

**National Press Club Board of Governors Meeting
March 23, 2015**

Board Governor Ken Mellgren opens the meeting.

Board approves minutes from January meeting.

Board speaks with board member Anthony Shop via Skype about Social Driver's hiring of a National Press Club employee.

Membership Secretary Joe Morton presents membership applications.

Board discusses applicant who is a journalism historian and a vendor of newspaper archives, doesn't fit into existing membership categories.

Board discusses opening a new category, assigning provisional membership, holding to standards of membership categories. Board member Ed Barks suggests membership committee revisit membership categories. Membership Secretary Joe Morton agrees. Application is removed from group of applicants. Remaining applicants approved for membership.

Board approves six members moving to retired status. No requests for dues assistance this month.

Treasurer Marc Wojno presents February financial report. Revenues down, losses wider vs budget target, year earlier on federal govt/school closures. Several events moved to spring from winter. Club sees strong March, increasing business from April to June. NPC to review approach to next winter. Cash reserves up, debt down year-on-year.

Board member Ed Barks moves that board express thanks to staff, who came in to keep Club operating during snow storms. Approved.

Board member Andrea Edney asks what process is for assessing. Treasurer Wojno says that the Club is just starting to look into it.

Board member Alison Fitzgerald asks whether we should lower budget expectations.

Executive Director Bill McCarren says Club should wait for more of a pattern to be established (maybe three years), says January presidential inaugural will also throws things off.

Board member Tom McMahon asks how business is affected by journalists going out of town to cover primaries. Executive Director McCarren says everything is affected, core business not shaken.

Executive Director McCarren presents his report. Auditors will be coming to board in April or May. McCarren thanks board members who attended press conference seeking release of Jason Rezaian (Washington Post correspondent in Tehran).

President John Hughes says press conference got more than 20 satellite TV hits. Executive Director McCarren encourages board members to watch webcast. Board Chairman Mellgren, Executive Director McCarren commend President Hughes on handling of news conference. Executive Director McCarren says NPC got a letter from Mohammed Ali, his first public statement since death of Nelson Mandela.

President Hughes and Angela Greiling Keane (former NPC President, Bloomberg WH reporter) met with President Barack Obama's office about planning an appearance at the Club. Hughes says he's very optimistic.

President Hughes says at next meeting on April 20, board will pick Fourth Estate award winner. Fourth Estate dinner ticket will cost \$175. Date of dinner yet to be determined, most likely will be in October. Date should be determined by May.

President Hughes says he's looking at membership issue, issue of convening/galvanizing members. Promoting is not enough to get people to come to an event. Whose job is it to make sure seats are filled at events? Members'? Boards? President Hughes asks that people start considering. One option may be to bring on "galvanizer" to arrange for tables to be filled at events.

Further to Press Freedom & Book and Author committees switching over to umbrella of NPCJI. Two sentences in documents detailing the switch are different from a month ago:

First change is "The NPCJI will continue to receive revenue generated by Book and Author Committee events." This was the understanding and when the Journalism Institute board looked at that section, they felt we should spell that out with that sentence.

Second change requested by Press Freedom Committee. Language changed to "The Press Freedom Committee, consistent with past

practice, will have access to budgeted funds for program expenses." The NPC contributes the budget for that committee to the Journalism Institute. At next meeting of Press Freedom Committee, NPCJI to sit down with committee and review programs for potential fundraising.

NPC will continue to have board liaisons to those committees.

President Hughes calls for motion to approve changes in language. Seconded. Approved.

Chairman Mellgren says a board member has Old Business. Member says we need to revisit whether we need to have members under the age of 21, because the day-to-day doesn't fall on us & we could easily grandfather existing members in. We need to give a lot of weight to what staff & management of the Club say. References letters from Reliable Source Manager Mesfin Mekonen and Membership Director Melinda Cooke. Risk outweighs the benefits of having members under the age of 21.

Another member says she's also been thinking about it. Initially didn't like the idea of eliminating membership category because staff didn't want to card. Has revised understanding.

Question on whether anyone has had a change of opinion.

