

**National Press Club  
Board of Governors  
December 21, 2011  
Minutes**

1. The meeting was called to order by Board Chairman Theresa Werner at 6:30 p.m.  
**Present:** Chairman Theresa Werner, President Mark Hamrick, Vice President Keith Hill, Treasurer Myron Belkind, Secretary Joel Whitaker, Membership Secretary Angela Greiling Keane, Vice Chairman John Donnelly, Patrick McGrath, Mike Soraghan, Mark Wojno, Rodrigo Valderrama, Ken Mellgren, Ed Barks, Shawn Bullard, John Hughes, Immediate Past President Alan Bjerga, NPC Journalism Institute President Richard Dunham,  
**Absent:** None  
**Staff Present:** Executive Director William McCarren, Assistant to the President Havilah Ross.  
**Electees:** Membership Secretary-Elect Nyia Hawkins; Governors-Elect Thomas Burr, Suzanne Struglinski.

2. Upon motion by Secretary Joel Whitaker, the minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

**3. Membership (Keane)**

Keane reported that Press Club membership was up by one member vs. last year – 3312 vs. 3311 in 2010,

Keane moved that the following persons whose applications for membership have been reviewed and approved by the Membership Committee be admitted to membership, effective Jan. 1, 2012:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>
<b><u>Journalist</u></b>		
Martin J. Coyne	Platts Associate Editor	Kate Winston Christopher Newkumet
Mary Milliken	Thomson Reuters Washington Bureau Chief	Bill McCarren Mark Hamrick
<b><u>Journalist Young Member</u></b>		
Malik Sirat Akbar	The Baloch Hal Editor-In-Chief	Jackie Kasuya Emily Whitten
Mollie Bailey	Chronicle of the Horse Editorial Staff	Timothy Homan Andrew S. Medici
Jordan Smith	Washington Post / Salon / Slate	Membership

	Freelance Writer	Committee
Raf Sanchez	Daily Telegraph Reporter	Rachel Ray Toby Harnden
<b><u>Journalist Non-Resident</u></b>		
Rick Beyer	(Freelance) Non-fiction author / Documentary filmmaker	Emily Whitten Heather Forsgren Weaver
<b><u>Communicator News Source</u></b>		
Caren W. Madsen	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Public Affairs Chief	Jana Goldman
Sanna Kangasharju	European Parliament Liaison Office Liaison Officer - Communications	Michelle Kincaid A. John Adams
Julie Burton	Women's Media Center President	Conrad Martin Denice Zeck
<b><u>Communicator Young Member</u></b>		
Galen Tan	USAID/OFDA Information Officer	
Megan Cotton	Lipman Hearne Account Executive	Antony Shop
Delphine Halgand	Reporters Without Borders Washington DC Director	Clothilde Le Xoz Veronica Smith
<b><u>Building Tenant</u></b>		
Richard Wiley Vega	Macfadden Events and Information	Membership Committee
Kristina Southam	Macfadden Administrative Assistant	Gloria Allen
Margaret I. McKenzie	Macfadden Administrative Assistant	Gloria Allen

The motion passed unanimously.

Following approval of new members, the Board discussed the procedures by which new member applications are processed.

#### **4. Committee Reports:**

**Membership Committee (Keane)** helped draft proposed changes to Club Membership rules.

**Diversity (Keane)** didn't meet this month but is evaluating one more event before the end of the Club year.

#### **Book and Author Committee (Barks):**

The committee did not meet in December. However, thanks to Friedheim Library staffer Nicole Hoffman, committee members voted online for their author choices in coming months.

There are no events on tap for January. NPC member Eleanor Herman is set to discuss her book *King Peggy* on February 22. Two book raps are confirmed for March: Thomas Mallon (*Watergate: A Novel*) on March 2 and Anthony Shadid (*House of Stone: A Memoir of Home, Family, and a Lost Middle East*) on March 29.

The committee is pursuing first lady Michelle Obama for an April event. The publicist has required all interested venues to submit an event proposal to share with White House, which was done the week of December 5.

