

MEETING OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB BOARD OF GOVERNORS

April 19, 2010

Myron Belkind, Secretary

Board Chair Theresa Werner called the meeting to order at 6:55pm following a presentation from 6:35pm by Joshua Funk, director of business development, of plans for the new NPC Web site. Present were President Alan Bjerga, Secretary Myron Belkind, Treasurer Keith Hill, Membership Secretary Angela Greiling Keane, Governors Shawn Bullard, Marc Wojno, Theresa Werner, John Hughes, John Donnelly, Mark Hamrick, Mike Soraghan, Rodrigo Valderrama, and Ed Barks plus past president Rick Dunham and Andrea Snyder, chair of the Scholarship Committee . Not attending: Jennifer Sergent, Jessica Brady and Donna Leinwand (ex-officio). Staff present: Executive Director Bill McCarren and Sarahanne Driggs, director of membership recruitment.

The Minutes from the March 22, 2010 meeting were unanimously approved.

Membership Report

On the recommendation of Membership Secretary Angela Greiling Keane, the Board unanimously approved the application of 24 members (see list at end of Minutes), retired status for 5 members and a six-month hardship dues waiver for 4 members. The number of new members so far this year is 116, compared to 195 for the same period last year. Total members as of the Membership Report to the April Board meeting were 3,436, compared to 3,573 last year.

Financial Results:

The National Press Club had record profits of \$320,000 in March, bolstered by a strong performance in the Broadcast Operations Center.

The monthly results also showed near-record revenue of \$1.34 million.

The Club ended the first quarter of the year with profits of \$416,000, and Executive Director Bill McCarren projected that the second quarter should produce profits “in the neighborhood of \$800,000.” He said that would put the Club on track to exceed the \$1 million in available cash and reserves mandated by the Board for Sept. 1.

President’s Report

President Bjerga told he Board he was pleased with the wide range of professional activities taking place at the Club on an almost daily basis.

He singled out the Speakers Committee headed by Andrew Schneider for its continuing outstanding luncheon guests, with six Cabinet-level secretaries already appearing at the Club this year.

He also expressed appreciation to John Donnelly and John Hughes as co-chairs of the Freedom of Press Committee for its responses to press freedom issues and for arranging the forthcoming program May 11 on recent developments related to the Freedom of Information Act featuring Bloomberg Editor in Chief Matt Winkler and Lucy Dalglish, head of Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.

Bjerga also urged Board members who had not already done so to make a donation to the Eric Friedheim National Journalism Library to facilitate the process of obtaining grants from some organizations that want to know the level of support a non-profit, such as the Friedheim Library, receives from its governing bodies. A number of Board members filled out contribution forms at the meeting.

Eric Friedheim Library To Seek More Donations

Rick Dunham, president of the Eric Friedheim National Journalism Library, briefed the Board on plans to make the Library more self-sustaining through raising the level of donations as it embarks on a greater number of professional development programs including the annual Journalists' Boot Camp scheduled for May 15 and a 12-part series of classes on investigative reporting funded by a \$50,000 grant from the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation. Details of the series will be announced soon.

John Donnelly raised a question regarding an event arranged by the Book and Author Committee to benefit the Library where the same price was charged for both Club members and non-members rather than following the normal practice of having a price differential. Dunham said he would relay this matter to the Library Board and to the Book and Author Committee.

Temporary Club Membership Program Approved

On the recommendation of Membership Secretary Angela Greiling Keane, the Board approved a pilot program to offer temporary three-day Club memberships to visiting journalists and journalism-related convention groups through the Washington, D.C. Convention and Visitors Bureau as a way of generating interest in the NPC and hopefully leading to applications for full membership.

Some comments from Board members in support of the recommendation:

Ed Barks: "I was skeptical when I first heard the proposal, but I am not any more."

Mike Soraghan: "This is an innovative marketing idea, and we should do more."

John Hughes: "We need to be experimental in our membership efforts."

Mark Wjono: "This gives us an opportunity to give tours and will also help our archives to get more publicity and attention from these visitors with temporary Club memberships."

Scholarship Winners Approved

The Board approved a recommendation of the Scholarship Committee to name Cathryn Walker, who has freelanced for the San Antonio Express and is editor-in-chief of her school's yearbook, as winner of the Richard G. Zimmerman Scholarship, and Mary Susman, a high school senior in Omaha, Neb. who is editor-in-chief of her school newspaper and a member of the leadership council of the Gay-Straight Alliance at her school, as winner of the NPC Scholarship for Journalism Diversity. The scholarships will be presented at the annual NPC Awards dinner this summer.

