

**MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS  
APRIL 22, 2006  
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA**

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**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

With President David Carlson presiding, the meeting of the board of directors of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 9:37 a.m. on Saturday, April 22, 2006, at the Eugene S. Pulliam National Journalism Center in Indianapolis.

**ROLL CALL**

In addition to President Carlson, the following were present for all or portions of the meeting: President-Elect Christine Tatum; Secretary-Treasurer Bruce Cadwallader; Immediate Past President Irwin Gratz; Vice President for Campus Chapter Affairs Mead Loop; Directors at-Large Sally Lehrman and Molly McDonough; Advisers at-Large Sue Kopen-Katcef and Neil Ralston; Campus Representatives Ashlee Clark and Adrian Uribarri; Regional Directors Carl Corry, Ann Augherton, Holly Fisher, Joe Wessels, Richard Roth, Gordon Govier, Ron Sylvester, Travis Poling, Deb Hurley, Nathan Isaacs, Paul McAfee, and Clint Brewer; and Executive Director Terrence G. Harper.

Other staff members present for the meeting were Associate Executive Director Chris Vachon; Associate Executive Director Julie Grimes, Quill Editor Joe Skeel; Programs Coordinator Heather Porter; Communications Manager Beth King; Web Administrator Billy O'Keefe; Accounting Manager Linda Hall; and Controller Jake Koenig.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Upon proper motion and second by Cadwallader and Ralston, respectively, the board approved the minutes of the Oct. 15, 2005 board of directors meeting.**

**Upon proper motion and second by Hurley and Lehrman, respectively, the board approved the minutes of the Oct. 19, 2005 board of directors meeting.**

**WARD NEFF INTERNSHIP**

Loop presented his recommendation that the University of Tennessee be awarded the Ward Neff Internship for 2006 — 2008, effective in mid-August 2006. Several campuses applied for the internship. Loop and Skeel reviewed the applications and determined Tennessee's to be the strongest. A strong local chapter coupled with the school's recommendations for enhancing PressNotes were cited as deciding factors in the recommendation.

**Upon proper motion and second by Ralston and Fisher, respectively, the board awarded the Ward Neff Internship for 2006 — 2008 to the University of Tennessee, under the direction of adviser Dorothy Bowles.**

**CAMPUS MEDIA STATEMENT**

In response to a number of recent incidents involving the student media — including the United States Supreme Court's refusal to review the decision in *Hosty v. Carter* and the removal of advisers to student publications — Loop presented a Campus Media Statement that had been presented and adopted by the Executive Committee at its January 14, 2006, meeting. Loop requested the statement's endorsement by the full board.

**Upon proper motion and second by Katcef and Hurley, respectively, the board approved, in spirit, the following statement:**

Our student media are designated public forums and free from censorship and advance

approval of content. Student media are free to develop editorial policies and news coverage with the understanding that students and student organizations speak only for themselves. Administrators, faculty, staff or other agents shall not consider the student media's content when making decisions regarding the media's funding.

SPJ will encourage colleges and universities to adopt this statement.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION**

The board went into executive session to complete the evaluation of the Executive Director. When the board reconvened in open session, the following actions were taken:

**Upon proper motion and second by Gratz and Tatum, respectively, the board approved a five percent increase in the executive director's salary, effective August 1, 2006.**

**Upon proper motion and second by Gratz and Uribarri, respectively, the board authorized Carlson to negotiate a new, long-term employment agreement with executive director.**

## **FY 2007 BUDGET**

Cadwallader reviewed organization's budget process and budget proposal, which was distributed at the meeting after one change was made during the Finance Committee meeting the previous day. Koenig explained how the budget was prepared and answered questions from the board.

**Upon proper motion and second by Roth and Poling, the board approved the 2006-07 SPJ budget as presented by the Finance Committee.**

The budget is attached to these minutes as Exhibit A.

## **BUILDING ISSUES COMMITTEE APPOINTED**

Carlson appointed an ad hoc committee on building issues. The committee should prepare a preliminary report and/or plan of action for review during the Executive Committee meeting in June. Committee members are: Tatum, Cadwallader, Isaacs and Wessels. Tatum will chair the committee.

## **GREEN EYESHADE AWARDS**

Arising from a meeting of the regional directors held prior to the start of the board meeting; a recommendation was made to place the Green Eyeshade Awards under the auspices of the regional directors whose regions are included in the contest area. All revenue from the Green Eyeshade Awards program will be disseminated to the regional accounts in the regions. Revenue sharing will be based on the percentage of entries each year from each region. The regional directors involved will hire a contest administrator each year to execute contest marketing and duties. Regional directors will market the contest at the local level as part of their regular duties. It was noted that this change will have a negative impact on the Society's budget of approximately \$18,000.

