

**National Press Club  
Board of Governors  
September 19, 2011  
Minutes**

**1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Theresa Werner at 6:30 p.m.**

Present: Chairman Theresa Werner, President Mark Hamrick, Vice President Keith Hill, Club Secretary Joel Whitaker, Treasurer Myron Belkind, Membership Secretary Angela Greiling Keane, Vice Chairman John Donnelly, Immediate Past President Alan Bjerga, Patrick McGrath, Mike Soraghan, Mark Wojno, Rodrigo Valderrama, Ken Mellgren, Ed Barks, Shawn Bullard, Library President Richard Dunham.

Absent: John Hughes, owing to a death in his family.

Staff Present: General Manager William McCarren and Director of Membership Recruitment Havilah Ross.

**2. Approval of Minutes.** On motion by Whitaker/Valderrama, the minutes of the July board meeting were approved.

**3. Membership**

a. On motion by Keane/Hill, changes to journalist status and retired status were approved.

b. On motion by Keane/Hill, and upon recommendation by the Membership Committee, the following new members were approved:

**Journalist**

Matthew J. Schudel – The Washington Post, Staff Writer; Veronica Smith – Agence France-Presse, Economics Correspondent; Kevin Wack – American Banker Newspaper, Reporter; Thomas W. Roberts – National Catholic Reporter, Editor at Large

**Journalist Young Member**

Michael Edward Walsh – The Diplomat, DC Correspondent/ASEAN Beat; ElReco R. Gillison – 96.3 WHUR FM, Creative Services Director/Production Director; Patricia Geli – WTOP/Zone 2.8, Photographer; Carlo Munoz – AOL/Huffington Post Media Group, Deputy Editor; Aaron Kessler – Detroit Free Press, Washington Correspondent; Patrick Ferguson – Canadian Broadcasting Corporation/Radio-Canada

**Journalist Retired**

Dr. Barbara A. Reynolds – Reynolds News Service, Commentator;

**Communicator**

Toshihide Ando – Embassy of Japan, Head of Public Affairs Section, Counselor

### **Communicator News Source**

William H. Byrnes – Thomas Jefferson School of Law & National Underwriters, Professor, Author in Chief; PhD Sheldon Elizabeth Manuel – Harvest Projects International, Inc., Radio Show Host; Ron Benet (Building Tenant) – Clutch Legal LLC, Discovery Attorney; Raymond Tanter – Iran Policy Committee and Georgetown University, Professor & President of IPC; Christos S. Efessiou – SRXA Strategic Pharmaceutical Advisors, LLC, Author of Non-fiction book

### **Communicator Non-Resident**

Alan J. Cousin, Jr (New Orleans, LA) – Get up Radio Global Media Broadcasting, LLC, Marketing Consultant & Journalist Reporter

### **Communicator Young Member**

Jason Bluke (Building Tenant) – ACEEE, IT Support Specialist; Monica Gray – Hypervocal.com, Culture & Lifestyle Editor, Video Blogger

### **Student**

Chanelle E. Havey – George Washington University; Anthony Palmer – American University; Alexandra Solderer – American University; Jiaxin Quan – American University; Thomas Beck – American University; Linn Wilk – American University; Samuel Adams – American University; Wen Yan – Georgetown University, Student.

c. During discussion, Valderrama asked the number of Communicators who are paying dues but are unable to be inducted into the Club because of the percentage limitation with respect to Journalist members. Havilah Ross, membership recruitment manager, indicated she would supply the number later. (At the General Membership Meeting, Keane said there were 87 Communicators on Hold.)

## **4. Committee Liaison reports**

### **a. Events Committee (Whitaker)**

The Annual Picnic was cancelled due to lack of interest from committee chairs and volunteers. The logistics of picking up food and preparing it raised concerns about logistics and about health regulations. Further, it was difficult to organize activities.

In lieu of the picnic, the Committee is planning a family-friendly outing on Nov. 5 - a tour of the Smithsonian American History Museum with a lunch in the cafeteria - free for members, significant others and children; \$10 for guests.

On Oct. 3, the Events Committee is planning a "Speakeasy" evening to complement the Ken Burns' lunch in reference to his recent prohibition film. In the McClendon Room, a segment of the film will be shown. In the Truman Lounge, a jazz band will perform a mix of prohibition-era and contemporary music. Prohibition-era drinks will be served throughout.

**b. Wine Dinners (Whitaker)**

Jefferson Bourbon Dinner, Oct. 15.

**c. Photography**

**d. International Correspondents**

**e. Travel (Hill)**

Twenty-three people have signed up for a trip to Berlin and Dresden Nov. 3-11.

