

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
NOV. 16, 2015
ZOOM CONFERENCE CALL

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

With President Paul Fletcher presiding, the meeting of the board of directors of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 2:05 p.m. ET on Monday, Nov. 16, 2015, via Zoom conference service.

In addition to Fletcher the following were present: President-Elect Lynn Walsh; Secretary Treasurer Rebecca Baker; Vice President of Campus Chapter Affairs Sue Kopen Katcef; At Large Director Bill McCloskey; Campus Advisers At Large Mike Reilley and Rebecca Tallent; Student Representative Monica Dattage; Regional Directors Jane Primerano, Andy Schotz, Michael Koretzky, Patti Newberry Gallagher, Debra Givens, Eddy Gallagher, Matt Hall and Amanda Womac.

Executive Director Joe Skeel was also present for the meeting.

The primary purpose of the call was to discuss a proposed strategic membership planning meeting for January. The meeting would take place when the SPJ Executive Committee would typically meet. In addition to the Executive Committee members, key staffers, the membership committee chair and the diversity committee chair would be invited to participate. A few more at-large members would also be invited in an effort to get different perspectives.

Fletcher shared that the executive director was given a goal during his evaluation to create a planning session for the January Executive Committee meeting. In addition, Fletcher stated that he shared the idea for this meeting during his first board meeting in Orlando, and mentioned it during his presidential speech in Orlando.

Schotz questioned why SPJ didn't get proposals from other outside groups. Although he read the answer to that question in an e-mail prior to the board meeting, he still didn't understand. Also, he said he didn't understand – and agree with – the need to hire someone from outside the organization to facilitate a meeting.

Womac shared that she has a background in non-profit organizations, and non-profits often hold strategic planning sessions with outside facilitators. She said it's good to bring people from outside the organization to lead the discussion and get a different point of view.

Tallent also supported the idea of having an outside voice facilitate the meeting. She said it helps eliminate politics and control emotion in the room.

Koretzky said he shared Schotz's concerns, but supports Fletcher's desire to do something quickly. He said he supports the idea that the president should have some flexibility to make things happen during a one-year term. He said many complain about SPJ not having a sense of urgency, and Fletcher has a sense of urgency. Therefore, he will support the proposal.

Baker called the question. Although no second was offered, and therefore no vote. Discussion ended.

Upon proper motion by Baker and second by McCloskey, the board voted to accept the proposal. Schotz and Givens voted against.

Michael asked if the January session could be Skyped. He is interested in listening in on the discussion. Newberry Gallagher commented that if it's not feasible to Skype, she would like some feedback within a reasonable timeline.

In regards to an e-mail sent to the board prior to the call, she said she felt the responses were defensive. Moving forward, she asked to keep in mind that the asking of questions isn't a challenge to expertise. It's an effort by board members to understand the situation better.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon proper motion by McCloskey and second by Hall, the meeting was adjourned at 2:22 p.m. ET, Monday, Nov. 16, 2015.