

# **SPJ Executive Board Meeting Minutes**

## **July 10, 2004 - Washington, D.C.**

### **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

With President Mac McKerral presiding, the meeting of the executive committee of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 12:30 p.m. on July 10, 2004, at the Hilton Garden Inn at Franklin Square in Washington, D.C.

### **ROLL CALL**

In addition to President McKerral, the following were present for all or a portion of the meeting:

Irwin Gratz, President-elect  
David Carlson, Secretary/Treasurer  
Jim Highland, Vice President for Campus Chapter Affairs  
Robert Leger, Immediate Past President  
Guy Baehr, Region 1 Director  
Holly Fisher, Region 3 Director  
Terrence G. Harper, Executive Director  
Julie F. Grimes, Deputy Executive Director  
Gail Kiles, Assistant Director of Programs  
Greg Jones, Multimedia Coordinator.

Also present for a portion of the meeting were Pete Weitzel and Rick Blum.

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**

Rick Blum of OMB Watch and Pete Weitzel of the Coalition of Journalists for Open Government updated the committee on the coalition's activities. Weitzel offered information about the group's purpose and pointed out the need to better coordinate efforts in the area of freedom of information. Weitzel encouraged SPJ leaders to keep him up apprised of SPJ's FOI activities.

The group discussed The Associated Press' recent commitment to aggressively pursue access issues.

Weitzel discussed the need to get early research about potential access issues and legislation. That information must then be quickly distributed through a reliable network. He also spoke about educating journalists about editorializing about access issues. He said there's a need to explain to readers that certain information is not available because the government refused to disclose it.

Weitzel reiterated his request that SPJ keep the coalition informed about its FOI activities.

### **LEGACY FAMILY INSTITUTE PROPOSAL**

Gratz addressed the proposal presented by SPJ FOI Committee Co-Chair Joel Campbell regarding the Legacy Family Institute. The Institute would like to work with SPJ to provide training on the coverage of child welfare and the juvenile justice system. The Institute seeks to use SPJ's partnership to seek funding for the training program.

After discussion, McKerral stated that he will direct Campbell and FOI Committee Co-Chair Charles Davis to correspond with this group and develop a proposed arrangement. The committee stipulated that any grants written by the Institute that included SPJ's name would require approval prior to presenting the grant to any outside organizations.

### **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

McKerral provided a verbal president's report. He noted that SPJ lawyers recommended that board members drop the option of fax ballots for votes.

McKerral also noted that he would be forming a Web Committee that would develop ideas for revisions to SPJ's Web site. He's seeking recommendations and would like to see new people involved in the committee.

The committee briefly reviewed the Baker & Hostetler memo regarding the b-monthly meeting at the Newspaper Association of American on May 27, 2004. The memo was included in the board packet for informational purposes only.

### **MEMBERSHIP: INTERNATIONAL CHAPTERS**

The committee reviewed notes from the International Journalism Committee (available in the board packet) regarding the creation of international chapters. Dan Kubiske, co-chair of the International Journalism Committee was present to address the group. The Executive Committee would like the Membership Committee to review the International Journalism Committee's notes and make a recommendation to the board of directors at the fall meeting. This recommendation should include thoughts about an international membership category and whether international chapters should be created and, if so, how they should operate.

### **MEMBERSHIP: YOUNG JOURNALISTS DIVISION**

Fisher referred to her written update in the board packet. She suggested that membership in the Young Journalists Division be expanded to 35 years of age (up from 32). She has established a site for discussion at [www.youngspj.com](http://www.youngspj.com). A small group of leaders continues to develop program ideas and look for other areas of involvement for this age group. The group is leaning towards "Generation J" as a group name.

### **STAFF REPORTS: JOURNALISMTRAINING.ORG**

Grimes briefly updated the group on activities related to JournalismTraining.org. Gratz will contact Ted Gest, director of the Council of National Journalism Organizations, to discuss this project further. Staff will continue to work on the project and will, at some point, pursue additional funding for the site.

