

MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
THURSDAY, SEPT. 5, 2019
SAN ANTONIO GRAND HYATT — SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

DRAFT

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:01 a.m CDT. Members present: President J. Alex Tarquinio; President-elect Patti Newberry; Secretary-Treasurer Matthew Hall; Vice President of Campus Chapter Affairs Sue Kopen Katcef; directors at-large Lauren Bartlett, Tess Fox, Victor Hernandez, Mike Reilley, Michael Savino and Yvette Walker; Region 2 Director Andy Schotz; Region 3 Director Michael Koretzky; Region 6 Director Joe Radske, Region 10 Director Don Meyers and Region 12 Director Kelly Kissel. Joining late was director at-large Ivette Davila-Richards. Joining by phone were campus adviser at-large Jeff South and Region 11 Director Deb Krol. Also present: SPJ communications director Jennifer Royer, SPJ attorney Mark Bailen, SPJ consultants Leah York and Heather Rolinski, and other SPJ members and staff members.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board voted at 8:02 a.m. CDT to enter executive session to receive a report from Talbott Talent, the consultants hired to assist with the executive director search. Motion: Newberry. Second: Meyers. Vote: unanimous. The board voted at 9:09 a.m. CDT to exit executive session. Motion: Newberry. Second: Meyers. Vote: unanimous.

EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION

PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael Drudge, president of the San Antonio SPJ chapter, welcomed everyone to San Antonio for the 2019 Excellence in Journalism conference and asked for an update on the executive director search. SPJ Foundation vice president and executive director search task force chair Hagit Limor said the task force expects to interview candidates soon and present the board with options within two months. She said someone might be hired by December.

Jonathan Make, past president of the Washington, D.C. SPJ chapter, invited staff, board members and others to a gathering Thursday evening at the conference.

Stephanie Bluestein, president of the L.A. SPJ chapter, discussed the chapter's Sept. 3 statement calling on the national board to return its share of Fox News' EIJ19 sponsorship money as NAHJ did before the conference. She said the L.A. chapter board realizes Fox is a huge sponsor and added that the chapter wasn't necessarily saying that Fox should be disinvented in

future years, but that anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim rhetoric from some Fox pundits had increased over the past year.

SPJ PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Tarquinio asked if there were any questions on her report. There were none.

FOUNDATION PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Tarquinio asked if there were any questions on Foundation President Irwin Gratz's report. There were none.

JOURNALIST ON CALL'S REPORT

Journalist on Call Rod Hicks gave a report on his media literacy efforts in Casper, Wyoming, and the board discussed it. Hicks said he was evaluating potential next steps.

MINUTES

The board approved the minutes of its June 1 meeting, as amended. Motion: Walker. Second: Bartlett. Vote: unanimous. The executive committee approved the minutes of both its Jan. 27 and July 13 meetings, with an amendment to its July 13 meeting minutes, in one vote. Motion: Bartlett. Second: Kopen Katcef. Vote: unanimous.

CHAPTER REPORT

Royer gave a chapter status report. She said 31 chapters have not submitted their annual reports for three years in a row, and that she was in contact with them. After discussion, the board tabled a vote on the potential deactivation of the defunct Charlotte Pro chapter. The board voted to charter three new chapters: Louisiana State University Campus Chapter in Region 12, Northeastern Illinois University Campus Chapter in Region 5 and Wyoming Pro Chapter (reinstated) in Region 9. Motion: Kissel. Second: Bartlett. Vote: unanimous.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE/TASK FORCE REPORTS

Tarquinio asked if there were any questions on any of the reports. There were none.

BOARD POLICY REVIEW TASK FORCE REPORT

Hall provided an overview of the report and after discussion, the board unanimously passed a series of motions to approve the policy recommendations of the task force. The approved policies shall be collected into one document that will be posted in a convenient place on the

SPJ website ASAP, shared with all board members annually after each election, and reviewed biennially by the president for potential improvement.

The first motion was to approve the task force's recommendations on a block of policies that included amending the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications selection policy, campaign guidelines, composition of national committees policy, convention registration bag policy, convention voting transparency policy, discretionary spending policy, electronic voting policy, investment policy, reimbursement guidelines for board members and regional coordinators, release of LDF applicant information policy, sponsor disclosure policy, third-party records policy, and whistleblower policy for SPJ/SPJ Foundation; maintaining the EIJ sponsorship policy, and work visa opinion letters policy; and repealing the non-media company convention sponsorship policy. Motion: Hall. Second: Bartlett. Vote: unanimous.

The second motion was to approve the task force's recommendation to create a new awards policy, with one amendment by Kopen Katcef to add the following final sentence about the Wells Memorial Key: "However, the Wells Key may also be awarded posthumously." Motion: Hall. Second: Bartlett. Vote: unanimous.

The third motion was to approve the task force's recommendation for a new board transparency policy, with one amendment by Kopen Katcef to add this sentence to the end of the second bulleted item: "However, in rare situations, if there is an emergency board meeting with less than 24 hours to provide notice, information shall be sent out via the quickest means possible." Motion: Hall. Second: Schotz. Vote: unanimous.

The fourth motion was to approve the task force's recommendation for a revised conflict of interest policy. Motion: Schotz. Second: Bartlett. Vote: unanimous.

The fifth motion was to revisit and amend the composition of national committees policy, following a suggestion by Kopen Katcef, to include the final line: "Every June, SPJ shall send out a notice to the membership with a list of national committees and ask that members apply by two weeks prior to the annual convention." Motion: Kopen Katcef. Second: Bartlett. Vote: unanimous.

The sixth and final motion was to approve the task force's recommendations to revise both the executive director evaluation policy and the executive director hiring policy, with one amendment for the executive director evaluation policy proposed by Kopen Katcef and refined by Savino, to include that the evaluation committee will share its findings with the SPJ and SPJ Foundation boards "at least one week before the first meeting after the annual review." Motion: Hall. Second: Bartlett. Vote: unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS

Bartlett offered a tribute for recently deceased SPJ past president John Ensslin. Savino said there would be a resolution honoring Ensslin at the closing business meeting.

LONG-TERM STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE REPORT

Hernandez gave an overview of progress to date on strategic planning. He said he will cycle off the task force and that Hall will take over as its chair and also that the new executive director would be on the committee once hired, giving it 10 members. He said two focus groups would be assembled in coming weeks to gather more direction and data and that a report should be presented at the April 2020 board meeting.

TALBOTT TALENT REPORT

Rolinski gave a report on Talbott Talent's organizational assessment and executive director search. She said next steps include candidate interviews in the near future by the search committee and a person potentially being hired by December.

ADJOURNMENT

The board voted to adjourn in memory of John Ensslin at 12 p.m. CDT. Motion: Bartlett. Second: Schotz. Vote: unanimous.