

**MEETING MINUTES  
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**July 23, 2022  
Conducted via Zoom**

**Call to Order**

Rebecca Aguilar, President of the Society of Professional Journalists, called the meeting to order via Zoom at 1:03pm ET.

**Roll Call**

Ivette Davila-Richards, Secretary-Treasurer, took the roll. Attending the meeting were:

Rebecca Aguilar, President  
Claire Regan, President-Elect  
Ivette Davila-Richards, Secretary-Treasurer  
J. Israel Balderas, At-Large Director  
Emily Bloch, At-Large Director  
Daniela Ibarra, At-Large Director  
Danielle McLean, At-Large Director  
Rafael Olmeda, At-Large Director  
Cheryl Smith, At-Large Director

**Approval of minutes**

Danielle McLean made a motion to approve the June 4, 2022 minutes after 2 amendments, seconded by Emily Bloch. The motion passed unanimously.

**President's remarks**

President Aguilar congratulated the Sigma Delta Chi award winners, thanked Stephanie Ramos for MCing the awards and the SPJ Staff for the program. Aguilar discussed the work of the committees as follows:

- The Diversity and Inclusion Committee's work on the Diversity Leadership program, which received 22 nominations
- The Awards Committee's work with the Sigma Delta Chi and Mark of Excellence Awards.
- The Membership Committee's introduction of membership cards and the #SPJStrong leadership series with previous leaders.

- The Journalism Education Committee's work with the Press4Education program and its launch this fall of a mentorship program.
- The Nominations Committee's video of running for office
- The Professional Standards and Ethics Committee discussing code updates surrounding diversity and disinformation
- The Bylaws Committee discussing work and report

Aguilar congratulated Jennifer Royer to her promotion to Senior Director of Communications, and expressed appreciation for the work she and her team has done to keep members and the public at-large informed about the work of the Society. Aguilar also congratulated the leaders of Region 1 for putting on a high school journalism program that took place the previous weekend, and credited the region for bringing in younger members.

### **Public comment period**

Annick Joseph inquired if there is a fund to help with costs towards MediaFest22. Danielle McLean mentioned the Harper Memorial Scholarship as well as other resources, including finding SPJ members to share accommodations with. President Aguilar says this is a dilemma and an issue that needs to be thought of and explore, considering the work of other journalism organizations, including IRE. Hazel Becker said that the Freelance Community's Freelance Fund is sponsoring a fellowship to bring freelance journalists to MediaFest22 and encouraged attendees to spread the word.

Bob Becker expressed concerns about a policy proposal for chapters to initiate bylaws 90 days before the convention. Becker said that if it were applied this year, the current deadline is not fair and felt the policy was not advised. Aguilar deferred to Alex Tarquinio, chair of the Bylaws Committee on the subject for further consultation outside of the meeting.

### **Bylaws Committee Report**

Alex Tarquinio, chair of the Bylaws Committee, said there is a policy that the board should consider as soon as possible regarding the proposal of bylaws amendments by chapters and communities. Discussion followed regarding language changes that were allowed as part of the broader proposal. A motion to approve the amendments as such discussed by the committee was made by Israel Balderas and seconded by Bloch. The motion passed unanimously.

### **MediaFest22 report**

President-Elect Claire Regan, in her capacity as chair of the convention, discussed MediaFest22, Oct. 27-29 in Washington, D.C., co-sponsored with the College Media Association and Associated Collegiate Press. Regan confirmed that registration is open at early-bird rates and 60

people had registered. (It was 61 at 2:13pm ET.)

The conference committee received over 80 proposals and will accommodate about 70 of them due to the partnership. Regan expressed her appreciation for the committee's work despite the timing of the conference which shortens the length of the term of the next Board of Directors, and Regan would talk to the Bylaws Committee to ensure that a 12 month term can be made permanent. Regan said that sessions at MediaFest22 will be finalized within the next month.

John Shertzer, Executive Director, spoke about concerns regarding COVID-19. Shertzer said SPJ is collaborating with ACP and CMA on a universal policy with a vaccination requirement, or an ability to have a negative test. Should a participant test positive, measures will be taken to ensure the participant in question is quarantining. Other smaller issues (i.e. roommates and DC specific policies at the time) will be considered and discussed. Shertzer said attendees will see a big effort to keep things safe and ensure attention to COVID is at the forefront of the convention.

### **Convention and delegate process**

Shertzer talked about the delegate process for the convention. Once the call for chapter annual reports ends, a report will be run internally that shows how many members of each chapter in good standing and delegates will be assigned (one delegate per 50 members). Invitations are also open to serve as regional delegates (people who represent the region and not affiliated with a chapter – one delegate per 50 unaffiliated members). The deadlines for all delegate identification is Aug. 12. Training will begin immediately afterward.

### **Executive session**

The board went into executive session at 2:31pm ET to discuss award nominees and exited executive session at 3:45pm ET. President Aguilar announced that the deadline for the David Eshelman Award was extended to Aug. 31 and that decisions were made for winners of the Distinguished Teaching Award, Ethics in Journalism Award, the Dubin Award, the Galvan Award and the Wells Memorial Key Award.

### **Adjournment**

At 3:47pm ET, Rafael Olmeda made a motion to adjourn and Daniela Ibarra seconded. The voice vote was unanimous.