Staff Reports: Archibald PR Scholarship/Internship

Upon a proper motion and second by Leger and Carlson, the committee approved language describing the Archibald Communications Internship. That language follows:

### **ARCHIBALD COMMUNICATIONS INTERNSHIP**

Administration: The Archibald Communications Internship is made possible through a bequest from the estate of Fred I. Archibald, a longtime Maryland newspaperman. The internship is funded through the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation.

Purpose: The Archibald Communications Internship is an eight-week summer internship at the Society's national headquarters in Indianapolis. The intern will work on analyzing the Society's existing marketing strategies as developing new strategies.

Eligibility: To be considered, applicants must include the following:

- Completed application
- Résumé
- A one-page essay that illustrates your understanding of communications strategies and what you expect to gain from the internship
- Three to five examples of your work

Applicants must be journalism students, concentrating in communications or public relations, who have completed at least their junior year.

### **BUSINESS SYSTEMS**

The group briefly discussed the Internal Technology Update provided in the board packets. Committee members pointed out the need to budget specific costs in the future for virus protection software; membership database Web components; Web site redesign; and a system to replace computer hardware as

necessary.

### **LDF GUIDELINES**

The committee reviewed the Legal Defense Fund history and current guidelines, which were available in the board packets. They discussed the use of LDF funds for promoting the fund itself. No vote was taken, but the general consensus of the group was the money in this fund should be used only for the exact definition of the fund; funding for any promotions should come from other sources.

### **FACS/SPJ PARTNERSHIP**

The committee reviewed a grant proposal draft outlining a partnership between SPJ and the Foundation for American Communications. The proposal would center around FACS providing knowledge-based training, with SPJ following up with skills training and some tangible resource for participants and the journalism industry. This proposal is based on a similar arrangement between FACS and Religion News Writers. Harper said this could be a good opportunity for chapters or regional conferences to have an automatic programming opportunity available to them. The consensus of the group was that this was a good start, but it needed additional development.

### **STIPEND GUIDELINES**

The committee reviewed the board of directors and committee chair stipend guidelines proposal, which was available in the board packet.

Upon a proper motion and second by Gratz and Highland, the committee voted to recommend the policy as amended to the full board of directors for approval.

The policy to be reviewed by the board of directors is attached to these minutes.

### **WARD NEFF INTERNSHIP RECOMMENDATION**

Three proposals (in addendum packet). West Virginia University, University of Oklahoma, University of Mississippi.

Highland recommends the University of Oklahoma.

Motion by Highland. Second by Leger.

Important to get today's news in PressNotes. Make consideration for it being in the Eastern Time Zone. Should be out by 11 a.m. Eastern (10 a.m. Central).

Transition date is around Labor Day.

### **AWARDS: FIRST AMENDMENT**

Upon a proper motion and second by Gratz and Leger, the committee voted to present a First Amendment Award to Beryl Howell.

### **AWARDS: SUNSHINE AWARDS**

Upon a proper motion and second by Leger and Carlson, the committee voted to present Sunshine Awards to Joe Adams of the Florida Times-Union; Megan Fromm of Grand Junction, Colo.; and the Montana FOI Hotline.

### **AWARDS: ETHICS AWARD**

The committee referred discussion about an ethics in Journalism Award to the Ethics Committee for a recommendation at a future date.

### **AWARDS:**

#### **HOWARD DUBIN OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL MEMBER AWARD**

Upon a proper motion and second by Gratz and Highland, the committee voted to present the Howard Dubin Outstanding Professional Member Award to Roberta Wax.

### **AWARDS: REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR**

Upon a proper motion and second by Gratz and Highland, the committee voted to present the Regional Director of the Year Award to Region 6 Director Dave Aeikens.

### **AWARDS: HELEN THOMAS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

Upon a proper motion and second by Carlson and Leger, the committee voted to present the Helen Thomas Lifetime Achievement Award to Tom Brokaw.