**f. NPC Journalism Institute (Dunham)**

The Library By-Laws have been changed to reflect the new name, "National Press Club Journalism Institute. The Institute's nominating committee is looking for new board members, and Club President Hamrick noted that the Institute needs "people who can raise money as well as people who can work on professional development."

**g. Professional Development (Bjorga)**

Bjorga noted that the Committee hasn't gotten off the ground since Susan Heavey left the committee's chairmanship. Bjorga said the Board of Governors "needs to give serious thought as to how to structure and organize this committee to make it worthy of the National Press Club. We need to figure out how to have member-led professional development at the NPC."

**h. Awards (Sorahan)**

Sorahan discussed ways to better publicize the Awards program.

**i. Book and Author Committee (Barks)**

The History & Heritage Committee has decided to move its meeting date so that the Book and Author Committee will now meet in the McClendon Room most of the time.

There was a discussion of the plan to place the Book and Author Committee under the Library Board. Julie Schoo reported the move was made to bring the committee in line with accounting laws. She said that the move will not affect the operation of the committee, calling it a "distinction without a difference."

Upcoming include Mitch Daniels on September 26, with approximately 30 people signed up thus far.

Terry Prachett appears on October 14, and has drawn 75 attendees to date. Due to the author's health, Prachett will not sign books, though he may do a drawing of some type and sign 10 to 15 copies. Other books will be stamped. The next article in *The Wire* will alert readers to that fact.

NPC's own Alan Bjerga will unveil his new book, *Endless Appetites: How the Commodities Casino Creates Hunger and Unrest*, on October 17.

The committee plans to pursue the following authors for December book raps, in order of priority: Walter Isaacson with a book on Steve Jobs, Michael

Dirda with *On Conan Doyle*, Tori Spelling with *ClebbraTORI*, and John Feinstein with *Best Seat in the House*.

Potentials on the horizon for early 2012 include Stephen Fry, Dave Barry, Elizabeth George, Rachel Maddow, and Michelle Obama.

**j. Communications and Marketing Committee (Barks)**

**Mankiewicz Dinner:** The committee declared the dinner with legendary communicator Frank Mankiewicz, who was press secretary to Sen. Robert F. Kennedy and now is the vice chairman at the Hill & Knowlton office in Washington, a success. There were 30 attendees, nearly all club members, except for some Mankiewicz family members and colleagues and a few guests, including the former Treasurer of the United States. The committee agreed to host a dinner early next year with another notable communicator. Marlin Fitzwater, the former press secretary to President George H.W. Bush, was suggested as a possible speaker.

**Josh Funk Recognition:** The committee recognized Josh Funk for his outstanding contributions to the planning of the Mankiewicz dinner that helped make it a success. The committee would like to convey to the Board and the club's management its deep appreciation and gratitude for Josh and his assistance with the event.

**Picnic Alternative:** The committee suggested an indoor event at the club as an alternative to the annual picnic, which was cancelled for this year. Vice chair Martha Lockwood recommends opening the club on a Saturday afternoon to members and their families to participate in a variety of activities, including indoor golf and other games, magicians and palm readers. The club could also serve a traditional barbecue menu, along with soft drinks and adult beverages. She said a similar event sponsored several years ago by the Young Members Committee was very successful and led to great camaraderie and goodwill among the club's membership.

**NPC Awards:** Will Lester of the Awards Committee has asked the Communications and Marketing Committee to again arrange the publicity for the annual NPC Awards. The committee is pleased to assist in the awards program that recognizes outstanding journalism. It plans to update the distribution lists of media outlets and organizations that reach professional journalists, creating online advertising featuring banner ads on the NPC's website and others that support the industry, as well as issuing regular news releases about the awards leading up to the submission deadline next spring. In addition, the committee suggests beginning the publicity campaign as soon as possible to provide more time to promote the Club's annual awards program.

**"Jumbotron":** Committee member Tony Culley-Foster suggested that the TV monitor in the Club's lobby, also referred to as the "Jumbotron," show video features about the club instead of Harris Corporation material with periodic 30- or 60-second commercials by Harris along with a sign affixed to the Jumbotron identifying the company's sponsorship (the committee understands that Harris sponsors the monitors). The club could also offer

video sponsorship opportunities on the Jumbotron to other companies and organizations, resulting in additional revenue for the club.

Reporters and Sources Happy Hour: The committee would like to host an activity it suggested last year to bring the club's Journalists and Communicators together. An "Evening Exchange with Reporters and Sources" would feature a panel of the club's Journalists members from a news agency or specific beat describing the issues they cover. Then the club's Communicators could suggest sources and resources for them. The proposed evening event would be held in the McClendon Room or another room at the club with a cash bar.

