

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
JULY 23, 2015
SKYPE CONFERENCE CALL

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

With President Dana Neuts presiding, the meeting of the board of directors of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 1 p.m. ET on Thursday, July 23, 2015, via Skype conference call.

In addition to Neuts the following were present: President-Elect Paul Fletcher; Immediate Past President David Cuillier; Vice President of Campus Chapter Affairs Sue Kopen Katcef; At Large Directors Bill McCloskey and Alex Tarquinio; Campus Advisers At Large Mike Reilley and Becky Tallent; Student Representative Brett Hall; Regional Directors Joe Radske, Rob McLean, Eddy Gallagher, Tom Johnson, Pia Hallenberg, Matt Hall and Amanda Womac.

Staff members present for the meeting were Executive Director Joe Skeel, Associate Executive Director Chris Vachon and Membership Strategist Tara Puckey.

The primary purpose of the call was to discuss the 2018 convention and a partnership for the 2016 conference.

2018 CONVENTION

Skeel recommended that the board approve the Baltimore Hilton as the site of the 2018 convention. The dates would be Sept. 27-30. Some of the reasons for that recommendation include:

- A \$199/night room rate for attendees.
- Date: Sept. 27-30, 2018.
- EIJ sleeping rooms and meeting space under one roof. Some other bidders would have required as many two hotels or even two hotels and a convention center. Furthermore, we would be the only group in-house.
- A low \$50,000 food and beverage minimum. This is a critical area because our groups host relatively few meal events.
- Exhibit hall and meeting space free of charge.
- Free or reduced costs for pre-convention executive committee/board meetings (as we had in Orlando last year and New Orleans next year).
- Complimentary guest room wireless.
- Complimentary meeting space and exhibit hall wireless (a very unusual, but welcome concession). Caveat: They have limitations on the number of connections as of 2015. We aren't sure this would be sufficient. They expect an upgrade that would remedy the issue prior to 2018, but it's not guaranteed. Therefore, we may still need to pay for additional

wireless to meet our needs – as the hotel would need to rent equipment. Nonetheless, our max cost for wi-fi would be about \$4,500. This is *significantly* lower than our typical charge. Free or not, still a win.

- Four blocks from the Inner Harbor (a hotspot of tourist activity) and adjacent to Camden Yards – which has more restaurants and bars open every day to the public.
- Fifteen minutes from the airport, two miles from the AMTRAK station. One block from the bus circulator around the area.
- Being downtown, numerous eating options are a few steps away: sports bars, fast food and high-end options are aplenty. There is a sub shop in the hotel.
- And of course, it has a nice bar and coffee shop in the lobby.

Upon proper motion by Sue Kopen Katcef and second by Brett Hall, the board approved Baltimore as the convention site for 2018, pending hotel negotiations.

2016 CONFERENCE PARTNERSHIP

Skeel shared with the board that the Native American Journalists Association is interested in joining SPJ and RTDNA for the 2016 Excellence in Journalism Conference.

He explained the relationship with NAJA would be similar to the relationship we have with the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. In that, NAJA would pay a management fee (which we would divide proportionally with RTDNA). NAJA would be involved in programming while also managing their own organization-specific events.

Upon proper motion by Bill McCloskey and second by Becky Tallent, the board voted to partner with NAJA for EIJ16, pending contract negotiations.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon proper motion by Rebecca Baker and second by Matt Hall, the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m., Thursday, July 23 2015.