

## **MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB**

**June 19, 2006**

**Sylvia Smith, Secretary**

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

**Smith moved and the board approved the minutes of the May 22 meeting with a technical correction.**

**Zremski moved and the board approved the following 23 new members:**

ACTIVE: Hyung-du Choi, bureau chief, The Munhwa Daily; Jeff Gannon, contributing columnist, Washington Blade; Jim Michaels, deputy world editor, USA Today; Kelly O'Meara, freelance writer; April Ryan, correspondent, American Urban Radio Network; Abdallah Schleifer, bureau chief, Al Arabiya News Channel; John Whitesides, correspondent, Reuters.

ACTIVE UNDER 35: Adriana Garcia Martinez, correspondent, Reuters; April Umminger, graphics editor, Washington Post.

ACTIVE UNDER 30: Rory Carroll, correspondent, American Metal Market; Mieko Endo, staff writer, Kyodo News; Carrie Sheffield, staff writer, The Hill; Sarah Sparks, reporter, Education Dail

ACTIVE NON-RESIDETN: Chris Corum, Tallahassee, Fla., executive editor, Avisian Inc.

ACTIVE REINSTATEMENT: Matthew K. Benjamin, reporter, Bloomberg News; Jeff Nesmith, reporter, Cox Newspapers.

ACTIVE NON-RESIDENT REINSTATEMENT: Chris McCarter, Greenville, S.C., senior writer, The Beat Newspaper.

PROVISIONAL UNDER 30: Xin Li, freelance reporter.

REQUEST FOR ACTIVE UNDER 30 STATUS: Courtney B. Mabeus, staff writer, Washington Examiner.

AFFILIATE: Jelena Cukic Matic, press counselor, Embassy of Serbia, Brad White, director of public affairs, Financial Planning Association.

STUDENT: Jordan Teller, George Washington University undergraduate School of Media & Public Affairs.

ASSOCIATE NON-ERSIDENT: Julie DeVader, Topeka, Kan., vice president of public relations and communications, Topeka FHL Bank; Rita Garson, Denver, editor-in-chief, MEDCO.

**Zremski moved and the board approved retired dues status for four members.**

Zremski said recent recruiting events have been successful. Ten applications were received via the Rolodex campaign; 15 from the reception targeted at broadcast journalists; 3 from the reception targeting international correspondents and press attaches; and 9 from various young member events.

He passed out the list of activities for the non-resident members' weekend (July 14-17), which includes a talk from Helen Thomas and tours of the Washington Post, Meet the Press studio, Georgetown and Reuters. He said 15 letters have gone out to potential reciprocal clubs.

Hamrick invited Bail to make her presentation. She said she was not happy that the Record did not print an article about a play at the McLean Drama Co.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

Leinwand said the Broadcast Operations Center is doing well but is still a little off budget because it did not go operational as soon as the budget projected. She said the Club is looking at a slow July and August.

**Leinwand moved and the board approved designating the \$22,000 received by the Club as an unrestricted donation from a late Club member, Robin Perry, to the Centennial Fund.**

#### GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Bloom said May was the third month in a row that the Club crossed the \$1 million mark in catering operations, including the BOC. However, he said energy prices are a challenge.

He reported that Shirley Bentley, a member of the accounting staff, is retiring, and Lee Culp of the BOC is returning to school. He said he has asked a consultant to evaluate the cost of restoring and protecting the Mrs. Zenger painting and is having the value of all material in the archives updated, an every-five-years requirement for insurance purposes. He said the archives is starting to get material from the National Travel Writers Association, and the archivist is concerned about the quantity. He said work is being done on preparing to digitize the material in the archives, including obtaining costs. Bloom said he is evaluating the telephone contract against whether to buy equipment. He said the transfer of the Record to a different printer went well. He said he is working with Club Essentials so members could pay bills and make reservations on line. The preliminary cost is \$10,000.

#### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Salant said Vice President Cheney's staff abruptly demanded an end to the luncheon earlier in the day so that Cheney could leave. He said no one was given advance notice. He said he will communicate with C-SPAN and XM Radio about what happened.

Salant said the members' reception had 80 to 90 people. Smith said she heard feedback suggesting that if the event is scheduled next year, tables should be labeled by committee so people could more easily find information about committees they are interested in.

He said he had received a letter from member Kenn Miller complimenting Terry Davis for helping him when he became ill.

He said he also received a letter from member Tonda Rush, who complained because her organization is not permitted to bring its own AV equipment when it conducts events at the Club. During discussion, Dunham said he wouldn't want to start making exceptions but would give the staff flexibility on price. Leinwand said she's unaware of any venue in town where clients can take their own equipment and not be charged. Bloom said he can often work it out with a member if it involves only a few slides. He said the problem is that when people bring their own equipment, if it doesn't work, they expect NPC staff to step in to assist.

