

Society of Professional Journalists
Minnesota Pro Chapter
Board of Directors meeting
May 13, 2008

Minnesota Public Radio offices, St. Paul

Board members present: Joan Gilbertson, president; Nicole Garrison-Sprenger, president-elect; Dave Beal, treasurer; Scott Theisen, secretary; Art Hughes, past president; Jane Kirtley, Andrew Tellijohn, Jeff Achen, Amanda Lutz, Sarah Bauer, Karen Lundegaard, directors.

I. Treasurer's Report

At the close of business on May 9 the chapter had \$13,685 in checking, \$17,187 in savings and \$10,712 in our CD for a total of \$41,548. Beal reported that included in this amount are restricted funds of \$3,000 for the two scholarships to be awarded next month, \$1,000 to be paid toward ethics week expenses from SPJ grant money we are holding for the Silha Center and \$2,500 in gifts from the St. Paul, St. Cloud and Mankato dailies for the annual regional journalism conference in March 2008.

The most significant expenses of the year will be coming over the next few weeks as the expenses of the Page One event come due.

The chapter is in better shape this year than last, largely due to our success in promoting and expanding the Page One contest, Beal reported.

The CD comes due June 28. When renewed, we will face an interest rate that will be significantly lower than the current rate of 3.45%. Once the Page One expenses are paid, it may be possible to increase the principle of the CD because of increased amounts in checking and savings accounts.

II. Program Recap

- A. Hughes reported that the Ethnic Media Training program held at Rondo Library went well and that there were about 20 people in attendance.
- B. Kirtley reported that there were about 100 people in attendance at the Ethics Week event, Wartime Journalism. Kirtley and others agreed that the featured speaker Edward Wasserman and the panel of Twin Cities journalists did a great job. Video and photographs were taken at the event and are being displayed on the Silha Center and Minnesota SPJ Web sites.

III. Page One

A. Speaker Expenses

A motion was made by Hughes and seconded by Gilbertson to spend up to \$700 on travel expenses for Page One speaker Byron Pitts. The motion passed with an 11-0 vote.

B. Invitations

Garrison-Sprenger reported that the invites were printed and being prepared to be mailed out.

C. Awards and Scholarships

Hughes is working on sorting out some complications in the results returned by the judges. Some of the results seem to have been reported in incorrect entry tiers.

Lutz reported that the scholarship winners have been notified and invited to attend the banquet June 12. They both said they plan to attend to receive their scholarships.

Popovich Award Nominees

The board reviewed two candidates nominated for the Popovich Award. The names of the Popovich Award winners will be announced at the Page One banquet.

A motion was made by Kirtley and seconded by Garrison-Sprenger, to award both candidates with Popovich Awards this year. The board felt both recipients were working to shine a light on information that may otherwise be inaccessible by the public. The motion passed 11-0.

A motion was made by Beal and seconded by Gilbertson to pay for Page One dinners of seven guests. The guests include the guest speaker, two scholarship recipients and the two Popovich Award winners and one guest each. The total cost is \$245. The motion passed 11-0.

The board briefly discussed the first, second and third-place awards. Coordination with the trophy maker and certificate printer is awaiting the final draft of the contest results. There were no concerns about getting the certificates printed. The first-place awards have increased in price over last year's cost. It is likely that we will use the same glass trophy, but Theisen will check into any similar, less expensive options. Achen is also awaiting the finalized results to create the PowerPoint display.

IV. Elections

Garrison-Sprenger reported that there was a strong interest in the elections. She said that there were more people interested in running for director positions than open director seats. The ballots have been printed and were in preparation to be mailed to chapter members.

V. Other Business

A. Annual Report

Gilbertson reported that she has done the chapter's annual report to the national office. Gilbertson also mentioned that Region 6 Director Gordon Govier said there was discussion about transferring the annual report duty from the chapters to the region director. Instead of an annual report, the

region directors would do more frequent reports throughout the year. The board briefly discussed the proposed change on the limited information at hand and felt that the annual report should continue to be the responsibility of the chapters.

B. National Convention

Board members Garrison-Sprenger, Bauer, Achen and Beal are considering representing the chapter at the national convention in Atlanta this fall.

C. Payment to Silha Center

A motion was made by Bauer and seconded by Tellijohn to pay the Silha Center \$2,000 minus dinner expenses for the featured speaker paid for by Beal. Dinner expenses totaled \$89.84. Half of the \$2,000 comes from a national SPJ grant and the other half comes from the Minnesota Pro Chapter. The total amount to be paid was \$1,910.16. The motion passed with 10 votes to approve and one abstention. Kirtley abstained from the vote due to her position with the Silha Center.

The next meeting is set for June 18 at 6:30 p.m. at Sweeney's in St. Paul.

The meeting adjourned on a motion by Theisen, seconded by Achen.