

Feb. 24, 2014

Present:

Chairman Ken Mellgren
Vice-Chairman Jeff Ballou
President Myron Belkind
Vice President John Hughes
Treasurer Thomas Burr
Secretary Andrea Snyder
Membership Secretary Marc Wojno
Executive Director Bill McCarren
Board member Ed Barks
Board member Frederica Dunn
Board member Marilyn Geewax
Board member Molly McCluskey
Board member Joe Morton
Board member Anthony Shop
President ex-officio Angela Greiling Keane

Chairman Mellgren calls meeting to order at 6:32.

1) President Myron Belkind
Congratulates Angela Greiling Keane, Alison Fitzgerald, Molly McCluskey.

To Alison, Angela and Molly, I extend a special opening-of-our-year congratulations.

Alison, member since 2002 & newly elected BOG member, was part of team from the Center for Public Integrity that won a George Polk Award for business reporting. Three-part series reported that regulators and prosecutors failed to hold major Wall Street figures accountable for decisions that contributed to the financial crisis in 2008. Allison was chair of the Speakers Committee before being elected to the board of governors.

Angela, 2013 NPC president, recently named to cover breaking White House news for Bloomberg. Previous assignments included covering transportation and the Postal Service. Angela became an NPC member 1999, was a student member for 2 years before that.

Molly, chair of International Correspondents committee and new member of BOG, selected for a reporting fellowship to Congo, Rwanda and Uganda by the International Women's Media Foundation. Molly is a full-time freelance journalist whose work has appeared in Al-Jazeera English, the Washington Post and National Geographic. Is a contributing writer to the Washington Diplomat and AOL Daily Finance. Has been an NPC member since 2010.

Asked BOG to join toast to them.

Hear, hear!

Belkind: Thank you for helping us show that the National Press Club is a place of excellence in journalism.

2) Mellgren asks for motion to approve minutes from January BOG meeting. Hughes: so moved. McClusky: seconded. No discussion. Approved unanimously.

3) Membership Secretary Wojno presents membership report. Proposes approval of 22 new members. Hughes seconds motion to approve. Approved unanimously.

Have 9 members applying for retired status, proposes approval. Burr seconds. Approved unanimously.

Have 7 members requesting change to journalist from original status. Approved unanimously.

4) Board Liaison report. Motion made to approve board liaison report. Jeff Ballou seconded. Approved unanimously.

5) Treasurer's Report (Burr)

--Dec. was good month, above budget, not enough to make up for tougher months earlier in 2013.

--Jan. also fell short. No sign of a trend we should be concerned about.

-- Dec. revenue was more than we had planned for, higher than in previous Dec. Total costs in December were higher than anticipated. Bill has plans to bring those down this coming year.

-- Broadcast services continue to be drag on goals.

Met Brian Taylor last week, seems to have a lot of great contacts.

Bill and his team, Joann and Georgetta, worked very hard to get a new ATM into the club, ATM of State Dept. Credit Union. Will be operational later this month.

While first month isn't what we hoped for, we are still a profitable business, there are plans in place to boost revenue.

Bill McCarren commented on sales team: bringing in Brian; promoting Brent Gwathney, who was opening up in front of the restaurant; Jake Serwer.

Belkind:

Glad you're bringing Brent up from maître-d'. Important that we don't lose that momentum.

McCarren:

We have to be better here about recognizing talent and helping people develop, not lose that momentum.

Had a lot of success with Travelzoo, offering a deal that started on Valentine's Day, runs til May.

Mellgren asks for questions, motion to accept the Treasurers report. McCluskey makes motion, Ballou seconds. Motion carried (albeit later).

6) Media Center/BOC Task Force Report (Mellgren)

Mellgren presents report on operations of media services division.

7) Executive Director's report (McCarren):

Have unresolved issue with Onstream. Auditors finishing their report, will decide whether to treat as a receivable that is performing or whether to write it off. If written off, will go into 2013 accounts.

Big cost item is staff health insurance. We're keeping costs down and offering comparable coverage to staff by going with new provider. Blue Cross (used for 12 years) was just too expensive.

Ken calls for motion to accept Executive Directors report. Marc Wojno moves to accept.

