

**MINUTES
MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
JUNE 17, 2006
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

With President David Carlson presiding, the meeting of the executive committee of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 9:12 a.m. on Saturday, June 17, 2006, in the offices of the San Francisco Chronicle in San Francisco, Calif.

ROLL CALL

In addition to President Carlson, the following were in attendance: President-elect Christine Tatum; Secretary-Treasurer Bruce Cadwallader; Vice President for Campus Chapter Affairs Mead Loop; Immediate Past President Irwin Gratz; Region 12 Director Clint Brewer; Executive Director Terry Harper; Associate Executive Director Chris Vachon and Associate Executive Director of the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation Julie Grimes. Guests included former board member Jim Parker, student representative Adrian Uribarri and several members of the Northern California Pro Chapter including Peter Sussmann, Linda Jue, Peung Vongs, Michael Stoll and Diane Keaton.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon proper motion and second by Gratz and Cadwallader, respectively, the committee approved as presented the minutes of its January 14, 2006, meeting in Memphis, Tenn.

VOTING PROCEDURES FOR ONE-MEMBER, ONE-VOTE AMENDMENT

The committee reviewed a memo from Bylaws Committee Chairman Bill McCloskey and discussed the following:

- A point of clarification that “one-member, one-vote” applies only to officer elections. The delegate system will apply in all other instances.
- The committee agreed to rename this the “officer election procedures” to make clear its purpose.
- The committee decided that candidate speeches will be given at the Friday morning business session beginning at 7:45 a.m. Delegates and candidates need to be educated about this change.

CHANGES TO THE MARK OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The committee reviewed a memo from Awards & Honors Committee Chairman Guy Baehr regarding changes to the Mark of Excellence Awards contest. The committee also reviewed information opposing the proposed changes. It was the sense of the committee that the alternative set of proposals contained in Baehr’s memo was the appropriate course of action.

Upon proper motion and second by Cadwallader and Loop, respectively, the committee adopted the alternative set of proposals, including the amplifications listed below. The changes will be reviewed with the full board in August.

The alternative set of proposals is attached to these minutes as Exhibit A.

Amplifications to alternative set of proposals:

- The Regional Director is responsible for the MOE awards program even if an awards chair is not identified.
- The \$300 will not go to the Regional Director — only to the awards chair.
- Additionally, the awards chair will receive a complimentary one-year membership.

HIRING PROCEDURE AT HEADQUARTERS

It was discussed that some members had complained that a recent position filled on the Headquarters staff was not posted to the entire membership. It was the sense of the board that all available jobs at the Headquarters should be communicated to members of the Society. Harper noted his objection to the adoption of such a policy as impeding his ability to effectively manage the hiring process.

Upon proper motion and second by Gratz and Cadwallader, respectively, the committee directed Harper to make members aware of all available positions at the Headquarters by posting the openings on the Web site and via E-mail.

STATEWIDE CHAPTERS

The committee discussed the concept of statewide chapters. It was decided that statewide chapters would be put on the agenda for the August board of directors meeting.

CONVENTION REGISTRATION FOR SPEAKERS

It was moved and seconded by Gratz and Cadwallader, respectively, to adopt a policy that would provide complimentary registrations to all convention speakers. There was a brief discussion about whether the provision of complimentary registrations was impacting participation by high-profile speakers. Staff assured the committee it was not. The motion was withdrawn.

STUDENTS AFFECTED BY HURRICANE KATRINA

The committee reviewed a letter from Sherry Alexander, adviser to the campus chapter at Loyola University in New Orleans. The letter described the still-challenging situation in the area due to the after effects of Hurricane Katrina. Alexander requested special dispensation for the chapter and others affected by Hurricane Katrina. The following action was taken:

Upon proper motion and second by Brewer and Tatum, respectively, the committee voted to extend the memberships of any students and advisers impacted by Katrina in Louisiana and Mississippi.

Upon proper motion and second by Brewer and Tatum, respectively, the committee voted to provide two complimentary 2006 convention registrations (one student and one adviser) for Loyola University.

CHAPTER REQUESTS

The committee reviewed requests from two professional and two campus organizations and took the following action:

Upon proper motion and second by Tatum and Gratz, respectively, the committee granted provisional status to Snake River Pro Chapter.

