

MEETING OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB BOARD OF GOVERNORS

November 22, 2010

Myron Belkind, Secretary

Board Chair Theresa Werner called the meeting to order at 6:35pm. Present were President Alan Bjerga, Vice President Mark Hamrick, Secretary Myron Belkind, Treasurer Keith Hill, Membership Secretary Angela Greiling Keane, Governors Jessica Brady, Shawn Bullard, John Donnelly, Marc Wojno, Theresa Werner, John Hughes, Ed Barks, Rodrigo Valderrama, Donna Leinwand (ex-officio), and Rick Dunham, president of the board of the Eric Friedheim National Journalism Library. Not attending: Mike Soraghan. Staff present: Executive Director Bill McCarren; Accounting Manager Georgetta George; Melinda Cooke, membership secretary, and Sarahanne Driggs, director of membership retention.

The Minutes from the October 18, 2010 meeting were unanimously approved.

Membership Report

On the recommendation of Membership Secretary Angela Greiling Keane, the Board unanimously approved the application of 32 members (see list at end of Minutes), retired status for three members and a six-month hard ship dues waiver for two member. The number of new members so far this year is 342, compared to 393 last year. Total members as of the Membership Report to the November Board meeting were 3,362, compared to 3,486 as of last year.

Financial Report

With only two months to go, The Club's goal of generating year-end profits of at least \$1.4 million this year is expected to be reached following strong performances in September and October.

For the first time ever, the Club had back-to-back revenues of more than \$1.3 million in September and October, Treasurer Keith Hill reported.

Through October, the Club had profits of \$1.355 million, exceeding budgeted profits of \$1.262 million for the first 10 months of the year.

Hill said that the financial outlook for the remainder of the year was good, with November expected to be profitable and December looking promising with strong advanced billings and events planned.

Executive Director Bill McCarren told the Board that the Broadcast Operations Center had another good month in October, with revenues of about \$230,000, bringing the revenue total for the year to date to more than \$1.9 million.

“We have felt that \$2 million a year in revenue would be necessary for meaningful profitability,” he said. “We are finally there!”

2011 Budget Discussion

The Board discussed the 2011 budget, which will be voted upon at the Board’s next meeting on Monday, Dec. 13, and proposals related to next year’s membership dues following the streamlining of the membership categories.

The Board’s discussion focused on approving the new rates for membership categories that had been consolidated to reduce the number of categories, as approved at the Oct. 8, 2010 general membership meeting, with the result that the rates for some categories would increase while the rates for others would be reduced, so that there would be a “zero-sum-game” overall in terms of the impact on the Club’s revenues derived from membership dues. The Board at its Sept. 14, 2010 meeting had adopted the following resolution: “Overall membership dues will increase by 1.8 percent with per category variance in keeping with the adoption of the new membership categories.”

The Board met as a Committee of the Whole and first considered a proposal that as part of the alignment of the new membership categories, no rate would go up by more than \$60 per year per category. That proposal was rejected by voice vote, with Alan Bjerga, Mark Hamrick and Rodrigo Valderrama voting in favor of the \$60 cap. The Committee as a Whole then approved 11-2, with Mark Hamrick and Rodrigo Valderrama dissenting, the new rates for membership categories that had been previously drawn up in consultation with the treasurer. The Board then moved out of the Committee as a Whole and adopted 10-1, with Mark Hamrick dissenting, the following new rates for membership categories that would have price changes as a result of the consolidation:

The new rate for the new Journalist Young member category would be \$275 per annum, an increase of \$54 for Young Members under 30 and a reduction of \$71 for Young Members aged 30 to 34.

The new rate for the new Communicator Nonresident category would be \$325, an increase of \$134 for the old Affiliate Nonresident category and a reduction of \$263 for the previous Associate Nonresident category.

The new rate for the new Communicator Young Member category would be \$455, an increase of \$38 for the old Affiliate Young member under 35 and a reduction of \$38 for the previous Associate Nonresident category.

