



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

2 p.m. EDT, April 6, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

SPJ President Claire Regan called the meeting to order at 2:02pm. EDT.

ROLL CALL

Vice President Ashanti Blaize-Hopkins called roll.

Present were: Claire Regan, Ashanti Blaize-Hopkins, Emily Block, Daniela Ibarra, Jodi Rave Spotted Bear, Adam Sennott, Kevin Smith and Peter Szekely

WELCOME

Regan welcomed members in attendance and explained that this brief meeting was called to vote on temporality extending budget authority to the interim executive director pending approval of a 2023 budget. She introduced Fred Brown as parliamentarian and Mark Bailen, legal counsel, who were present as well.

BUDGET EXTENSION

Regan explained that a budget extension for the interim executive director through April 30 was needed pending the 2023 budget being approved to carry on the business of the Society.

Blaize-Hopkins made the motion. Sennott seconded. There was no discussion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Regional Coordinator for Region 11 Jennifer Ellis expressed concern that the meeting was not publicly announced in the weekly Leads newsletter. She said she found out about the meeting because she was notified regional coordinator who saw the notice at the top of the website. She said that is not a place where the public goes for that information. She also said she would like to see a draft of the minutes from the last meeting so people can keep up with what's going on with the budget process. She also asked if any misappropriated funds have been discovered.

Regan called on Interim Executive Director Jennifer Royer to address the questions. Royer said the omission from Leads was inadvertent and it simply was not submitted

in time for the newsletter. She said the draft meeting minutes will be available before the next board meeting in the board packet and, until then, the recording of the meeting is available on SPJ's YouTube channel. She explained that SPJ has been working with an outside accounting firm to catch up on the 2022 financials while also working on the 2023 budgets. They are working to complete a full year of financials in only a few months but are very close to having the 2022 actuals available. There were many roadblocks that slowed the process including gaining access to bank information and accounts after several staff members left.

Regan added that today's meeting was announced in advance of the 72-hour requirement and the agenda was also made available in advance. She added that what she wants everyone to know is how hard everyone is working to get the budgets ready – and there are two – one for SPJ and one for the Foundation. The finance committees are meeting today at 5 p.m. EDT to continue moving toward the goal of approved budgets.

Royer asked to address Ellis' other question and said there has not been any evidence of misappropriation of funds.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

There was no new or old business.

ADJOURNMENT

Sennott made a motion to adjourn. Szekely seconded. Motion carried.
Meeting adjourned at 2:13 p.m. EDT.