Upon proper motion and second by Tatum and Loop, respectively, the committee reactivated the Southern Arizona Pro Chapter.

Upon proper motion and second by Tatum and Cadwallader, respectively, the committee reactivated the Bowling Green State University Chapter.

Upon proper motion and second by Cadwallader and Brewer, respectively, the committee granted a charter to the University of Idaho Chapter.

DIALOGUE WITH NORCAL CHAPTER

Representatives from the chapter met with the Executive Committee to express their concerns about some of the positions the Society has taken recently that the chapter feels are not reflective of its membership. Peter Sussman also raised some concerns about Quill magazine.

SPJ DOCUMENTARY

As a result of the RFP to develop a documentary film about SPJ, a proposal was received from Shepherd University. The committee compared the information from Shepherd against the information already in hand from the University of Florida.

Upon proper motion and second by Tatum and Loop, respectively, the committee reaffirmed the

board's April 22 decision to move forward on the project with the University of Florida, pending the execution of an agreement between the university and SPJ. Carlson recused himself from the discussion and vote.

AWARDS

The following awards were made by the executive committee:

- David L. Eshelman Outstanding Campus Adviser: No winner chosen.
- Distinguished Teaching in Journalism: Upon proper motion and second by Loop and Gratz, respectively, the committee selected Gaylon Murray, Grambling State University.
- Ethics in Journalism: Upon proper motion and second by Loop and Gratz, respectively, the committee selected Allan M. Siegal, The New York Times.
- Fellows of the Society: Upon proper motion and second by Brewer and Tatum, respectively, the committee selected Sandy Close, California New Media; Reginald Stuart, past SPJ president and Knight Ridder corporate recruiter; and Ben Bagdikian, longtime journalist and author of The New Media Monopoly.
- First Amendment: Upon proper motion and second by Tatum and Gratz, respectively, the committee selected Tom Curley, The Associated Press.
- Helen Thomas Lifetime Achievement: Upon proper motion and second by Tatum and Loop, respectively, the committee selected Stan Chambers, longtime anchor at KTLA Los Angeles.
- Historic Site in Journalism: None selected
- Howard S. Dubin Outstanding Pro Member: Upon proper motion and second by Cadwallader and Tatum, respectively, the committee selected Emil Dansker, Queen City Pro Chapter.
- Julie Galvan Outstanding Graduate in Journalism: Upon proper motion and second by Loop and Gratz, respectively, the committee selected Renee DeLuca, University of Maryland.
- Regional Director of the Year: Upon proper motion and second by Brewer and Gratz, respectively, the committee selected Carl Corry, Region 1.
- Sunshine: Upon proper motion and second by Loop and Tatum, respectively, the committee selected Ryan Nees, Western High School, Russiaville, Ind.; Nancy Conway, Salt Lake Tribune; and John Hughes, Deseret Morning News.

WELLS MEMORIAL KEY AND ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of the executive committee adjourned at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 17, 2006, so that the officers of the Society could move into closed session to select the 2006 recipient of the Wells Memorial Key.

EXHIBIT A

Mark of Excellence Awards Alternative Set of Proposals

1. Immediately reduce the number of categories in the MOE contest to 39 from the current 43 by combining seven existing categories into three:

Combination #1 — The category “Best All-Around Non-Daily Student Newspaper published 2-3 times per week” would be merged with the category “Best All-Around Non-Daily Student Newspaper published no more than once a week” to create one category called “Best All-Around Non-Daily Student Newspaper.”

In 17 cases, one or the other category has three or fewer entries in a region. In half the regions, neither category exceeds three entries. The weaker of the two, “Non-Daily 2-3 times a week,” had three or fewer entries in all but one region. Combining the categories would strengthen both while preserving the distinction between daily and non-daily papers.

Combination #2 — The category “Best All-Around Student Magazine published once a year” would be combined with the category “Best All-Around Student magazine published more than once a year” to

create one category called “Best Student Magazine.”

In 12 cases (out of 24), regional judges had one or zero entries to choose from. In only one case out of the 24 did regional judges have more than three entries to choose from. Combining these categories would strengthen both without putting entrants in either category at an obvious disadvantage.

Combination #3 — The categories "Best Online Newspaper," "Best Online Magazine" and "Best Online Broadcast Station" would be merged into one category to be called "Best Affiliated Website."