## NEW BUSINESS

Zremski said he and others had worked on proposed language governing the Library's fund-raising for the centennial documentary. Member Tony Culley-Foster is heading the effort and hopes to raise as much as \$500,000. Zremski said the goal is to raise money from non-ideological foundations and communications corporations, but Culley-Foster suggested the limits are too restrictive. Smith asked why the Club board was being asked to set policy for the Library board, which is a separate entity. She said she would feel more comfortable if the NPC board asked the Library to structure the fund-raising a certain way, rather than dictating it. Zremski accepted the suggestion as a friendly amendment. Salant asked what would happen if the Library board said no. Smith said the Club would then have to raise the money itself. Dunham pointed out that there's a large cross-over between the Club and Library boards and at the end of the day, there would be consultation about any proposed contribution that raised questions. Smith said the NPC president appoints all Library board members and could remove them, as well. Zremski asked whether anyone on the board thinks the proposed rules are too restrictive. Bethel said she does. Hamrick said philosophically it's not but practically it is. Salant said he'd rather spend \$300,000 of Club dues on the documentary and preserve the integrity of the Club. **Zremski moved and the board approved the following motion: The board of the National Press Club encourages the board of the Eric Friedheim National Journalism Library to adopt a fundraising policy for the Club's centennial documentary. The NPC board recommends that those funds may be derived from (1) media corporations and organizations and (2) foundations that are non-ideological in mission and are not controlled by corporations other than media corporations. Media corporations are defined as those that derive significant revenues from journalism, online communication or entertainment ventures. Fundraising solicitations aimed at other sources must be approved in advance by the president and treasurer of the Library board. Bethel abstained.**

Zremski reminded the board that the auditors recommended the Club adopt a 3- to 5-year strategic plan and that he originally thought it could be done in the context of next year's budget preparation. He said he has since learned that a more thoughtful approach takes more time, and he recommended one that would include surveying the membership, potential membership and former membership. He said he hope work could begin this year by having Bloom prepare 5-year projections on the finances, capital improvements and membership (based on demographics) of the Club and then have more discussions about subsequent steps.

Zremski reported that the Futures Task Force met with a representative of the Smart Card Alliance and was briefed on the difference between smart cards and magnetic strip cards. He said it became apparent that the Club does not need a smart card, but a magnetic card would accomplish the twin goals of restricting access to members in certain places of the Club and serving as a debit card so the Club could eliminate cash transactions. Hamrick and others questioned whether there really is much of a problem of non-members using the facility and whether the debit-card system is necessary. Leinwand said it is very expensive to manage cash transactions. Bloom said in 1993 the Club leadership decided to take the Club cashless, but there was a membership uproar, in part because some people do not have credit cards so could not have a house account. He said the debit card aspect of a magnetic strip card would resolve that. He also said one of the biggest problems with respect to non-members in the Club is when members host 20 or more people at a time, particularly at Taco Nights. He said the matter of non-members eating breakfast would not be resolved by a magnetic card unless entry were barred except for those with cards.

The board moved into executive session and then resumed open session.

Smith offered congratulations to Bethel for her new job as executive editor of Legal Times, and the board applauded her.

## BOARD AND COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

House – Finished its annual review of the Club ethics policy and recommended a change. **Groppe moved and the board approved adding “White House Photographers Association” to the list of outside organizations that the Record may print news of their professional events.**

Events – The Club picnic is July 15.

Capital Projects – will resume meeting.

Photography – Art director of USAToday made a presentation. A program on wedding photography is upcoming. The annual members’ photo exhibit is in October.

Oral History -- Wants to digitize 6 oral histories per year and is trying to price it.

5K – This year, participants will be able to solicit donations for their per-kilometer accomplishments.

Online registration is available. Donations are being solicited for the silent auction.

Library – Tentative dates for 2007 are travel award dinner March 17; chef/cookbook fundraiser May 17; and book fair Nov. 1. Specs have been put together to hire a consultant for all three.

International Correspondents -- Sen. Richard Lugar, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, gave a briefing to participants of the committee’s Buddies Program. She said the committee has booked an official from the Chamber of Commerce for a presentation later in the week.

Broadcast task force – XM has already started airing promos of the Club program

Speakers – Upcoming are John Edwards, George Pataki and executives of Nickleodeon.

New media – Is working on a major redesign of the web site.

The next meeting is July 24.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.