

**MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
MARCH 4, 2010
CONFERENCE CALL**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

With President Kevin Smith presiding, the meeting of the board of directors of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 4:10 p.m. on Thursday, March 4, 2010 via conference call.

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; Directors-at-Large Bill McCloskey and Michael Koretzky; Student Representatives Tara Puckey and Andrew Seaman; Regional Directors Luther Turmelle, Jenn Rowell, Jeremy Steele, Liz Hansen, Scott Cooper, John Ensslin, Dana Neuts, Jodi Cleesattle, and Sonny Albarado; Executive Director Joe Skeel; and Associate Executive Director Chris Vachon.

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH AND PLANS

As reported by Smith, SPJ has seen an “up-tick” in the membership numbers lately. The number of new members continues to be strong, but renewal numbers are concerning. Smith’s statistics show that 1 in every 3 members renew at their respective renewal time.

Smith requested that each Regional Director have a membership table at their respective spring conference. Additionally, he asked the directors to be sure to meet with the chapter leaders in attendance at their conference.

Smith will be making calls to thank new members for joining SPJ. Past presidents will be making calls as well. Smith offered the opportunity to any and all board members too. Smith envisions that each person will make 4-5 calls per week.

BUDGET

Skeel reported that SPJ’s grant requests to the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation will be different than last year’s grant requests. SPJ will now be requesting 100 percent of the costs for each program. Before last year, SPJ did not ask for any of the indirect expenses, such as salaries and utilities, associated with programs. Last year, for the first time, SPJ requested a small percentage of the indirect expenses — which was received favorably by the Foundation.

Additionally, the method that calculates the money available to the Foundation for grant giving is being done differently than in past years. The Foundation is still holding to their 5 percent giving policy; however, due to the change, the amount available this year for grant giving has increased by more than 50 percent. This is being done by using 100 percent of the cash that comes to the Foundation in the form of un-reinvested interest and dividends. In the past, only a small portion was used.

The Foundation’s grants and awards committee is holding their conference call in the near future in order to make their recommendations about grants to the full SDX Foundation board.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

President Smith is attending the most recent FCC hearings. They continue to discuss the future of media with this hearing having a focus on radio and television.

SPRING CONFERENCES

The Public Outreach committee has developed talking points for the officers attending the conferences. The list of officers attending each conference was reviewed.

SHIELD LAW

The current discussion regarding the shield law is centered on the definition of a journalist. It may be defined as a journalist working for a media entity, otherwise, one would need to establish oneself as a media representative.

ETHICS TOWN HALL MEETINGS

SPJ did not receive funding from the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation for the grant request of \$25,000. Instead, SPJ is able to use left over money from the Media Credibility grant and past Ethics Week grants to still put on the town hall program. Chapter grant applications are due in April.

ETHICS BOOK

The book will be ready by the October convention. The publisher, Marian Street Press, will be doing pre-sales of the book. Fifty percent of the revenue from the book sales will be going to the SDX Foundation.

MODEL BY-LAWS

The by-laws committee has been asked by Smith to develop some sample by-laws for SPJ chapters to use. A best-practices set of chapter by-laws is the goal.

SDX MONUMENT CLEANING

The cleaning of the monument on DePauw's campus is set for Thursday, April 15. Any board members wanting to arrive to Indianapolis early for the board meeting are welcome to participate.

KNOWLEDGEWEBB

Knowledgewebb is an online training tool and information gathering place for journalists. Associations can become partners with Knowledgewebb and as a result, SPJ members will be eligible for a discounted Knowledgewebb membership.

Upon proper motion, and second, Steele and McCloskey motioned that SPJ should become a Knowledgewebb partner.

INTERNATIONAL JOURNALISTS

SPJ has received a few requests lately from attorneys looking for some kind of "seal of approval" for international journalists looking to obtain visas to come to the U.S. to work. The attorneys indicated that the Department of Homeland Security told them to come to SPJ. SPJ will not be giving out these "seals of approval." In addition, Smith is to ask the Government Relations committee to investigate how we got on the Department of Homeland Security's list.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.