The new rate for the new Communicator Retired category would be \$407, an increase of \$56 for the previous Affiliate Retired category and a decrease of \$51 for the previous Associate Retired category.

The new rate for the new Communicator Retired Nonresident category would be \$200, an increase of \$77 for the old Affiliate Retired Nonresident rate and a decrease of \$127 for the Associate Retired Nonresident rate.

The new rate for the Communicator Student category would be \$197, representing no change for a student who is resident and an increase of \$6 for a student nonresident.

The new rate for the Communicator Spouse /Partner category would be \$120, an increase of \$31 over the old rate.

President's Report

President Alan Bjerga reported good news on the Club's efforts to raise funds for the Eric Fridheim National Journalism Library. He said that the Fourth Estate Award dinner honoring CBS correspondent Bob Schieffer had netted \$15,000 for the Library and that coupled with the successes of the 5K race and the Book Fair, it had been a very good year for supporting the library and its professional development programs.

Bjerga also announced that the Club will be the central venue of the global observance of World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2011.

The program, under the theme, "21st Century Media: New Frontiers, New Barriers," will be held May 1-3 in Washington, with events on May 3 -- when World Press Freedom Day is officially observed -- centered at the National Press Club. More than 20 organizations working to advance free expression worldwide are collaborating with the United Nations and the U.S. State Department to plan the events.

"The National Press Club is excited and honored to be the focal point of an international celebration of the importance of press freedom," Bjerga said. "As a place where news happens every day, it's appropriate for the National Press Club to play a prominent role in keeping a free press at the forefront of the world's agenda."

Report on NPC Board/NPC Library Task Force

Alan Bjerga and Rick Dunham, a past NPC president who is now president of the Library Board, presented a report from a joint NPC Board/NPC Library task force on governance issues related to on the relationship between the NPC and Library Boards.

Highlights of the report:

Conclusions:

- The current relationship between the NPC and the Library falls well within IRS regulations and nonprofit standards.
- The bylaws and governance structure is acceptable under IRS regulations and nonprofit standards, but there are certain changes recommended that would answer legitimate questions that have arisen about the authority and independence of the library board.
- The amount of financial support provided by the Club is well within the range acceptable to the IRS.
- Library employees can be on the Club's payroll. The Club can provide health insurance, auditing, accounting, payroll and other services to the library, but such arrangements should be spelled out in an official document.
- No "poison pill" provision is needed to prevent the Library from spinning itself off into a separate entity – just vigilance by the NPC president and Board of Governors.
- The NPC should have flexibility to use the Library to maximize its tax advantages.
- The Library should remain a separate nonprofit entity and should not become part of the for-profit Club.

Recommendations:

- A NPC Board/Library Board committee should be appointed to craft a memorandum of understanding covering sharing of space, staff and support for one another's activities. The MOU should be forward-focused while resolving long-standing issues such as the Library's accumulated debt toward the Club and the relationship between the Club, the Library and its art work.
- The Library Board should immediately assume responsibility for its executive's annual performance review and compensation, in consultation with the Club's Executive Director. This will be more closely described in the MOU.
- The Library should have its own URL. The Library home page could be linked by automatic re-directing to the NPC website.
- The NPC should assume responsibility for funding the NPC Archives, with a review of the management and financial relationship taking place annually for at least the next three years to evaluate whether both parties are satisfied with that arrangement and whether the Library should aim toward receiving control of the Archives as its financial situation improves.
- Beyond including of the Library Board president as an ex-officio member of the NPC Board, as was approved recently by the NPC membership, the Library's current system of staggered-year appointments should be maintained.
- The Library should create an Audit Committee to handle its own audits and financial oversight.
- The Library should also create a recommendations/recruiting committee to assist the NPC president in making selection to the Library Board.
- The NPC president and Library Board president should work over the next year, in conjunction with the two boards, to clarify the relationship between the two

boards, staff liaison, board liaisons and committee chairs of the following committees that work on Library-related events: Professional Development, book Fair, Book & Author, Fourth Estate Dinner, 5K, Awards and Scholarships.