**i. Young Members (Bullard)**

The committee is pursuing one of the jazz musicians who is regularly heard on the Weather Channel. The event is scheduled for November 30.

On Friday, Sept. 16 the committee implemented a new pace and modified rules for the Club's Pub Quiz. Nearly 40 people participated.

On Tuesday, Sept. 20 John Cameron and the Young Members committee will host a news conference on a controversial smokeless cigarette.

On October 3, the committee, in partnership with the Book & Author Committee, will host a master distiller from the home of Mount Vernon to give members a taste of bourbon from Washington's restored distillery.

Authors Dr. Naif Al-Mutawa presents the controversial comic book "99" on Oct. 6. And author Terry Pratchett speaks on Oct. 14.

**j. Broadcast Committee (Mellgren)**

**k. Books & Brunch (Valderama)**

**l. House & Bar (Valderama)**

**m. Publications**

**5. President's Report**

President Mark Hamrick reported that we are exploring ways for people outside the Club to be able to see, and perhaps participate in, the General Membership Meeting. He's especially interested in being able to accommodate Nonresident members, who represent about one-third the club's membership.

Hamrick noted that the Rudy Giuliani luncheon attracted 26 cameras as well as being well attended. He noted that Republican Presidential hopeful Herman Cain will be speaking in October, as will Ken Burns, the producer of historical films on PBS.

Fourth Estate tickets are going fast. Jim Lehrer will be honored, and Lehrer has agreed to be honorary chairman of this year's Book Fair.

A delegation from the Yemeni journalists and activists visited the Club. Their visit was arranged by the U.S. State Department and Meridian International. Hamrick has focused on attracting more speeches and other involvement by heads of state, and has been working with the State Department's chief of protocol on this.

Hamrick observed that we need to develop a team to produce The Wire, which historically has been a one-person effort.

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

August financial results, while still producing a loss, were the best ever for that month, which this year was not only in the midst of the summer doldrums but compounded by a weakening economy, a hurricane and an earthquake.

The loss, he noted, was virtually in line with the month's budget. Revenue was ahead of budget and substantially ahead of the August 2010 results.

The loss also represents a significant continuing decline in narrowing out losses for August.

The Club achieved the Board-mandated goal of having at least \$1.5 million in cash and reserves at the end of August, up from \$1 million last August.

Broadcast Operations Center did very well in August. Revenue for BOC and Audio-Visual, two separate but related departments, were more \$60,000 ahead of budget and ahead of a year earlier.

Noting that the Library has paid back \$50,000 of its \$200,000 debt to the club, Belkind/Hamrick moved that the National Press Club Board of Governors extend its appreciation and congratulations to the Library Board on this achievement. The motion passed unanimously.

## **7. Executive Director's Report (William McCarren)**

McCarren noted "there are real competitors out there, including the Newseum, who are actively working to minimize our positive position as a business.

Noting that approximately 1,000 people attend the Book Fair, which he described as a holiday shopping event, McCarren suggested a fee be charged to attend the Book Fair, which is a fund-raiser for the NPC Journalism Institute. Dunham responded that he wouldn't want the JI Board "to make decisions that will bring the anger of members down on the Press Club board. But if you want to do this, I'm happy to have the revenue." No decision was made.

## **8. New Business**

Belkind reviewed the 2012 budget assumptions, which include no dues increase in 2012. Drink prices, which are significantly below market, will be increased, and Happy Hour will be extended to include Thursday evening. Keane said "it's logical to increase drink prices," but added, "I'm a little wary of holding dues flat because people might assume we are holding dues flat forever."

On motion by Bullard/Hamrick the Board entered the Committee of the Whole.

On motion by Belkind/Ballard, following discussion, the Committee of the Whole approved the 2012 Budget Assumptions.

On motion by Belkind/Ballard, the Committee of the Whole voted to return to the normal order of NPC Board business.

Belkind/Hamrick then moved the NPC Board adopt the 2012 budget assumptions.

During discussion, Valderrama observed that a \$1 across-the-board increases in drink prices is, in some cases, equivalent to an increase of more than 30%. It is not the membership's fault if previous Boards did not raise them gradually, he said, adding that drinks prices aren't a major item in the budget in any case.

Valderrama also requested that the capital improvement plan be specific, with some form of priority as to what would be included in the amount budgeted for this purpose and a time frame.

9. Motion (Donnolly/Wojno) to set the next meeting for 5:30 p.m., October 17, 2011, was approved.

10. Motion (Hill/Wojno) to adjourn approved at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JOEL WHITAKER  
Secretary