

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

July 24, 2006

Sylvia Smith, Secretary

Chairman Mark Hamrick called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm. Present were President Jonathan Salant, Vice President Jerry Zremski, Secretary Sylvia Smith, Treasurer Donna Leinwand, Membership secretary John Donnelly and Governors Alison Bethel, Alan Bjerga, Gayela Bynum, John Gallagher, Maureen Groppe, Keith Hill and Lou Priebe and former President Rick Dunham. Also, Clubhouse manager David King, Membership director Julie Schoo, Membership recruitment director Sarahanne Driggs. Governor Joe Anselmo was absent.

Smith moved and the board approved the minutes of the June 19 meeting.

Donnelly moved and the board approved the following 28 new members:

ACTIVE: Bob Edwards, host, the Bob Edwards Show/XM Satellite Radio; Paul Johnson, reporter, WRC-TV; Satomi Kato, photojournalist, Kyodo News; Rachel Ray, freelance writer; Mark Silverman, editor, Gannett News Service; George Yaksick, senior writer, CCH Inc.

ACTIVE UNER 35: Todd Fielding, freelance reporter; Joseph Morton, staff wrier, Omaha World-Herald; Priscilla Yap, editorial associate/writer, Northern Virginia Magazine.

ACTIVE UNDER 30: Michael Burnham, reporter, Greenwire; Jennifer Haberkorn, reporter, Washington Times; Ben Lando, correspondent, United Press International; Matthew Perrone, reporter, FDC Reports.

ACTIVE NON-RESIDENT: Jerome R. Corsi, Denville, N.J., author.

ACTIVE UNDER 30 RE-INSTATEMENT: Jamila Bey, freelance writer/producer.

PROVISIONAL UNDER 30: Daniel A. Roem, reporter, Gainesville Times.

AFFILIATE: Patti Tripathi, president, TriPath Media.

AFFILIATE UNDER 35: Matthew Keller, director of communications, Embassy of Liechtenstein.

AFFILIATE NON-RESIDENT: Francis Gary Powers Sr., Midlothian, Va., editor, The Cold War Times.

ASSOCIATE: Michelle D. Bernard, president and CEO, Independent Women's Forum; Cody Lusk, president, FirstUp, Ignition, This Week in Washington; Katie Mandes, director of communications, Pew Center on Global Climate Change; Gregory A. Martin, director of policy, General Motors.

ASSOCIATE UNDER 35: Melissa Anderson, communications and web content manager, FirstUp, Ignition, This Week in Washington; Murphie Barrett, public affairs coordinator, FirstUp, Ignition, This Week in Washington; Benjamin Becker, associate account executive, Susan Davis International; Todd Kohlhepp, writer/publisher, FirstUp, Ignition, This Week in Washington; Tara Olivia Setmayer, principal, Universal Strategies, LLC.

Donnelly moved and the board approved retired dues status for 2 members and a six-month dues waiver for 2 members.

Donnelly moved and the board approved acceptance of a reciprocal arrangement with Club St. James in Montreal.

Donnelly distributed a list of members who are on the verge of suspension because of non-payment of dues. He asked board members to have a word with them. He said suspension letters would be sent during the last week of July.

He said the non-residents weekend was a success, and the board applauded Driggs. Driggs said attendees' feedback included the suggestion that the event be held in another time of year, not include events on Friday and Monday, have events closer to the Club and involve more interaction with resident members.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Leinwand said the Club is 4 percent over budget in income but that expenses are also over budget but cash flow is fine. She said August will be very slow but bookings will pick up in the fall. She said staff will meet with a potential vendor for the online billings and payments. When it is set up, she said, members will be able to see and pay bills online; staff will be able to generate email to certain groups, such as those who have signed up for an event. She said the estimated cost is \$25,000, with \$13,000 recurring annually.

Leinwand noted that membership is in a decline despite strong efforts at recruitment. She said John Bloom estimated this costs \$400,000 a year, which has to be made up by increased sales through catering.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

King said a key thing that must be done with respect to online bill paying is to redesign the web page so it is integrated. He said work is being done on that, and he distributed a sample page. Salant said the New Media Committee is also working in a redesign, and he expects to have a report for the board in September. There was discussion about the sample page King distributed; Zremski said it was busy-looking, Salant said there is no room on it for a daily story or statement on press issues. Smith expressed irritation that Salant and the New Media Committee haven't acted sooner. Salant said the committee has been trying to get all the infrastructure in place and that the committee wants to have a members' blog and online source book. Zremski said everything on the page should be filtered through a vision. Salant said the board should decide what the priorities are. He said he will circulate suggestions before the next board meeting.

King said the first draft of the 2007 budget would be ready for the September Budget Committee meeting. He said there is better control of the temperature now that the new air conditioners are installed. He said recent heavy rains caused leakage, which the building owners fixed. But damage repairs have not yet been done. He said the foul odor in the Broadcast Operations Center is caused by the trash room of the Corner Bakery and that he has discussed it with the store manager. King said it will cost about \$3,200 to repair the painting of Mrs. Zenger and protect it with a plexiglass cover. He said the Club is looking at three possible vendors for phone service. He reported that Howard Rothman has been in discussions with JW Marriott about including the NPC studio in its catering package.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Salant said 120 people attended the picnic and the Awards Dinner went well. Zremski said the Powerpoint program was a disgrace because it distorted the faces of winners. He said the poor presentation should not be repeated.

Salant said Sen. Richard Lugar and Rep. Mike Pence would discuss their shield bill at an upcoming luncheon. He reported on the softball team's record. Salant suggested spending \$500 to have a nicer program for the Fourth Estate Award Dinner. Smith said it's gilding the lily. Leinwand said if the dinner committee has a budget (\$9,996), and if the budget can be stretched to cover a fancier program, it could spend it that way. Salant said there was money left from his inaugural that could be used.

NEW BUSINESS

Zremski said the futures task force met to discuss the strategic plan and how to go about it. He said the members are collecting ideas and questions. He asked the board to read the memo over the next month. He said he went to a session with a strategic planning expert sponsored by the club managers association. He said he wants board input on survey research of Club members. He said the board would need to decide whether to hire a consultant, do it in-house or do a mix. Leinwand said Bloom should be asked to include this in the 2007 budget assumptions. She said she thinks money should be spent for a good survey. Salant said he agrees. Groppe said if the main purpose is to find out why people do not renew their memberships, then it's more important to survey former members than current members. Bethel suggested there might be a member who has surveying expertise. Zremski said he would put something in the Record.

Zremski said the journalism training task force is trying to hone its mission. He said he did a survey of what journalism training already exists and that the information should be included in the strategic planning.

Smith reported on a proposal by Ibis World, which does business analysis, to make its information available to NPC members after registering their details with Ibis World. There was no motion.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

Young members – had a successful speed networking. Seminar on niche reporting nixed. Working on embassy night with Norway; daylong congressional reporting seminar Sept. 16.

Newsmakers – Had the ABA head; scheduled a panel on globalization.

Travel – Coming up: Greece and Turkey; Tunisia; New Orleans; Argentina; Brussels

Events – Indian Embassy party on Aug. 16.

5K – Sponsorships are down.

Broadcast task force – 5 shows done; the staff has been responsive in getting them posted to the web site.

Speakers – August is dry.

The next meeting is an executive session Aug. 9. Next regular meeting is Sept. 18.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.