- The NPC president and Library nominations committee should focus on appointment new members of the Library Board with expertise in development, grant applications, nonprofit administration or state-of-the-art journalism training.
- The Library Board distinguish itself by becoming a true development board, with a requirement of at least \$2,000 in annual fund-raising from each member to assist in the growth of the Library as a unique institution with a unique mission at the National Press Club. No board member would be nominated by the president who did not promise to raise at least \$2,000. That minimum requirement would include funds raised by the Library Board member or a personal contribution from the member.

In a motion moved by Vice President Hamrick, and duly seconded, the NPC Board supported the conclusions and recommendations that the Library Task Force had approved.

Governor Hughes said the report was “a great product and congratulated all who served on the task force.”

The task force members were: from the NPC, Ed Barks, Angela Greiling Keane, Mark Hamrick and Alan Bjerga, and from the Library Board, Ed Lewis, Kathy Bonk, Jerry Zremski and Richard Dunham. Staff represented were NPC Executive Director William McCarren and Julie Schoo, the Library director.

New Business

Approval of Election Board:

On the recommendation of Secretary Belkind, acting under Article VI, Section 3, of the NPC Bylaws, the Board appointed five Journalist members in good standing to serve as an Election Board in charge of the balloting and counting of votes for the Dec. 20, 2010 elections, as follows:

Melissa Charbonneau (Chair), William Miller, Darlene Shields, Andrea Stone and Jack Williams

Old Business

Member Outreach from Board of Governors: The Board continued its discussion from its October meeting on the suggestion by Ed Barks to take steps to increase the Board’s transparency and openness in the eyes of the membership. Vice President Hamrick said member outreach would be a priority of his, if he is elected as president in the forthcoming elections, and pledged to work with Barks and other Board members to have an open dialogue on how best to achieve that objective.

The Board met in Executive Session from 8:05pm to 8:25pm to be briefed on a legal matter and to hear a report from the Ethics Committee.

The next meeting of the Board was scheduled for December 13.

The Board adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Committee Liaison Reports

Book and Author

Due to the recent Book Fair and the holiday season, the Book and Author Committee has only one book event scheduled for December 13, when David Philipps will present *Lethal Warriors: When the New Band of Brothers Came Home*.

The committee plans to continue going after big name authors and books, such as Sally Wade's *The George Carlin Letters* and the Olympic figure skater Johnny Weir's *Welcome to My World*. A prime target for February is Michael Oher's *I Beat the Odds: From Homelessness to the Blind Side and Beyond*, though success has been elusive thus far. Similarly, attempts to get Senator Scott Brown for a book event do not appear promising.

The subcommittee that looked through catalogs to put together a list of interesting books for future events will revive its efforts with a focus on spring events, as there may be some notable books to pursue then.

Book Fair

Diane Rehm, this year's Honorary Chairwoman, and Edith Friedheim both expressed congratulations on an outstanding event. The SEED School, in partnership with the Book Fair for the second year, received books purchased by attendees of the Book Fair for the development of the Maryland school's library.

At this writing, final figures are still being compiled. We do know that book sales were down slightly, though total revenues were somewhat higher due to increased sponsorships.

The date has already been set for next year's Book Fair: Tuesday, November 15, 2011.

Communications and Marketing

More than 20 NPC members attended October's committee meeting featuring NPC member Paul Rodriguez of Burson-Marsteller leading a discussion of best practices in media relations. With no guest speaker in November, attendance dwindled significantly. The committee is closing in on a panel for its first "Reporters and Sources" event, though

has decided to push back its debut until 2011. Also, discussions have begun with a possible speaker for the committee's initial "Dinner with Champions" series, which will feature a dinner conversation with a noted luminary from the communications field. Plans for "Social Media Monday" have been put on hold for the time being. The committee will not hold a business meeting in December, instead encouraging members to take advantage of the Club's holiday buffet.