In 33 cases (out of 36), regional judges had one or zero entries to choose from in these categories. Combining the three categories would create a single category that would be stronger and more competitive without excluding any current entrants.

The key criteria, besides overall excellence, would be making good use of both the resources of the affiliated print or broadcast news organization and fully exploiting the online medium to add value and audience. That's the challenge for all affiliated online operations no matter whether they're affiliated with newspapers, magazines, radio stations or TV stations. That would give the category the needed intellectual coherence and logic so that judges could find valid common points of comparison. (We would retain the "Best Online Independent Publication" category because the challenges for a stand-alone online publication are significantly different than for an affiliated website. In addition, that category is already stronger than the other three categories and is showing better growth.)

Merging these categories would follow a successful pattern.

As a result of suggestions from Deb Hurley and others, for this year’s MOE we merged the “Television Daily Newscast” category, which had had seven entries the previous year, with the “Television Non-Daily Newscast” category, which had 24 entries. The result: We had a total of 41 entries in the combined “Television Newscast” category. (I did get at least one complaint from a non-daily station manager, eased somewhat after he found his station had placed first in his region).

In a similar vein, we changed the “Radio Daily Newscast” category to “Radio Newscast.” Allowing non-daily newscasts to enter increased the number of entries to 15 from the previous 11. (Another successful change in the radio category, sparked as response to a suggestion by Sue Kopen Katcef, came when we broadened the “Radio Spot News” category into “Radio News.” That doubled the number of entries from 23 to 45.

2. Create a new position called Regional MOE Chair in each of the regions. The Regional MOE Chairs would take on the MOE duties now performed by the Regional Director.

This proposal would deal directly with the problem faced by Regional Directors trying to cope with the administrative burden created by the MOE contest’s significant growth over the last half dozen years. The overall result would be to free Regional Directors for other important tasks, add needed members to the Awards & Honors Committee and improve the administration of the MOE contest.

The Regional MOE Chairs would be recruited and nominated for three-year terms by the Awards & Honors Committee with help from the awards staff in national headquarters, national officers and the Regional Director in each region. Final approval of appointments would be by the national president.

The Regional MOE Chairs would primarily be responsible for lining up judges for reciprocal judging of entries from other regions, coordinating with national headquarters, ensuring that deadlines are met, organizing regional award ceremonies, distributing award certificates and general troubleshooting.

In addition, the Regional MOE Chairs would be responsible for promoting the MOE contest to campus journalism programs, journalism advisers, campus editors and station directors and student journalists in general. They would put special emphasis on seeking entries in categories with relatively few entries.

The Regional MOE Chairs would be encouraged to recruit others to assist them so that each region would have a small Regional MOE Committee from which future Regional MOE Chairs could be recruited.

Finally, the Regional MOE Chairs would automatically become members of a national MOE subcommittee that would be part of the national Awards & Honors Committee. The subcommittee would review each year's MOE results and propose changes in rules, procedures and categories to improve the contest. The committee would also assist in recruiting future Regional MOE Chairs and filling vacancies as they occur.

If approved by the board at the June or August meetings, the Regional MOE Chairs could be recruited, nominated and installed in time for next year's judging.

3. To support the work of the Regional MOE Chairs and their committees each chair would receive a regional expense budget of \$300. This would be financed with an 11 percent increase in the MOE contest fees.

In order to recruit Regional MOE Chairs and their committees it is important to cover costs such as postage, mailing, telephone calls, travel to regional conferences and the like. While these costs will vary from region to region, \$300 seems like a reasonable allowance to start with. Adjustments can be made in the future as we gain more experience.

The total cost, \$3,600, would be more than offset by raising the MOE entry fee to \$10 for members and \$20 for non-members. Current fees, which have not been raised in several years, are \$9 for members and \$18 for non-members. About 60 percent of MOE entrants are non-members. Actual revenue from the fee increase is estimated at \$5,000.

The remaining \$1,400 would be used for targeted marketing efforts to increase entries in weak categories and to hire about 20 hours or temporary help in Indianapolis to allow staff to better handle peak contest workloads.

Based on past experience, this modest 11 percent increase in the contest fee is not likely to reduce the number of entries. At the same time, the additional revenue will go right into improving the quality of the MOW contest, first by helping recruit Regional MOE Chairs and second by helping national better administer and market the contest.