### **AWARDS: FELLOWS OF THE SOCIETY**

Upon a proper motion and second by Carlson and Gratz, the committee voted to name Anne Garrels of NPR, Tom Curley of The Associated Press, and Bob Woodward Fellows of the Society.

### **AWARDS: JULIE GALVAN OUTSTANDING GRADUATE AWARD**

Upon a proper motion and second by Highland and Fisher, the committee voted to present the Julie Galvan Outstanding Graduate Award to Paul Grzanka of the University of Maryland.

### **AWARD: DAVID ESHELMAN OUTSTANDING CAMPUS ADVISER AWARD**

Upon a proper motion and second by Highland and Leger, the committee voted to present the David Eshelman Outstanding Campus Adviser Award to George Keeler.

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

Upon a proper motion and second by Leger and Carlson, the committee voted to present the Distinguished Teaching in Journalism Award posthumously to Dr. Steve Pasternack of New Mexico State University.

The committee also instructed Awards and Honors Committee Chairman Guy Baehr to review the awards criteria for any necessary revisions and make recommendations to the board of directors at the fall meeting.

### **AWARDS: GREEN EYESHADE AWARDS DISCUSSION**

The committee reviewed the information presented in the board packet by Carolyn Carlson about the latest Green Eyeshade Awards contest.

Upon a proper motion and second by Leger and Fisher the committee voted to assign staff the task of reorganizing the contest category structure. Staff should consult with Baehr, Fisher and an Atlanta representative.

In addition, the Atlanta chapter will devote its energy to building its membership base, and the national office will run the awards program on its own in the coming year.

### **QUILL COMMITTEE**

Carlson updated the group on the recent activities of the Quill Committee. Carlson said the committee was prepared to recommend that SPJ should continue to publish Quill with a new content focus. It should be more of a "service magazine," with a focus on "how to" stories. A professional redesign is in order to give the magazine more "personality." Content changes will help with that, too, especially shorter, quicker stories. The committee would like to see an advisory board in place when the new editor is hired, but the board should act in an advisory capacity only. The Executive Committee instructed the Quill Committee to file its report with the board.

### **BOOK/CD PROPOSAL**

Upon a proper motion and second by Leger and Highland, the committee voted to seek a grant to fund the preparation of a book and/or CD highlighting the work of SPJ's Sigma Delta Chi and possibly the Mark of Excellence Award recipients.

### **BYLAWS PROPOSALS**

Upon a proper motion and second by Gratz and Leger, the committee voted to certify the bylaws proposal presented by the Western Washington Pro Chapter, with 10 supporting chapters. The proposal will be

forwarded to the voting delegates for consideration at the fall convention.

Leger reminded staff to include previous bylaws change recommendations supported by the board in the mailing to delegates. These included revisions to the bylaws preamble and a proposed change to the section that outlines the board's ability to make changes to the dues structure.

The board discussed the remaining bylaws proposals, which were in the board packet and had been reviewed by the bylaws committee.

Upon a proper motion and second by Carlson and Leger, the committee voted to propose wording changes to Article 6 Section 1 to read: "The board shall establish a nominating committee which shall seek a slate of candidates. Any society member can nominate any eligible member as a candidate. All nominations must be received by June 1."

Upon a proper motion and second by Gratz and Baehr, the committee voted to propose working changes to Article 6 Sections 2-4 to read as follows:

#### Section 2

The officers and board members shall be elected by ballots mailed to eligible members by July 1. Members shall have the option of returning their ballots by mail but only those received by Aug. 1 shall be counted. If feasible, members shall also be allowed to vote through a suitably secure voting system.

#### Section 3

Professional, student, and post graduate members in good standing as of June 1 shall be eligible to vote.

#### Section 4

The board shall establish an elections committee to oversee the election process, including ballot preparation, counting of ballots, and resolution of disputes. The chair of the committee shall certify the results to the convention.