Scholarship Committee Chair Andrea Snyder urged the Board to approve expenses for the scholarship winners to travel to Washington to attend the dinner. Governors John Donnelly and Ed Barks said they would study this request and report back to the next Board meeting.

New Reciprocal Club Arrangement Approved

The Board approved new reciprocal arrangement with The Columbia Club of Indianapolis, Ind.

Ethics Process Reviewed

Myron Belkind, chair of the Ethics Committee, reported back to the Board, as requested at its March 22 meeting, on ways to improve the process for dealing with complaints about members' behavior. He said that this year's Ethics Committee would do its best to process complaints on a prompt and timely basis within the existing structure under the Constitution and By-laws. He agreed with the consensus reached at the March 22 Board discussion that it was not necessary to add another committee or level of bureaucracy to deal with this matter.

Committee Liaison Reports

Book and Author:

The April 7 Roxana Saberi book event drew almost 300 people. The library raised \$1210 from the \$5 attendance fee and sold 64 of 100 books. The committee debated when to charge the \$5 fee and decided that the determining factor should usually be whether the event merits the ballroom or not. Ballroom events should warrant the fee being charged. Events held in other rooms will be free. Future events scheduled to date:

May 18: Ben Bradlee and Quinn Bradlee, moderated by Sally Quinn. *A Life's Work: Fathers and Sons.*

June 7: Andrew J. Young and Kabir Seghal. *Walk in My Shoes: Conversations between a Civil Rights Legend and his Godson on the Journey Ahead.*

June 14: Fred Thompson. *Teaching the Pig to Dance: A Memoir of Growing up and Second Chances.*

Book Fair:

The Book Fair Committee continues the process of identifying, contacting and inviting notable and award-winning authors to appear with their newest books at the November 9 Book Fair. Mika Brzezinski is confirmed as an honorary chair and Madeleine Albright has been invited to serve as the other honorary co-chair.

The Author Application form is completed and available online for book submissions. Sponsorships, media contacts, and the SEED School's participation in the Book Fair are being developed.

Communications and Marketing:

Due to the early nature of April's board meeting, the Communications and Marketing Committee has not met since the last board gathering. At its April 20 meeting, the committee's agenda will focus on addressing the requests it is getting from other club committees for help promoting their events. This will include a review of the NPC calendar for the next several months to determine how committee members can provide assistance to the many events that are planned.

Speakers Committee:

Upcoming speakers:

April 30: Ray Mabus, Secretary, U.S. Navy

May 19: Tim Kaine, Chair, Democratic National Committee

May 21: Ted Leonsis, owner, The Washington Capitals

May 26: Barbara Bush, President, Global Health Corps

June 7: Gerald R. Ford Journalism Awards. Guest Speaker, Brent Snowcroft

July 7: Venus Williams, tennis champion

Travel Committee:

The NPC Travel Committee reception will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 22.

Professional Development Committee:

Upcoming Events:

Journalism Survival Bootcamp May 15

FOIA event with SPJ May 24

Photo shop classes (Julie Schoo scheduling)

More video training classes with FlipCams (Julie Schoo scheduling)

Personal finances for journalists with Newsweek/Reuters columnist Linda Stern June 15

TBD - working with Alan Bjerga, Bill McCarren on possible Pulitzer panel

TBD - News Schmooze networking happy hours with Events Comm.

International Correspondents Committee:

Two upcoming events:

April 21 (with Freedom of the Press Committee): The widow of the 2009 recipient of the NPC Freedom of the Press Award for an international journalist will receive the honor on behalf of her late husband at 6:30 p.m. April 21, in the Holeman Lounge.

June 9: Annual International Membership Recruitment Reception.

Photography Committee:

Two upcoming events:

April 23: The NPC Photo Committee's first "Photos and Tacos Night." Members are invited to the McClendon Room to stop by and ask photo or camera questions.

April 28: Jared Ragland, former White House photo editor and currently an adjunct professor at the Corcoran College of Art & Design in D.C, will speak at the next committee meeting on "From a Mop Bucket to the White House: An Unlikely Journey." Jared plans to weave stories of his journey starting as a janitor before winding up as an editor at the White House.

Freedom of the Press Committee

Upcoming Events:

--April 21 (with International Correspondents Committee): The widow of the 2009 recipient of the NPC Freedom of the Press Award for an international journalist will receive the honor on behalf of her late husband at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 21, in the Holeman Lounge. The presentation of the award will be followed by an interview conducted by Club member Marvin Kalb of Harvard's Joan Shorenstein Center for Press, Politics and Public Policy with Sonali Samarasinghe, who will accept the award on behalf of Lasantha Wickramatunga, a Sri Lankan journalist who was murdered in January 2009.