8) President's Report (Belkind)

Speakers: Had two in February: had about 170 for Energy Secretary Ernie Moniz on Feb. 19, today had House Armed Services Committee Chair Buck McKeon speaking on his view about our Afghan policy. Drew almost 150. Speakers Committee Chairman Jerry Zremski, others turned around over the course of four days from ca. 50 previously. People came up afterwards and said it was very newsworthy.

Have to get numbers up, can't have a ballroom event with 50 people.

Speakers coming up include IRS chief on April 2, used to be April 15. Have Air Force Chief of Staff Mark Welsh April 29. Have Donald and Ivanka Trump scheduled for May 27. Dr. Benjamin Carson coming May 28; will probably move

that for a week later.

Bill, thanks for mentioning inaugural gala, members who helped fill up the ballroom to 350 people, excellent staff, and to inaugural committee including Molly McCluskey, Jan Du Plain, Frederica Dunn, Narayan Lakshman, Gil Kleinmy wife Rachel.

Wanted to make the event a truly international event; had 27 ambassadors and probably 100 additional members of the diplomatic corps.

Fourth Estate dinner, main fundraiser for Journalism Institute:

As board approved Selection Committee recommendation at Jan. 17 meeting, Charlie Rose will be 2014 award winner. Important to have recipient who will help recognize excellence of the NPC and good work of National Journalism Institute but also will bring in good sponsorship. Coca-Cola is main Charlie Rose sponsor.

Charlie Rose accepted ca Jan. 24, said ``Myron, I accept with enthusiasm."

Awards dinner will be July 30.

Awards Committee Chairman Will Lester very keen to have as many entries for awards as possible, esp. in breaking news category. Will showed up for last committee chair meeting when DC government was shut down because of snow even though he works a night editing shift for AP until 3 a.m.

Feb. 7, had about 100 people watching Olympics at the Reliable Source around 9. Events Committee planning events at the Reliable Source for the World Cup June 12 - July 13.

Brazilian embassy press officer will work with Press Club on World Cup events.

Fourth Estate on Valentines night had 93-95 people despite snow. Had about 50 next night, Saturday. Fourth Estate doing well with special dinners. Reliable Source also doing well, Chinese Buffet had very good numbers.

Honored Pat Nelson, retiring reservations manager. Bill (McCarren), Frederica (Dunn), Jeff (Ballou) spoke. Was a great event. Pat speaks from the heart, told colleagues that she'd joined as a cashier 27 years ago and they too may one day be honored after a great career at the NPC.

Feb. 27, a number of Africa ambassadors will be at NPC linked to event raising support for new channel.

9) President's Club Membership Drive:

Myron said he'd kick off membership drive, hopefully next week.

Will be competition among members, committees and board of governors. BOG, membership committee members restricted from winning general membership prize.

Wojno: seeking to bring in more non-residential members.

10) Proposed change in the NPCJI Bylaws (Belkind)

Reference has been dropped to NPC President nominating directors of the NPCJI, subject to conversation by the NPC board of governors and following constituencies:

board of directors of Washington Press Club Foundation, board of directors of the National Press Foundation. Previous bylaws created to reference conditions that no longer exist.

Burr moved to adopt, Wojno seconded.

Approved unanimously.

11) Support for AJ journalists held in Egypt (Ballou)

Ballou requests board support efforts by Al-Jazeera, CNN, other news organizations to free three journalists still imprisoned in Egypt, get charges against other journalist dismissed. Twenty being tried mostly in absentia for political bias, some are Al-Jazeera journalists. Ballou asking board to empower President Belkind to participate in/speak at "Day of Action" later in week, related events.

Wojno asked if there was anything we could do beyond putting out statements, for ex., team up with highly visible human rights organizations to support additional action.

Ballou said he'd write up Wire item. Discussed potential webcast of event.

Mellgren asked whether board supports Myron's participation in "Day of Action" event. No members were opposed.

13) New Business

NPCJI welcome to send someone to attend NPC board meeting, as long as they're a club member, when Barb (Cochran?) is unable to attend. They don't need to feel compelled to. NPC board members welcome to sit in on their meetings.

14) Mellgren suggested March 24 as date of next meeting. Discussed setting a schedule for board meetings for the rest of the year. TBD at next board meeting.

Meeting adjourned.