Upon a proper motion and second by Leger and Carlson, the committee voted to propose wording changes to Article 7 Section 2 as follows: "Officers shall hold office between successive annual national conventions, with the exception of the vice president for campus chapter affairs, who shall be elected for a two-year term between conventions in odd numbered years."

Upon a proper motion and second by Highland and Fisher, the committee voted to recommend wording changes in Article 8 as amended.

No recommendations were made concerning Article 9.

A copy of the proposed bylaws changes to be sent to delegates is attached to these minutes.

Staff should prepare the delegate mailing and distribute it this weekend.

### **WELLS KEY DISCUSSION**

The group adjourned, and the officers selected the Wells Key recipient.

APPENDIX ITEM 1: Stipend Guidelines for Full Board Approval

### **SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS**

#### **STIPEND GUIDELINES FOR BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

effective September 12, 2004

#### **STIPENDS**

As of Fiscal Year 2005, officers, board members and committee chairs receive the following stipends for work and travel done on behalf of SPJ:

President: \$7,500  
President-Elect: \$3,000  
Secretary-Treasurer: \$1,500  
Immediate Past President: \$1,500  
Regional Directors (12): \$750  
Committee Chairs (10): \$500  
Directors/Advisors-at-large (4): \$750  
Vice President Campus Chapter Affairs\*: \$3,540  
Student Representatives (2)\*: \$1,700

\*There is no set limit on stipends for the VPCCA and Student Representatives, but the Executive Director must approve any reimbursable expenses for the people serving in these offices before the expenses are incurred. The dollar amounts listed here for VPCCA and the Student Representatives are approximations.

## **REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES**

Board members and committee chairs receive annual stipends for work they do on behalf of the Society. They should remember they have a fiduciary responsibility to the Society and stipends should be used strictly for work related to SPJ. Board members and committee chairs also should solicit support from their employers (when applicable) to help cover expenses incurred while conducting SPJ business.

Approved reimbursements include:

- Airfare
- Car Rental
- Mileage for personal vehicle (prevailing IRS rate)
- Lodging
- Meals (up to \$50 per day)
- Miscellaneous travel expenses, including parking fees, cab fares and toll fees

The following expenses will not be reimbursed:

- National Convention and Regional Conference registration fees within the home region (including meal event tickets)
- Alcohol-related expenses
- Entertainment

The goal of the stipend is to offset travel expenses for regional directors traveling within their regions, for directors-at-large traveling around the country for SPJ business and for officers who makes trips and visits on behalf of SPJ. Board members and committee chairs should use their best judgment when requesting reimbursements.

Board members should make every effort to stretch the SPJ dollar by using the least expensive form of travel. Mileage reimbursement requests should not exceed the cost of the lowest non-refundable airfare.

Board members are free to secure their own lodging for any SPJ event, however, the reimbursement request should not exceed the rate at the “headquarters” hotel.

Expenses incurred for spouses/significant others are not eligible for reimbursement.

A key word to insert before all eligible reimbursements is “reasonable.” SPJ does not expect volunteers to stay in shoddy hotels and eat every meal at fast-food establishments. Likewise, staying at five-star hotels and dining at expensive restaurants every night is similarly discouraged.

## **REIMBURSEMENT REQUESTS**

Requests should be submitted using an SPJ expense account form (available from SPJ headquarters). Receipts or copies of receipts must be included with all reimbursement requests.

All requests for reimbursement should be submitted within 30 days to SPJ headquarters. Expense reports

submitted more than 60 days after the expenses have been incurred shall not be reimbursed.

The stipend timeline runs from the close of the national convention to the close of the following national convention in accordance with board member and committee chair terms. This ensures outgoing board members or committee chairs do not tap into their successor's stipends.

Questions about reimbursements or requests for waivers should be directed to SPJ's Executive Director.