Another member says she's with whatever Mesfin Mekonen says. He has the experience, we can't disregard his opinion. Supporting materials very compelling.

Another member says he didn't know this was coming up tonight, would like more time to think about it. Thinks banning under-21 members doesn't solve the problem.

Another member asks in the future what we're considering doing is banning under-21 members and continuing to card everyone.

Another member says her initial issue with the proposal was that this policy wouldn't stop people from bringing in under-21 guests. Now she sees it as adding a layer of protection for the Club. Not worth the risk to us and our business model.

Another member: Would we run the risk of having our liquor license removed if an under-age non-member were served?

Another member: To recap, the policy we put into place is that you're not allowed into the bar if you're under 21 unless you're

accompanied by a member. We have very few members that that are under 21, my primary concern is making sure that what we put into place before stays in place.

Another member: I don't want to eliminate potential members because of they're under the age of 21. To grow our membership over the long-term, we should recruit student members. Maybe we can create a new membership category that would allow them to attend/participate in events without granting access to the restaurant or bar. Maybe the club card looks different.

Another member: We do so many things, press freedoms, professional development, things that they could be involved in. We have a restaurant that serves alcohol to the general public. I don't think this proposal solves the problem. If the staff cards, then they card.

Another member: My sense is that the staff hates the 100% carding -- do they think if we pass this proposal, there will be an end to that?

Club representative: I don't know the answer to that. Think we should be considering interactions between the under-21s and the staff. There's a respect issue there. The member should be an adult, should be worthy of respect.

Another member: Could we tell the staff -- we have seven members who are under 21, be aware, don't serve them?

Another member: Could we consider a new category or a new card?

Another member: I just want to make sure that the staff is aware that approving this proposal wouldn't remove the issue of carding.

Club representative: If we ask for a membership card, and they have one, they're a member -- if we don't have members under 21, they don't need to be carded. I don't care how old they are -- if they're a guest, we're asking them for an ID.

Another member: Within that framework, why couldn't we issue a different card to under-21s?

Club representative: We've done that and we've got a bunch of different things to prevent this, but the cleanest way is to just not have any.

Another member: Let's table the discussion and revisit in a couple of months.

Chairman Mellgren asks about item mentioned in Travel Committee report. Board member Dunn (liaison to Travel Committee) says we need to revisit what travel committee does. Person who has been arranging the trips has asked a travel agency to come in and make a presentation. Dunn says we need to reconsider the kinds of trips we offer, maybe create shorter trips, long weekends, regional travel. This services primarily the older members, who are willing to pay for the service.

Board member Fitzgerald: Could we poll the membership?

President Hughes: We want to make sure the committee doesn't select a vendor, that would be a Club decision.

Board member Dunn: Yes, I've made sure of that.

Executive Director McCarren: We have business that would probably be attractive to an agent.

Vice Chairman Jeff Ballou: We should make the process competitive, open it to bids.

Chairman Mellgren: Please tell the committee the board discussed, we have lots of questions. Let's make it an agenda item when the committee has something to present.

Meeting is adjourned.

In attendance:

- Chairman Ken Mellgren, Associated Press (Retired)
- Vice Chairman Jeff Ballou, Al Jazeera
- President John Hughes, Bloomberg News
- Vice President Tommy Burr, Salt Lake Tribune
- Treasurer Marc Wojno, Kiplinger
- Secretary Andrea Edney, Bloomberg News
- Membership Secretary Joseph Morton, Omaha World Herald
- Board member Frederica Dunn, Jamestown Post Journal
- Board member Alison Fitzgerald, Center for Public Integrity
- Board member Marilyn Geewax, National Public Radio
- Board member Molly McCluskey, Freelance
- Board member Ed Barks, Barks Communications
- Board member Tom McMahon, Motorola Solutions
- Board member Anthony Shop, Social Driver (via Skype)
- National Press Club Executive Director Bill McCarren

Absent :

- Board member Evan McMorris-Santoro, BuzzFeed
- Ex Officio Myron Belkind, George Washington University
- Ex Officio Barbara Cochran, University of Missouri