

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB
JULY 25, 2005
Sylvia Smith, Secretary**

President Rick Dunham called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm. Present were Vice president Jonathan Salant, Secretary Sylvia Smith, Membership secretary John Donnelly and Treasurer Jerry Zremski and Governors Alison Bethel, Alan Bjerga, Gayela Bynum and Lou Priebe. Also present were General manager John Bloom and Membership director Julie Schoo. Chairwoman Donna Leinwand and Governors Joe Anselmo, Mark Hamrick and Maureen Groppe were absent.

Smith moved and the board approved adoption of the June 27 minutes.

She also reported that by email, the board approved a motion by Dunham to endorse the following statements in support of the principles of journalism represented by Judith Miller's case, to post both the Press Club statement and the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press statement on the National Press Club website:

The National Press Club is forcefully on record in support of journalists who keep their promises of confidentiality to their sources. Regrettably, New York Times reporter Judith Miller is now in jail, paying the price for commitment to the independence of the news media and the public's right to know. To underscore our support for the principles of journalism represented by Miller's case, we urge all National Press Club members, as individuals, to join us in signing this petition that will be presented to her when possible. Thank you.

Rick Dunham, National Press Club President
Donna Leinwand, Chair, NPC Board of Governors
Tony Mauro, Co-Chair, NPC Freedom of the Press Committee

The vote was 11-0. Donnelly abstained. Bynum said she would have voted "yes" if she were able to cast a vote.

A motion (by email) by Salant to amend Dunham's motion failed with 3 yes (Salant, Hamrick, Bethel), 7 no (Dunham, Zremski, Smith, Leinwand, Groppe, Gallagher and Anselmo) and 1 abstention (Donnelly). The motion was to change the wording to: To underscore our support for the principles of journalism represented by Miller's case, we WANT TO ALERT NATIONAL PRESS CLUB MEMBERS TO A PETITION IN SUPPORT OF MILLER that will be presented to her when possible. Thank you.

Dunham apologized for any inconvenience with having an email vote, but he said it was a good cause.

Donnelly moved and the board approved the following 22 membership applicants:

ACTIVE: Alseny Ben Bangoura, bureau chief, Guinee News; Khalil Rahman Bughio, correspondent, Associated Press of Pakistan; Shin Kazama, bureau chief, Fuju Television Network; Sabah Lebbar, chief editor, Moroccan News Agency; Mark Schoeff, staff writer, Workforce Management; Mounzer A. Sleiman, bureau chief,

Almustaqbal Al Arabi; William V. Theobald, correspondent, Gannett News Service; Lijuan Zhang, director, New Tang Dynasty Television.

ACTIVE UNDER 30: Emily Rehring, assistant managing editor, Traffic World Magazine.

ACTIVE NON-RESIDENT: Pam Baker, freelance writer; Cintra Wilson, Rolling Stone.

PROVISIONAL UNDER 30: Russell Dinnage, assistant editor, Agra Informa.

AFFILIATE: Maria Streshinsky, program analyst, communications, Department of the Interior.

AFFILIATE UNDER 35: Kara Breissingner, program officer, U.S. Department of State.

ASSOCIATE: Melanie Dougherty, president, Capital Public Relations; Ken Johnson, senior vice president, PhRMA; Paul Mackie, senior media officer, World Resources Institute; David Popper Watson, director of public relations, Wyatt Worldwide; David Vance, director of public relations, International Dairy Foods Association; Margaret C. Wilhide, vice president of communications, Association of American Railroads.

ASSOCIATE UNDER 35: Aerica Veazey, director of the Washington Round Table, Heritage Foundation.

ASSOCIATE NON-RESIDENT: Bobbi McKenna, self-employed publisher.

Donnelly noted that six of the new members attended the recruitment reception for foreign correspondents. Bethel asked about the age category, saying it had been changed to 35 and under. Smith said the problem is that the change was made in the middle of a billing cycle. Donnelly said six people were affected, and the Club is crediting their accounts, correcting the web site and the membership application.

Donnelly moved approval retired dues status for one member and an initiation waiver for one. Zremski said there should be standard policies for dues waivers. He and Bethel noted there are two months in which initiation fees are waived. **The motion was approved; Zremski and Bethel abstained. (See below.)**

Donnelly said work is being done on an ad for AJR and Quill featuring this year's scholarship winners. A reception for broadcast journalists/prospective members will be Oct. 6. He also reported a list is being prepared of people being notified of suspension for non-payment of dues. All were notified four times. Their unpaid dues are about \$75,000. He asked board members to call people on the list.

Donnelly also said there have been a few examples of members who have changed residences or jobs in such a way as to change their membership status, but they have not notified the membership department. He said ideas to resolve this are being considered, including adding a line in the membership application that says members must promptly

notify the Club of any such changes. He also said there should be some discussion about what should be done when a member's employment or residence needs to be confirmed. During discussion, board members suggested requiring some proof, such as a driver's license. Dunham asked that other ideas be given to Donnelly or Schoo over the next few months.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Zremski asked Bloom to provide an update on the broadcast studio project. Bloom said the cost has increased from an original estimate of \$1.5 million to more than \$2 million. He said the additional money could come from the Second Century Fund or the Rainy Day Fund. The bank is willing to increase the credit line, Bloom said, and recommended that route because of the good interest rate (1/4% over prime). Bloom said the cost rose because of unanticipated costs, including the price of equipment and construction. He said bids are due Aug. 11. Zremski said the business projections are so good that the higher costs are easily weathered.

The board moved into the committee of the whole. Zremski moved to authorize the increase of the credit line to \$1.9 million. The board approved, with one "no" vote (Bethel). The board moved out of the committee of the whole.