#### **History & Heritage:**

The Committee is beginning to implement a joint program with the Library of Congress for Club members to conduct oral history interviews with news people on jobsite matters. The first step is training four or five committee members on conducting the interviews so they properly dovetail with the Library of Congress's "America Works!" project. Training will begin early in 2012.

#### **Communications and Marketing Committee (Barks):**

The committee did not hold its December business meeting due to proximity to the holidays.

#### **Young Members (Bullard):**

On Dec. 7, Sherlock Holmes aficionados filled the Reliable Source, which was transformed into Holmes' 221B Baker Street and the Punch Bowl Pub. Club members and friends watched Robert Downey Jr. play the master sleuth in the 2009 movie, search for clues in a scavenger hunt, enjoy an exhibit of Sherlockian posters by artist Francesco Francavilla, and win raffle prizes including Sherlock Holmes posters, books and passes to the new Downey movie, "A Game of Shadows."

Several attendees donned Victorian garb to enter the costume competition, which was judged by Club members Peter Blau, also a leader of the local Sherlockian group The Red Circle, and Carol Morgan. Janice Law and Eleanor Herman won the contest, and Fred L. walked away with the scavenger hunt prize. Each winner received a gift certificate to The Fourth Estate.

Sponsored by the Club's Events, Young Members, and Book & Author Committees, and organized by Emily Whitten, members of all ages enjoyed the ambiance, fun and games.

The Onion Report pulled in almost 200 members and guests on the evening of Friday, Dec. 16, and was considered by many a entertaining success. This is at least the third time the Onion and the Club have held such an event. The fundraiser event was organized by Young Member Committee member Ben Dooley in support of the Club's library.

### **Newsmakers Committee (Hughes):**

The Newsmakers Committee had a strong finish to 2011 with the following Newsmakers taking place in December:

Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield, co-founders of Ben & Jerry's Homemade Inc., explained how they share many of the values supported by the "Occupy Wall Street" movement. The two were joined by Jostein Solheim, CEO of Ben & Jerry's, and Jeff Furman, chairman of the board of Ben & Jerry's.

Maen Rashid Areikat, chief representative of the delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United States, discussed Palestinian efforts at the United Nations, reconciliation talks between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, and prospects for the Palestinian-Israeli peace process under the current climate.

Republican presidential hopeful and former Utah Governor Jon Huntsman discussed a reform package to address what he described as the country's "economic and trust deficit."

A four-member panel of leaders from U.S. solar energy companies discussed what they said was the critical importance of Congress extending the Treasury Department's 1603 Grant Program. The third quarter was the best quarter ever for the U.S. solar industry, which is doing well despite the Solyndra bankruptcy and subsequent speculation about the health of the sector.

UNESCO Director General Irina Bokova discussed the cut in U.S. funds to the organization following the vote of UNESCO's General Conference to admit Palestine as a member state on October 31.

On Wednesday of this week, the minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Cyprus, Dr. Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis, will discuss prospects for a solution to the Cyprus question and how it would positively affect security, stability and cooperation in the Southeast Mediterranean.

The committee already has scheduled the following Newsmakers for next year:

On Jan. 5, international pollster John Zogby will present the results of fresh U.S. presidential election-year polling with the topic of "The Iowa Bounce, Now on to New Hampshire." Zogby's polling in New Hampshire, between Christmas and New Year's, will be based on two tracking polls of 450 likely voters. Some of the questions will aim to determine what is most important to conservatives, moderates, Libertarians and independents; the intensity of moderate Democrats; and how many members of the Libertarian and Tea Party parties are out there, and will they show up at the polls in volume, or just continue to be vocal.

ICANN CEO Rod Beckstrom will appear on Jan. 11, the day before the date that will mark the beginning of one of the biggest changes ever to the Internet. ICANN is the

non-profit corporation charged with coordinating the addressing system of the global Internet. On Jan. 12, the agency will begin taking applications for new domain names. Currently there are 22 generic top-level domains, such as .com, .net, .gov. Under the new and extremely controversial ICANN program, that number will expand to include most any word in most any language. For some, the change marks a global branding opportunity; for others it translates into a trademark and intellectual-property protection nightmare.

