

Society of Professional Journalists
Minnesota Pro Chapter
Board of Directors meeting
6:30 p.m. Nov. 12, 2007

WCCO-TV offices, Minneapolis

Members present: Joan Gilbertson, president; Dave Beal, treasurer; Nicole Garrison-Sprenger, president-elect; Scott Theisen, secretary; Art Hughes, past president; Sarah Bauer, Don Davis, Karen Lundegaard, Amanda Lutz, Andy Tellijohn, directors.

I. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Beal reported that the chapter has \$32,644 in the three Wells Fargo accounts. \$10,813 in a CD, \$4,802 in checking and \$17,029 in savings. Expenses for the cameras in the courtroom campaign, Legal Defense Fund auction, reimbursements for board members and students' travel expenses for the national convention and a rebate for an overpayment on Page One entries offset the interest earned on the CD, \$500 online program grant from SPJ national and membership rebates from national.

Checks written but not cashed and checks to be written for convention expenses total \$2,500-\$3,000.

II. Old Business- Student chapter national convention reimbursement.

Tellijohn reported that the MSU Mankato chapter is willing to work with the MN Pro chapter on a program to be held in the Mankato area, as a way to earn the full \$300 reimbursement for national convention expenses.

Lutz reported that the St. Cloud State representative at the national convention did not see or sign the letter of agreement sent by the MN Pro chapter due to a miscommunication on the part of the SCSU chapter president. The board agreed to pay a partial reimbursement of up to \$150 when receipts are received for travel expenses.

III. Programs

Diversity Event:

The diversity event on covering Minnesota's Hmong Community is scheduled for Nov. 27 at the Hmong Cultural Center in St. Paul.

A motion was made by Lutz, seconded by Beal, to spend up to \$300 on refreshments for the event. The motion passed 9-0.

Holiday Party:

Board member Ford has offered her house as a venue for the party. Bauer is looking into catering options for the party which is tentatively set for Dec. 7. Invitations will be sent out via e-mail.

A motion was made by Telli John, seconded by Davis, to spend up to \$750 on food and beverages for the event. The motion passed 9-0.

On-Line Program:

A program dealing with ethics for online journalism is being planned for January or February. Bauer suggested Dan Gillmor as a key speaker and other panelists are being sought. Hughes suggested the possibility of inviting bloggers to blog at the event as well as taking questions by e-mail. Webcasting the event is also a possibility. The Minnesota Public Radio UBS Forum may be a suitable venue.

Garrison-Sprenger offered the topic of readers commenting on stories posted on news Web sites as another online journalism topic.

Regional Conference:

The board discussed fundraising for the Regional Conference. Currently, the Minnesota Pro chapter splits all funds raised with the Northwest Broadcast News Association (NBNA). A discussion about raising funds for MN SPJ programming in general, instead of raising money specifically for the Regional Conference, concluded with the decision to continue raising money for the Regional Conference.

The chapter needs to come up with five panels for the conference by January. Board members will return to the next meeting with ideas.

Ethics Week:

Bauer reported that an Ethics Week event will take place April 22, 23 or 24. A proposal to SPJ national has been submitted for an Ethics Week grant. A discussion of the role of news media covering controversial issues in the time of war, particularly during elections. As in the past, the Silha Center will be a partner in the program.

Mankato Area Event:

Bauer will be in contact with members in Mankato to set up an event.

Ethnic Media Training Project:

An Ethnic Media Training Project event is being planned for April, June or July.

IV. Page One Contest

Lutz outlined changes and new categories that she, Hughes and Beal worked on. New categories were added to the broadcast portion of the contest and revisions were made in the online news

categories. Beginning this year television and radio entries will be judged based on newsroom size.

Board members will inquire with independent online news services whether they would prefer an independent Web site category or if they want to be in competition with mainstream media Web sites.

Special contest categories for Best Coverage or Story of the Year were proposed during the meeting.

V. Other Business

Student Scholarships:

A motion was made by Bauer, seconded by Theisen, to provide two \$1,500 student scholarships. The motion passed 9-0.

Lutz reported that the application form could be uploaded to the chapter Web site. Theisen and Bauer will work on updating the site with the information and application form.

The next meeting will be Dec. 7.

The board adjourned on a motion from Theisen, seconded by Gilbertson.