

**MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
FEBRUARY 23, 2012
CONFERENCE CALL**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

With President John Ensslin presiding, the meeting of the board of directors of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 2:05 p.m. EST on Thursday, Feb. 23, 2012, via conference call.

In addition to Ensslin, the following were present: President-Elect Sonny Albarado; Secretary-Treasurer David Cuillier; Vice President for Campus Chapter Affairs Neil Ralston; Director at-Large Bill McCloskey; Director at-Large Lauren Bartlett, Campus Advisers at-Large Kym Fox and George Daniels; Student Representatives Taylor Mirfendereski and Gideon Grudo; Regional Directors Luther Turmelle, Michael Koretzky, Brian Eckert, James Pilcher, Liz Hansen and Don Meyers. Staff members present for the meeting were Executive Director Joe Skeel, Associate Executive Director Chris Vachon and Director of Events Heather Porter.

SPJ COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE PSA FUNDING REQUEST

President Ensslin welcomed board members to the call and turned the floor over to Communications Committee chairwoman Lauren Bartlett.

Bartlett explained the committee's plan to develop PSAs. The messages would be aimed at creating public awareness that journalists are the watchdogs for the public and bring them the information they need to know — and the Society of Professional Journalists is the citizens' advocate for open government.

The Committee asked SPJ to split the total \$6,000 cost with the SDX Foundation, meaning each group would pay \$3,000. Bartlett shared that SDX Foundation president Steve Geimann had a favorable reaction to the concept. And that the Foundation may be willing to split the total costs.

Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Bartlett, respectively, the board voted to support the Communication Committee's PSA project and pay for half of the \$6,000 total.

CONVENTION 2014 UPDATE

President Ensslin then turned the floor over to Vachon, who shared details of the 2014 site selection process, which were:

- Staff put out request for proposals and ranked those that responded.
- RTDNA also ranked those that responded.
- Both groups ranked the locations identically.

Therefore, staff plans to visit the top-ranked property: Opryland Hotel in Nashville. If the site proves to be a good match for the Society's and RTDNA's needs, it will likely be recommended as the site for EIJ 2014.

Staff will make a formal recommendation to the full board during its April 28 meeting in Indianapolis.

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

Skeel shared a draft internal whistleblower policy with the board, asking that they support the document. Although not a requirement, the IRS does ask on the new 990 forms if the organization has a policy. The Society's auditors recommended that SPJ adopt one.

With the board's support of the draft, Skeel would then ask the Society's law firm (Baker Hostetler) to review the document before a final vote is taken by the Society's Executive Committee.

Ralston asked that "Code of Ethics and Conduct" be changed to "Code of Conduct" so that it is not

confused with the Society's external Code of Ethics for journalists.

Skeel agreed to make that change before getting legal approval.

Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Pilcher, respectively, the board voted to send the whistleblower draft for legal review.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Bartlett, respectively, the board adjourned at 2:40 p.m. EST on Feb. 23, 2012.