Suze Orman and Tavis Smiley will appear together on Jan. 12. In a time of increasing financial burdens and increasing fees levied by everyone from Bank of America to Wal-Mart, Orman will urge consumers to join her in the "Cash Revolution." Smiley, who recently launched a poverty tour, plans to highlight the need for more action to help those suffering from a lack of adequate financial resources in the United States.

Near the eve of the 38th anniversary of Roe vs. Wade, Merle Hoffman, founder and owner of Choices Women's Medical Center and author of Intimate Wars: The Life and Times of the Woman Who Brought Abortion from the Back Alley to the Boardroom, will lead a conversation on "Abortionomics -- When Choice is Not a Choice: the Impact of Recession on Abortion Rates." The Newsmaker is scheduled for Jan. 17.

On Feb. 1, Robert Johnson, founder and current chairman of the RLJ Companies, and founder and chairman of Black Entertainment Television, will appear at a Newsmaker to discuss issues surrounding the number of members of minority groups who are able to rise to the top of the corporate ladder.

Planned for early January is a four-member Newsmaker panel to discuss the Environmental Protection Agency's utility mercury rule. The rule has fostered an internal utility industry split (some support tougher rules because they have lots of renewables/nukes, others oppose because they use more coal). The rule will be released on a Monday, and by early to mid-January, both sides will have had time to review the rule and likely be formulating their strategies. Panel should consist of former EPA Administrator Jeff Holmstead; Natural Resources Defense Council clean air expert John Walke; Clean Energy Group Utilities spokesman Michael Bradley; and coal user utilities spokesman Scott Segal from the Electric Reliability Coordinating Council.

Also likely in January is an appearance by Ron Lauder, president of the American Jewish Congress.

### **Press Freedom (Donnelly):**

The Club in recent weeks called on the government of India to investigate charges of reporters being beaten in Kashmir and, separately, asked Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton to repudiate Ethiopia's effort to use terrorism laws to silence dissent.

Earlier this month, the Club signed on to a letter asking Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to publicly repudiate Ethiopia's effort to use terrorism laws to silence political dissent. Ethiopian journalist and dissident blogger Eskinder Nega was arrested Sept. 14 shortly after publishing a column calling for an end to torture in Ethiopian prisons and respect for freedom of expression. He faces up to 15 years in prison. NPC President Mark Hamrick was one of five signatories to the letter, joining groups including Committee to Protect Journalists and Human Rights Watch.

The National Press Club on Nov. 28 called for the Indian government to investigate charges that reporters were beaten in Indian-controlled Kashmir and to prevent such attacks from happening again.

#### **5. New Business:**

On motion by Soraghan/Hughes, the Board approved a new National Press Club award to be called the "Breaking News Award."

Eligibility: same as other awards.

Categories: Print/Online, Broadcast

"This award recognizes excellence in breaking news reporting. Entries will be judged for quality of reporting, presentation, speed and innovation. Particular attention will be given to reporting in the first 24 hours, and the use of a variety of formats to reach consumers.

Entries: No more than five stories, written or assembled under deadline pressure, covering a single event or occurrence. Material should be submitted as originally presented. A letter describing how the reporting was done on deadline is encouraged. Supplemental material should be clearly marked. Entrants must also submit passwords if they are needed to access the material online.

Prize: One free year of membership in appropriate category. No cash award.

#### **6. Treasurer's Report (Belkind):**

Efforts have been made to control cost. We expect to have the second best year for profits in the history of the club. We hope to reach the goal of \$3 million in cash/reserves by July 2012.

#### **7. Discussion of the Budget for 2012:**

Soraghan/Donnelly moved the Board act as a Committee of the Whole. The motion passed.

Belkind/Donnelly moved approval of the budget. Following discussion, the budget was passed unanimously.

Soraghan/Hill moved the Board exit the Committee of the Whole. After moving out of Committee of the Whole, the board approved the budget.

#### **8. Executive Director's Report (McCarren):**

McCarren noted that the Newseum has requested a three-year extension of the loan of a NPC sign reading "Accompanied Male Guests Only." The sign had been affixed to the members' bar prior to the early 1970s, when the Club was all-male. .

After a discussion, the Board voted not to extend the loan, but to have the sign returned to the NPC Archives.