Newsmakers

There have been 48 Newsmakers so far this year.

Broadcast Committee

- Renewing the PRX distribution agreement for our radio content
- Radio Team, led by Ralph Malvik, met last week to review new procedures for submitting our radio programs to PRX by taking advantage of enhanced metadata (more categories and key words)
- New discussions taking place about the committee producing behind-the-scenes short-form videos for us on the NPC website
- Strategic planning ideas to be discussed in our December committee meeting
- Vija Udenans has been appointed the staff liaison for our committee

Freedom of the Press

- 1) The Club issued a statement Nov. 10 expressing outrage about the beating of a Russian journalist named Oleg Kashin.
- 2) The Club held a reception and award ceremony Nov. 15 honoring the domestic and foreign winners of the 2010 John Aubuchon Press Freedom Awards: Charles Davis, a U Missouri professor and legendary open-government advocate, and Kouhyar Goudarzi, an Iranian blogger being held in solitary confinement in the infamous Evin Prison in Teheran. Subsequently, we issued a press release about the event and Bjerga's call for Ahmadinejad to release journalists in captivity and other political prisoners.
- 3) The NPC Press Freedom Committee co-sponsored on Nov. 18, 2010, its annual press conference with the Committee to Protect Journalism, as CPJ unveiled the winners of the 2010 International Press Freedom Awards—four journalists, from Venezuela Ethiopia Iran and Russia.

Professional Development

Upcoming activities from the Library's Professional Development Committee:

Dec. 6, 9:30 a.m., Web 2.0 Tools traing class, Bloomberg Room

Dec. 6, 11 a.m., Advanced Google Search, Bloomberg Room

Dec. 6, 1:30 p.m., Twittering Away, Bloomberg Room

Dec. 6, 3 p.m., Reporting From Facebook, Bloomberg Room

Dec. 7, Blogging Basics, 9:30 a.m., Bloomberg Room

Dec. 7, 11 a.m., Fousquare, Gowalla and Facebook Places and other Location-based Tools Class -- what are they, how do they work, how do they help gather information and identify sources, Bloomberg Room

Travel Committee

The Travel Committee is busy with 40+ people signed up for Paris over the Martin Luther King Jr. weekend in January. Turkey in May has 10 signed up and more on the way. China, the Silk Road and Tibet is also picking up travelers, with about 10 already and more promising to sign up. We're looking at Israel in November 2011. Interest in Berlin/Dresden is increasing so we are looking at that for next fall. We're also looking at some local (meaning U.S.) trips for next summer, although those are more difficult to fill because people feel they can go places in this country on their own! The regular meeting of the NPC Travel Committee -- along with holiday cheer -- will be held on Tuesday, December 14 at 6:30 p.m. in the McClendon Room.

Books & Brunch:

At our next meeting, at noon on Saturday Dec. 18 in the Fourth Estate, we will talk about *Zeitoun* by Dave Eggers.

At the Books & Brunch discussion on Nov. 20 we selected *Tinkers*, by Paul Harding, as the book to discuss at our Jan. 15, 2011 meeting.

Photography Committee

Carol Guzy, a Washington Post photojournalist, presented the Club with a copy of one of her three Pulitzer Prize-winning photos at the Nov. 17 meeting of the Photo Committee. The 1999 photo shows Agim Shala, 2 years old, being passed through a barbed wire fence into the hands of grandparents at a refugee camp in Kukes, Albania. The grandparents, who had no idea if their family was alive, reacted with unbridled delight. The photo is among those by Guzy, Lucian Perkins, and Michael Williamson of the Post that won the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for feature photography "for their intimate and poignant images depicting the plight of the Kosovo refugees." It is the first Pulitzer Prize-winning photo taken by a woman photojournalist that will hang permanently in the NPC's Pulitzer photo collection.

The photography committee will conclude its program for the 2010 with its year-end meeting and mini-photo contest for its members on Dec. 15.