**Upon proper motion and second by Brewer and Tatum, respectively, the board voted to return the Green Eyeshade Awards program to the regional level for administration, effective immediately.**

## **MARK OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS PROPOSAL**

The regional directors proposed some changes to the Mark of Excellence Awards contest, reducing the number of categories from 43 to 37. This was done primarily by consolidating most of the online categories into other categories. The changes focus on how stories are reported and presented, irrespective of platform.

It was moved and seconded by Brewer and Roth, respectively, to adopt the proposed changes.

**The main motion was amended by Tatum and Gratz, respectively, to refer the proposed changes to the Awards and Honors Committee for review and a recommendation by the August board of directors meeting. The amended motion passed.**

Carlson appointed Hurley and Uribarri to serve as members of the Awards and Honors Committee.

In addition to the proposal by the Regional Director Caucus, Carlson instructed the Awards and Honors Committee to the committee review the costs to enter the contest and research the low number of entries in online categories.

## **PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE BYLAWS**

Carlson reviewed a proposed amendment to Article Six, Sections One and Two, of the Society's bylaws that would enable each member of the Society to vote for officers and at-large directors, replacing the current system of voting by delegation. The proposed amendment would affect only officer and at-large director elections.

**Upon a properly amended motion by Brewer and Uribarri, respectively, the board voted to refer the following language to delegates for consideration at the 2006 convention, and instructed Carlson to appoint a committee to establish election procedures that will be reviewed by the Executive Committee at its next meeting.**

### **ARTICLE SIX**

#### Society's Officers

Section One. The Society's officers shall be a president, a president-elect, a vice president for campus chapter affairs, and a secretary-treasurer. The board shall certify eligible candidates for all elected offices 75 days before the start of the national convention. Any Society member can also nominate any member as a candidate for any office open for election. All nominations must be received by the nominating committee by 90 days before the start of the national convention.

Section Two. The officers and at-large directors shall be elected by ~~the convention and~~ ballots available in advance to all members. Members may cast ballots by means approved by the board of directors. 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.

## **SPJ FILM PROPOSAL**

Carlson introduced a proposal to create a professional-quality film that would serve as an introduction to what SPJ is and what it does. The film would be done by the Documentary Institute of the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications. Carlson noted that the institute routinely wins international awards and has its films screened at Sundance and nationally on PBS. The SPJ film would be produced by graduate students under the tutelage of the institute faculty. SPJ would pay only expenses and duplication/packaging costs. Carlson asked the board to endorse the project and approve up to \$12,500 in related expenses.

**Upon proper motion and second by Wessels and Cadwallader, respectively, the board endorsed the creation of an SPJ film and approved the expenditure of up to \$12,500 in support of the project.**

## **UNITY COVENANT**

Lehrman and Gratz discussed the possibility of SPJ becoming a covenant partner with UNITY: Journalists of Color. UNITY consists of four ethnic journalism organizations: National Association of Black Journalists, National Association of Hispanic Journalists, Asian American Journalists Association and Native American Journalists Association. They explained that a covenant between SPJ and UNITY would benefit both organizations as a means to further the core missions of both organizations. SPJ shares a commitment to inclusive news media staffing, sources and stories. SPJ can offer access to its respective membership audiences, share its expertise and trade information. The memberships of SPJ and UNITY overlap in some ways but also have different strengths. SPJ can provide access to its expertise in FOI, ethics, professional development and legal defense. UNITY member organizations can help SPJ incorporate more inclusive outreach and content in each of these areas. It was noted that the American

Society of Newspaper Editors and the Radio and Television News Directors Association are covenant partners with UNITY.

**Upon proper motion and second by Brewer and McDonough, respectively, the board endorsed the creation of a covenant partnership with UNITY that allows for collaboration on shared issues and events, position statements and announcements.**

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OPEN COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE**

Lehrman and McDonough introduced a proposed procedure regarding open communication for the Executive Committee. They stated that national board members have a fiduciary obligation to keep up with SPJ activities and decision-making. "SPJ Leads" has greatly improved chapter-to-chapter awareness of local activities as well as national-level decisions and initiatives, but board members do not necessarily learn about executive committee decisions any earlier than chapter members. Therefore, they believe that a formal procedure is needed to ensure that all board members are kept informed.