## APPENDIX ITEM 2: Bylaws Proposal for Delegates

July 11, 2004

Dear Chapter Leaders:

As I have stated earlier, this year more than ever it will be important to have your chapter represented at the SPJ National Convention in New York City, Sept. 9-11.

And it will be more important that you and all your chapter members fully understand some of the critical issues facing the voting delegates you send to the convention.

Among the most important are proposed changes to the SPJ bylaws. The specific language for proposed changes initiated by the SPJ board, drafted by the SPJ Bylaws Committee and approved by the SPJ Executive Committee is attached to this letter.

Also enclosed are proposed bylaws changes initiated by the Western Washington Pro Chapter.

As for the SPJ board-initiated proposals, during its spring board meeting, the board voted to have the bylaws committee draft proposed bylaws changes:

— that would reduce the number of regional directors by creating these regions — north, south, east, west, northwest, southwest and midwest. Right now SPJ has 12 regions identified by number. As per the current bylaws, it will remain the purview of the board to determine the makeup of regions.

— that would eliminate the secretary-treasurer position and assign those duties to another officer.

— that would redefine the requirements for serving as an officer of the board.

— that would set the number of at-large directors on the national board at six, the two that exist now plus one for print, one for broadcast, one for new media and one for freelance journalists.

— that would change the way board members are elected from the current delegate system to a one member, one vote system. The delegate system would remain for handling bylaws changes and resolutions. Direct elections would only apply to board seats.

Please remember and let your chapter members know: These proposed changes come with no recommendation for or against from the full board, although individual board members have positions on all of them.

As for the proposed changes initiated by Western Washington Pro, these deal with determining the number and boundaries of regions.

Please do not hesitate to be in touch if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mac McKerral

President  
mmckerral@spj.org  
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS  
OF THE  
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS

Additions noted in bold.  
Subtractions noted with strikethrough.

#### PREAMBLE

We do hereby establish and ordain these Bylaws of the Society of Professional Journalists, which seeks to unite journalists of talent, truth and energy in good fellowship; to assist the members in living up to the noblest principles of journalism; and to advance the standards of journalism by: **TAKING ACTION** to help safeguard First Amendment guarantees and ensure freedom of information, **FOSTERING** adherence to a code of ethical principles, **CREATING** opportunities for professional development, **ENCOURAGING** diversity in coverage and staffing at all levels of the profession, fostering a high ethical code, thus increasing journalism's value as a democratic institution.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

The bylaws committee recommends that this amendment be **REJECTED**. Two years ago we attempted to simplify the bylaws. Adding these mission statement issues clutter the document. These issues have nothing to do with the purpose of bylaws. The purpose of the bylaws is to outline the Society's governance issues. (Bylaws: The official rules and regulations which govern a corporation's management. —from InvestorWords.com.)

The issues of First Amendment, Freedom of Information, ethics, professional development and ethics and covered in the Society's "Mission Statement" and diversity is specifically referred to in the Code of Ethics.

From the Code: Tell the story of the diversity and magnitude of the human experience boldly, even when it is unpopular to do so.

From the mission Statement: It is the mission of the Society of Professional Journalists:

- To promote this flow of information.
- To maintain constant vigilance in protection of the First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and of the press.
- To stimulate high standards and ethical behavior in the practice of journalism.
- To foster excellence among journalists.
- To inspire successive generations of talented individuals to become dedicated journalists.
- To encourage diversity in journalism.
- To be the pre-eminent, broad-based membership organization for journalists.
- To encourage a climate in which journalism can be practiced freely.

#### ARTICLE SIX (NEW)

##### Elections

Section One. The board shall establish a nominating committee which shall seek a slate of candidates. Any Society member can nominate any eligible member as a candidate. All nominations must be received by June 1.

Section Two. The officers and board members shall be elected by ballots mailed to eligible members by July 1. Members shall have the option of returning their ballots by mail, but only those received by August 1 shall be counted. If feasible, members shall also be allowed to vote through a suitably secure online voting system.

Section Three. Professional, student and postgraduate members in good standing as of June 1 shall be eligible to vote.