International Correspondents Committee

Upcoming events:

--Dec. 5: Annual year-end luncheon meeting at an international restaurant, this time at a Turkish Restaurant.

--Jan. 6: Haiti Night, being organized by Reuters bureau chief Simon Denyer.

--January (from third week): Photo exhibition marking 30th anniversary of the release of the American hostages in Tehran on Jan. 20, 1981.

--Jan. 26: Hungarian Embassy concert, buffet and wine tasting

Speakers Committee

Upcoming Speakers:

Nov. 29: Energy Secretary Steven Chu

Dec. 15: Muhtar Kent, chairman and CEO, The Coca Cola Company

Jan. 12: Gail J. McGovern, president and CEO of the American Red Cross, on "One Year After the Haiti Earthquake: Progress and Challenges."

Events Committee

The kick-off of a Religion and the Press Series begins with Sally Quinn, Washington Post columnist, on Dec. 1.

Dinner and a Movie is scheduled for Dec. 6.

The Events Committee will have the members' holiday celebration in conjunction with the dinner event in the Reliable Source on Dec. 16.

House and Bar Committee

The committee at its Nov. 1 meeting had a mixed discussion regarding food variety and pricing in the Reliable Source. There was a request for lower priced food items and more variety at the buffet, including the return of self-serve sandwiches.

Fitness Center: One of two treadmills has been inoperable for one month. There was a suggestion by Robert Weiner that we need better and quicker maintenance.

Membership Applications Approved

Journalist

Christopher M. Boots-Faubert – Cape Cod Times, columnist; Younghae Choi – Dong A Ilbo Daily Newspaper, Washington bureau chief; Matthew Friedman – The Associated Press, online video producer; Paul D. Gale* (Marathon, Ontario, Canada) – The Marathon Mercury, Editor; Robert R. Heironimus* (Owings Mill,

Md.) – Self-Employed, Host, Producer, Author & Speaker; Mehdi Jedinia – Tehran Post, Editor; Miles M. O’Brien* (New York, N.Y.) – PBS Newshour, science correspondent; Kristin Roberts – Thomson Reuters, news editor; Melinda M. Roeder* (Baltimore, Md.) – WBFF-TV Fox 45, News Reporter; Ghihong Seong – Yonhap News Agency, correspondent; Jessica Zigmond – Modern Healthcare, Crain Communications, Washington bureau chief

Journalist Young Member

Ellen Gilmer – E&E Publishing, Copy Editor; Nahapetyan Haykaram – Public TV Company of Armenia, DC correspondent; Luke A. Nichter, Ph.D. – C-SPAN, executive producer

Communicator

Sarah Buhr* (Salt Lake City, Utah) – Big Star PR, public relations consultant; Laura Cortner* (Baltimore, Md.) – Hieronimus & Company, Inc. & Ruscombe.org, executive producer & author; Lawrence S. Freilich, D.D.S., Ph.D. – self-employed, periodontist; Peter Reginald Gibbon* (London, England) – MGA Group, managing director; David L. Good – Law Office of David L. Good, attorney; Anneli Halonen – Embassy of Finland, cultural affairs counselor; Diedtra Henderson – PhRMA, director of communications & public affairs; Larry Klayman* (Beverly Hills, Calif.) – Worldnetdaily.com & Freedom Watch, Columnist & Writer; Mark A. Knudsen* (Marlboro, N.J.) – Bass Mollet Publishers, producer & consultant; Fay Stover Iudicello – U.S. Department of the Interior, director, Office of the Executive Secretary; Robert B. Nealon – Nealon & Associates, P.C., senior partner; Elena M. Temple* (Cheverly, Md.) – The U.S. Conference of Mayors, director of communications

Communicator Young Member

Negar Mohommadi – Voice of America, anchor & reporter

Communicator Student

Caroline Haury – American University; Lauren Larson – University of Maryland; George Mocharko – George Mason University; Dana J. Wright – The George Washington University

(*denotes non-resident status)