distinguish themselves in performing an outstanding ethical manner as defined by the SPJ Code of Ethics.

**No award winner was selected.**

### **FELLOWS OF THE SOCIETY**

The highest honor the Society bestows upon a journalist is awarded for extraordinary contributions to the profession. Nominations are open to members of the journalism profession.

**Upon proper motion and second by Limor and Lunsford, respectively, Nelson Poynter, Stanley E. Hubbard and Austin Kiplinger were made 2009 Fellows of the Society.**

**FIRST AMENDMENT AWARD**

The First Amendment Award honors individuals and organizations for extraordinarily strong efforts to preserve and strengthen the First Amendment.

**Upon proper motion and second by Smith and McCloskey, respectively, The Oklahoman/NewsOK.com; Detroit Free Press; and Marjie Lundstrom and Sam Stanton, Sacramento Bee, were awarded First Amendment Awards.**

**HELEN THOMAS AWARD FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT**

The Helen Thomas Award for Lifetime Achievement is presented to an individual or individuals for a lifetime of contribution and service to the journalism profession.

**Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Ralston respectively, Robert Churchwell was awarded the 2009 Helen Thomas Award for Lifetime Achievement.**

**HOWARD S. DUBIN OUTSTANDING PRO MEMBER AWARD**

The Howard S. Dubin Outstanding Pro Member Award salutes individual professional members who have made significant contributions to their SPJ chapter. One award may be presented to a member of a large chapter (75 or more members) and one from a smaller chapter (less than 75 members). Individuals must be nominated by their chapter's board of directors.

**No award winner selected.**

**JULIE GALVAN OUTSTANDING GRADUATE IN JOURNALISM AWARD**

At the close of the college year, each campus chapter of the Society selects one graduate in journalism who is outstanding in his/her class on the basis of character, service to the community, scholarship, proficiency in practical journalism and significant contributions to their SPJ chapter.

**Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Limor, respectively, Megan Peterson, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, was named the 2009 Julie Galvan Outstanding Graduate in Journalism.**

**REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD**

The Regional Director of the Year Award honors individuals serving as an SPJ regional director for outstanding service to their region and the national organization during the preceding year.

**Upon proper motion and second by Smith and Limor, respectively, Region 3 Director Darcie Lunsford, was selected as the Regional Director of the Year.**

**SUNSHINE AWARDS**

The Sunshine Award recognizes individuals and groups for making important contributions in the area of open government.

**Upon proper motion and second by Limor and Lunsford, respectively, Project on Government Oversight, was awarded a Sunshine Award.**

**WELLS KEY**

The committee went into executive session to select the winner of the Wells Key.

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

Upon proper motion and second by Limor and Brewer, respectively, the meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

DRAFT

**MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS  
SEPTEMBER 29, 2009  
CONFERENCE CALL**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

With President Kevin Smith presiding, the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2009.

**ROLL CALL**

In addition to Smith, the following were present: Hagit Limor, Darcie Lunsford, Neil Ralston, Dave Aeikens and Bill McCloskey.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT**

President Smith called the conference call meeting for the purpose of discussing the employment contract for new Executive Director Joe Skeel.

**Upon proper motion and second by Lunsford and Limor, respectively, the committee voted go to into executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel-related issues.**

A discussion of what would be acceptable and prudent contract terms commenced. No binding vote or actions were taken.

**Upon proper motion and second by Limor and Ralston, respectively, the committee voted to exit the executive session.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**The meeting was adjourned upon exiting executive session at 4:55 p.m.**

**MINUTES**  
**MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**  
**SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS**  
**NOVEMBER 18, 2009**  
**INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

With President Kevin Smith presiding, the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 10:48 a.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2009, via a telephonic conference call originating in Indianapolis, Indiana.

**ROLL CALL**

In addition to Smith, the following were present: President-elect Hagit Limor; Past President Dave Aeikens; Secretary-treasurer Darcie Lunsford; Vice President Campus Chapter Affairs Neil Ralston; Director-at-Large Bill McCloskey; Region 12 Director Sonny Albarado; Executive Director Joe Skeel; Associate Executive Director Chris Vachon; Controller Jake Koenig; and Greenwalt Sponsel representative Amanda Meko.

**REVIEW OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Two documents were included as part of the audit report: a letter to the board of directors of the Society of Professional Journalists and the Society of Professional Journalists' Audited Financial Statements for the fiscal year ended July 31, 2009.

Amanda Meko reported that the auditors had no disagreements with management during the audit and that they received great cooperation from the staff and management. The auditors are prepared to issue a clean opinion on the financial statements.

Meko reviewed the Society's statements of financial position and the balance sheet.

The auditors stated there no material weaknesses were identified.

**Upon a proper motion and second by Limor and Lunsford, respectively, the Executive Committee approved the audited financial statements.**

The members of the Executive Committee declined the offer from Meko for an executive session.

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

**Upon a proper motion and second by McCloskey and Lunsford, respectively, the Executive Committee agreed to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 a.m.**

**AGENDA**  
**SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**TIME: 4 P.M. EST – CONFERENCE CALL**  
**MARCH 4, 2010**

1. Call to Order – *Smith*

2. Roll Call – *Lunsford*

- |              |                 |            |               |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|
| a. Smith     | g. Koretzky     | m. Eckert  | s. Cooper     |
| b. Limor     | h. Puckey       | n. Rowell  | t. Ensslin    |
| c. Lunsford  | i. Seaman       | o. Steele  | u. Neuts      |
| d. Ralston   | j. Kopen Katcef | p. Hansen  | v. Cleesattle |
| e. Aeikens   | k. Daniels      | q. Theisen | w. Albarado   |
| f. McCloskey | l. Turmelle     | r. Edgell  |               |

3. Discussion items

- a. Membership growth and plans – *Smith*
- b. Budget – *Smith/Skeel*
- c. FCC – *Smith*
- d. Regional conferences – *Smith*
- e. Shield Law – *Smith*
- f. Ethics town hall meetings – *Smith*
- g. Ethics book – *Smith*
- h. Model bylaws – *Smith*
- i. SDX Monument cleanup – *Smith/Vachon*
- j. KnowledgeWebb partnership – *Skeel*

4. Adjournment