Section Four. The board shall establish an elections committee to oversee the election process, including ballot preparation, counting of ballots and resolution of disputes. The chair of the committee shall certify the results to the convention.

#### RECOMMENDATION

The board of directors offers no recommendation on the proposed amendments to Article Six.

All succeeding Articles are renumbered.

#### ARTICLE SEVEN (RENUMBERED)

##### Society's Officers

Section One. The Society's officers shall be a president, a president-elect and a vice president for campus chapter affairs, and a secretary-treasurer.

Section Two. The officers shall be elected by the convention and shall hold office between successive, annual national conventions, with the exception of the vice president for campus chapter affairs, who shall be elected for a two-year term between conventions in odd-numbered years.

Section Three. No person shall serve as president or president-elect who has not previously served as a member of the board of directors, or the board of the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation, or been the chair of a national committee or as a professional chapter president who also has been or is a member of a national committee been a dues paying member for three consecutive years immediately preceding the start of the proposed term.

Section Eight. The secretary-treasurer shall be responsible for overseeing an accounting of all receipts and disbursements, assets and liabilities, and shall report to the president, to the board of directors, or to the convention when requested.

#### RECOMMENDATION

The board of directors offers no recommendation on the proposed amendments to the renumbered Article Seven.

#### ARTICLE EIGHT (RENUMBERED)

##### ARTICLE EIGHT

##### Board of Directors

Section One. The board of directors shall be composed of the national officers, the immediate past president, one regional director for each region established by the board, of seven geographic regions (north, south, east coast, west coast, midwest, northeast and southwest), and six 10 directors to be elected at large: two campus chapter advisers, two campus members, and two six professional members at least one representing each print, broadcast, new media and freelance journalists.

Section Two. The board of directors shall determine the boundaries for regions.

Section Three. Regional directors shall be nominated in a manner determined by the board of directors, and shall be elected by delegates from their respective regions at times and places established by the board of directors elected by eligible members from their respective regions.

Section Seven. The campus members at large shall be elected to one-year terms. The professional members at large and the campus advisers at large shall be elected to two-year terms. The terms of the non-student at large members shall be staggered so one of each non-occupation-specific professional, and one campus advisor is elected each year and two of the occupation-specific at-large members are elected each year.

## RECOMMENDATION

The board of directors offers no recommendation on the proposed amendments to the renumbered Article Eight.

## ARTICLE TWELVE

### Finance

Section One. National membership dues, as established by the Board of Directors, shall be payable at the time of or before initiation and annually thereafter. Dues shall include membership and a subscription to Quill. Any annual dues increase in excess of five 10 percent shall not become effective unless ratified by the convention.

## RECOMMENDATION:

The Bylaws committee recommends that the delegates vote NO.

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS OF THE SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS SUBMITTED BY THE WESTERN WASHINGTON PRO CHAPTER

Additions noted in bold.

Subtractions noted with strikethrough.

## ARTICLE SEVEN

Section One. The board of directors shall be composed of the national officers, the immediate past president, one regional director for each of the 12 regions established by the board, and six directors to be elected at large: two campus chapter advisers, two campus members, and two professional members. Changing the number of regions by expansion or contraction shall require a majority vote of the board of directors and a majority vote of the delegates at convention from the specific region or regions affected by the proposed expansion or contraction.

Section Two. The board of directors with approval of the majority of delegates at convention shall determine the boundaries for regions. Proposals to change the boundaries of regions shall first require a majority vote of the board of directors and secondly require ratification by a majority of votes cast by delegates at convention.

*NOTE: The SPJ executive committee that the following chapters have joined the Western Washington Pro Chapter in submitting these proposed amendments to the bylaws: Montana Pro, New Jersey Pro, Inland Northwest Pro, Greater Oregon Pro, William O. Douglas Pro, Bluegrass Pro, Fort Worth Pro, Louisville Pro and Washington, DC Pro.*