**Upon proper motion by Sylvester and McAfee, respectively, the following procedures were adopted by the board of directors:**

- **Meeting alerts and agenda items always go out to the full board in advance of executive committee meetings and conference calls. Background material is available upon request.**
- **Minutes of executive committee meetings go out to the full board shortly after the meeting occurs.**
- **A 24-hour advance notice, when possible as determined by the president, allows board members to review Society press statements and releases before they are released. Brief background on the need, intent and where the idea came from will be included.**
- **SPJ decisions and actions from headquarters staff, the president or the executive committee impacting policy, resources or public positions of SPJ will be previewed by the appropriate Regional Director prior to dissemination or action.**

## **CAMPAIGN FOR ETHICAL JOURNALISM**

Grimes brought the board up-to-date on the status of the Campaign for Ethical Journalism, a project initiated by the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation's board of directors and funded by a grant from the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation. The purpose of the campaign is to better equip working journalists to report on an increasingly complex world and raise public confidence in the news media, while providing a growth platform for the Society, which could enable the organization to play an even greater advocacy role on a range of issues going forward. Grimes reviewed the report prepared by Fleishman-Hillard and asked for the SPJ board's imprimatur on the project.

**Upon proper motion and second by McAfee and Hurley, the board endorsed the concept of the Campaign for Ethical Journalism.**

Carlson appointed an ad hoc committee: Tatum (chair); Sylvester; SDX Foundation President Todd Gillman; SDX Foundation board members Fred Brown and Al Cross. Carlson will complete assignments to the committee following the board meeting.

## **CHAPTER MATTERS**

**Upon proper motion and second by Hurley and Sylvester, the board approved provisional chapter status for Western Wyoming Community College.**

**Upon proper motion and second by Corry and McAfee, the board approved provisional chapter status for Sacred Heart University.**

**Upon proper motion and second by Isaacs and Brewer, the board approved provisional chapter status for Central Washington University.**

## **REGIONAL CONFERENCES**

McDonough, Roth and Sylvester offered a proposal to re-brand and retool regional meetings as SPJ's Spring Journalism Conference sponsored/hosted/or brought to you by Region 1-12 or any combination.

The rationale for the proposal is that some regional meetings are more successful than others. To assist those that are struggling and to boost even the most successful regional meetings, SPJ headquarters staff and volunteer members would create a “Regional in a Box,” with two to three optional core programs, supporting materials, including flyer templates and online mechanisms for registration and payment. The core programs would feature the same topics at each of the Spring Journalism Conferences, though the faculty would change. Chapters and regional planning groups could customize these conferences, take or leave the model content to meet their own particular needs, and include additional programming or events. The Mark of Excellence Awards could be a feature of these mini-national conferences or part of a “student day” at the conference.

These mini-national conferences enhance SPJ’s professional development programming and further reach out to the Society’s members and non members. Regions would be encouraged to set clear membership advantages when setting prices to attend these events.

**Upon proper motion and second by Brewer and McAfee, respectively, the board approved the above proposal to re-brand and retool regional meetings, effective immediately.**

## **SECTION MEMBERSHIP**

McDonough, Sylvester and Lehrman introduced a proposal to create professional/topical “sections” within the Society to further engage the membership. These sections would provide tips, training, mentoring and related discussion for all members — particularly for those individuals who are unaffiliated with a local chapter and/or those who have few opportunities to participate in SPJ. The rationale offered was that while SPJ has some active advocacy and topical committees — namely FOI, legal defense, international reporting, ethics and diversity — the Society lacks avenues for members to connect and interact regularly at professional levels. Rather than form additional groups based on media, SPJ would form sections based on topics that apply to all journalists regardless of the medium in which they work. Examples include: Government, politics and law; Health, medicine and life science; Applied science and technology; Business and labor; Sports; Lifestyles, recreation and travel; Investigative reporting, computer assisted reporting, database mining; Teaching, education; etc.

Depending on their success and as value builds, these sections are a potential revenue stream for SPJ. Initially, sections would be free for all SPJ members. Perhaps members would be asked to pay more to be a part of a section (just as they would a local chapter). There’s also a chance that SPJ could provide some access to this information to non-members for a fee.

It was the recommendation of those making the proposal that if this idea is approved by the national board, at least one or two section leaders could be in place and the online sections ready for launch as early as the national conference, where recruiting could begin and interest gauged in creating additional sections.

**Upon proper motion by Roth and Lehrman, respectively, the board approved the proposal to create professional/topical “sections” within SPJ to further engage our membership.**

The proposal was adopted with the understanding that there would be a pilot section done on a single subject. At-large directors Lehrman and McDonough volunteered to undertake the project.

## **2011 CONVENTION**

**A motion was made by Gratz and Isaacs, respectively, to hold the 2011 SPJ Convention & National Journalism Conference in San Francisco, provided that the Northern California Professional Chapter is in agreement.**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the board, Carlson declared the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m. on Saturday, April 22, 2006.