Zremski moved and the board approved giving the general manager authority to begin negotiations with the union for a new contract. The contract ends Oct. 15 and says that within 60 days of its expiration, the Club and union must exchange letters indicating whether they want to continue a relationship.

Zremski moved and the board approved appointing a board negotiating committee comprised of the president, treasurer, chairwoman and chairwoman of the personnel committee.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Bloom said July was a better month than most, but August bookings are so-so. Year-to-date income is \$5.5 million against a budget expectation of \$5.6 million and a previous year actual of \$5.4 million. YTD net income is \$670,000, slightly above budget.

Bloom said the dishwasher in the Reliable Source is being replaced, a new booster heater is being purchased for the kitchen, the doors in the First Amendment will be replaced, and the square bar between the First Amendment and Holeman Lounge will be stripped and refinished.

The board moved into executive session to discuss a legal matter and then resumed open session.

Bloom said he expected to have an electronic display of the broadcast studio project by the end of August for display in the lobby. Bethel recommended preparing a strong PR blitz; Bloom said he has been working with the Communications and Marketing Committee. Donnelly said references to "multimedia center" does not convey "broadcast studio" and said an accurate description/name should be decided on soon.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dunham said the weekend for non-residents was successful; about 25 or 30 members attended. Don Ritchie, a Senate historian, was the speaker at a reception, and attendees visited the White House, Washington Post, Georgetown and Capitol Hill.

He said the Club has issued statements in support of jailed New York Times journalist Judith Miller; he has been interviewed on the subject; and more than 60 people filled out cards to her that will be sent.

Donnelly asked if the Club is doing anything in support of the media shield bill introduced in Congress. Dunham said it's a hard call whether the Club should get involved in lobbying for it. Smith and Zremski said that would be awkward. (Smith covers the two main sponsors.) Donnelly said the Club should take actions on issues of this importance to the press and said the Club should ascertain how other media organizations are handling it.

Dunham said there are three new sponsors for the 5K, with total cash contributions of nearly \$30,000. He thanked Bloom for his creative ideas.

OLD BUSINESS

Bjerga said he wasn't present earlier in the meeting for the vote but disagreed with providing an initiation waiver for the member. **Donnelly moved and the board agreed to reconsider the vote.** Bjerga said he was the member's sponsor and that if she can claim hardship, anyone could. **Bjerga moved and the board agreed to deny the member the waiver of the initiation fee.**

NEW BUSINESS

Zremski said the Future Task Force has been talking about making sure the membership rules are up to date. He said the recommendation is to eliminate the graduate student category and replace it with a student membership so that undergraduates could join. He said membership should also be open to bloggers. **Zremski moved both proposals.**

Salant moved and the board approved dividing the question. Bethel said a student category is a good idea. After further discussion, **Zremski moved that the board recommend to the general membership the following change in the Constitution:**

Amend Article III, Section 1, paragraph (d.) as follows:

(d.) Student Members: Persons who are enrolled as full-time students in undergraduate or graduate journalism programs; or who can prove involvement in producing the editorial content of collegiate publications, broadcast outlets or news internet sites; or who otherwise do freelance or part-time work for qualified news outlets described in paragraph (a.)(i)

The board approved the motion unanimously.

Zremski moved the board recommend to the general membership the following change in the Constitution:

Amend Article III, Section 1, paragraph (b.) to add subsection (ii) as follows:

(ii) Bloggers who do not qualify as Active members.

During discussion, it was noted that the Membership Committee would be able to reject blogger applicants that did not appear qualified. The board approved the motion with one "no" vote (Bethel).

Salant said about 40 people attended the picnic, including about 25 Club members. He asked for board reaction to the idea of having the picnic again in 2006 but not pegging it to the softball team. He said there is a private picnic area near Cabin John for \$300 for a day's rental. Smith said she is not opposed to the idea but would like to know the costs of other venues and said the location should be closer to the city. During discussion, board members said it is a great idea but want the location Metro accessible and want it to alternate among Virginia, Maryland and D.C.

Bethel requested and received permission to take membership applications and NPC paraphernalia to the National Association of Black Journalists conference in Atlanta.

Priebe moved and the board approved the following motion: Those NPC members and staff who were responsible for the great success of the 2005 journalism awards competition and the July 18 banquet are to be commended for making an important contribution toward the betterment of the profession by defining and recognizing substantive accomplishments and by providing a prominent stimulus for continuing excellence.

Dunham moved and the board approved a motion thanking Gary Melancon for his years at the NPC and wishing him good luck in his future endeavors.

COMMITTEE AND BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

Smith said the House Committee is not in favor of a staff proposal to carpet the non-bar portion of the Reliable Source. The committee thinks a hard, ceramic tile in the kitchen/salad bar areas is easier to keep clean and the members prefer wooden floors in the restaurant.

In addition, the committee took up a complaint about using cell phones and eating and drinking coffee in the Library. They think it's not appropriate; they say Tom Glad doesn't think it's a problem. The committee asks the board to set a policy. Dunham said the leadership of the NPC and Library boards will discuss it with Glad.

Events Committee is working on recruiting volunteers for the 5K. It also proposed that 10% of the Reliable Source proceeds be donated to Tuesday's Children, which raises money for children who lost parents in the Sept. 11 attacks. Board members were reluctant to single out a charity and noted there are no guidelines for such.

Smith said two recent luncheons had very high security, including one in which the Secret Service would not allow members to go to the 14th floor without going through a check-point. She said if members are going to be shuffled through a metal detector and other inspections even if they are not going to an event, there should be better communication beforehand so they can make other arrangements for lunch.

The next meeting is Sept. 19. The board moved into executive session to discuss a personnel matter and then adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