#### **9. President's Report (Hamrick):**

Hamrick reviewed his presidency and said he had been pleased with Speakers Luncheons, and noted we set a high bar. Some events were better attended, like Herman Cain. Some less well attended. Members seem pleased with the presentations.

Vivian Awards – invited up to 5 people per committee to attend the event. We had 75 people RSVP and 150 attend. It was clear to me that everyone who got a Vivian was extremely appreciative. It's a good idea to give Vivians to committee chairs who are on the board because

there are responsibilities for being on the board and there are responsibilities to take on committee chairs. He applied three criteria: He wanted people to be effective, constructive and congenial.

One thing that will help our incoming president is to remind committee leaders that it's not up to committee leaders to decide who will be a committee chair.

We created the Weekly Wire as an answer to those who miss the Record.

We created a pamphlet at the request of the State Department to be presented to international delegations that are setting up state visits. 1000 copies printed, and we are sending them an electronic presentation.

We added Dinner with the President. Struglinski said she had attended and suggested a focus on networking. "There are a ton of things to do here (at the club), but not many ways to meet other members." Hamrick said this is one potential solution to communicator requests of how we can have more interaction with journalists.

Looking to future: Need to do better job with member section of the website. Want to make people feel like they have a resource.

We've been successful in making website more active.

Hamrick said the Club needs better pricing for international members, and noted we currently have 84 overseas members.

He said he had hoped to better embrace social networking within the organization but said he didn't think that was necessarily achieved.

#### **10. Board Commends Hamrick:**

Following the President's Report, Bjerga moved the Board "commend Mark Hamrick for his fine work and leadership during this past year."

Hughes proposed the following as a friendly amendment:

WHEREAS, Mark Hamrick is completing his term as president of the National Press Club, and

WHEREAS, the Club finances have remained in their positive direction, with a profit for the year expected in a range of \$1.3 million and a reserve of more than \$1.5 million, and

WHEREAS, total paying membership increased to 3,123 from 3,091 a year ago, journalist membership increased nearly 4% and overall membership increased to 3,312, and

WHEREAS, the Club gained a new level of distinction in speaking out on Press Freedom issues; continued a proud tradition of awarding journalism excellence by people such as Lara Logan and Jim Lehrer, and hosted significant Newsmaker and Speakers Luncheon event with the likes of Herman Cain, Ben Bernanke and Michele Bachman, THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB --

1. Thanks Mark for his service;
2. Congratulates him on an outstanding year as president, and
3. Urges him to remain active in Club affairs long after his owl feathers turn into silver and gold.

Bjerga accepted the amendment and the motion was passed unanimously.

#### **11. Appreciation of Service of Bjerga, Hill, Soraghan and Valderrama:**

On a motion by Hughes, the board unanimously adopted the following resolution:

WHEREAS, **Alan Bjerga, Keith Hill, Mike Soraghan and Rodrigo Valderama served the National Press Club with distinction as members of its Board of Governors, and**

WHEREAS, their actions contributed to the well-being of the club and its members,  
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS–

1. Thanks Alan, Keith, Mike and Rodrigo for their service to the Club, and
2. Urges them to remain active in Club affairs.

## **12. New Business:**

### **Board Orientation Program**

Barks reported that a board orientation program has been developed to help new board members perform well.

### **Constitutional Amendment – Qualification of News Source Communicators**

Keane/Soraghan moved the following amendment to Article III, Sec. 1(b)(v) of the Club Constitution:

(v) News Source – Persons whose profession or business involves regular contacts with members of **qualified news outlets** or whose duties involve preparation or dissemination of news and information. A letter from a member of the working press **from a qualified news outlet citing specific examples of the individual's use as a news source** is required to validate source status as a **regular news source**.

After discussion, the motion was approved.

### **By-Laws Change – Qualification of Freelance Journalists**

The board also discussed a proposal by Keane to amend the qualifications for freelance Journalist members, and a proposed amendment by Barks. The proposal was tabled to allow further development.

### **Adjournment:**

Hamrick reminded members the next Board meeting will be Jan. 20, and that the Inauguration of President-Elect Werner will be Jan. 28.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

JOEL WHITAKER  
Club Secretary