--May 11: "FOIA 2010: Prying Secrets from the Government" will be held May 11 at the Press Club starting with a 6 p.m. reception and feature Bloomberg News Editor-In-Chief Matt Winkler and Lucy Dalglish, executive director of Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.

-- The committee is working on a possible event on Obama's relations with the press in the wake of the White House's basically blocking press coverage of the nuclear summit.

--Additionally, the NPC issued a statement on March 24 urging the U.S. Congress to enact legislation discouraging foreign lawsuits that limit American authors' and journalists' First Amendment Rights.

Newsmakers: There have been 4 Newsmakers in April, bringing the total so far this year to 28.

Young Members Committee:

--YM Ben Dooley has taken up Cocktails with Champions. We are now moving forward on that. Don't have a date for the first one yet, though.

--Prohibition night, with History Committee, is being discussed for sometime in May.

--Interested in hosting an Election Night for the British Parliament in Truman Lounge. The results are expected to be announced about 8-9pm EST on May 9, so it works well.

--Abeer Abdalla is forming a subcommittee of combined YM and Events Committee to begin planning the Halloween Night.

--Hosting the NLGJA (National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association), will highlight a discussion of openly gay White House staffers on June 7 with a reception following.

History & Heritage Committee:

The History & Heritage Committee is proposing an event to commemorate the end of Prohibition and tied to a new book on the subject, perhaps to be held in the Bar/Truman Lounge. The Committee is also in advanced planning for events marking the 25th anniversary of the re-dedication of the Press Building and the merger of the NPC and the WPC. More oral histories are scheduled, including David Broder of The Washington Post.

Awards Committee:

Mike Soraghan, liaison to Awards, reported the awards season is well under way. Joann Booze said that the club received 114 entries. Packets have been ready for pick-up since April 8. Less than half of the judges have picked up their packets. Awards chair Jonathan Salant has asked for all the judging to be concluded by June 4, so there should be a full list for the June Board of Governors meeting. No date for the dinner has been set.

The next meeting of the Board was scheduled for May 24, 2010 (note: it was subsequently moved to May 17, 2010 to enable the Board to receive the Audit Report_.

The Board adjourned at 9:10 pm.

New Member Applications Approved

Active:

Misha McK - Misha & Friends Media, Inc./ABC 7, Cooking Up a Better Life With Misha/Host; Jorgen Ullerup - Jyllands Posten, Washington Correspondent; Giles Whittell - The Times of London, Washington Bureau Chief

Active Non-Resident:

Carl Hersh, Miami, FL -Close-Up Productions, Inc., Videographer, Producer; Thomas R. Greve, Hillsdale, NJ - Summit Business Media - Credit Union Times, Publisher

Active Non-Resident 65+ Reinstate:

John S. Day, Bangor, ME - Bangor Daily News, Retired Washington Correspondent; Edward Zuckerman, Hedgesville, WV - Amward Publications Inc., Editor

Active Under 35:

Randall Woods – Platts, Sr. Editor

Active Under 35 Reinstate:

Stephen Trimble - Flight Global, America's Managing Editor

Active Under 30:

Michelle Hirsch - The Fiscal Times, Writer and Producer; Timothy Young - Statebrief.com/Freelance, Op-Ed/Writer

Affiliate:

James R. Gaines - Story River Media, CEO, Founder, Editor; Joris Totte - Embassy of Belgium, First Secretary, Press & Public Affairs; Suzanne G. Spohn - U.S. EPA, Program Manager for China

Affiliate Non-Resident Reinstate:

Betsy Scolnik, Seattle, WA - Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Director, Content & Distribution

Affiliate Under 35:

Mary Brandenberger - Federal Election Commission, Deputy Press Officer

Associate:

Robert S. Cole, Jr. - Inter-American Development Bank, Executive Secretary, IDB Retirement Plans; Richard Stiennon - IT-Harvest, Chief Research Analyst

Associate Reinstate:

Laura B. Catalano - MWW Group, Sr. Vice President; Ruthann Saenger - Self Employed, Consultant

Associate Under 35:

Jacqueline Ferko - The Boeing Company, Communications Specialist; Jennifer Eden Gordon - U.S English, Inc., Director of Communications

Student:

Brianna Pyfrom - George Washington University, Student; Timothy Tassa - American Academy of Nurses/George Washington University, Program Associate, Public Affairs/Student