

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB
MARCH 17, 2008
Maureen Groppe, Secretary**

Chairman Keith Hill called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. Present were President Sylvia Smith, Vice President Donna Leinwand, Treasurer Alan Bjerga, Membership Secretary Mark Hamrick, Secretary Maureen Groppe, former President Jerry Zremski and Governors John Hughes, Theresa Werner, John Gallagher, John Donnelly, Gayela Bynum, Jennifer Sergent and Dipka Bhambhani. Also General Manager Bill McCarren and Membership Director Sarahanne Driggs.

Groppe moved and the board approved the minutes of the February meeting.

MEMBERSHIP

Hamrick moved and the board approved the applications of 27 members. Hamrick moved and the board approved retired dues status for two members.

Hamrick moved and the board approved eliminating the requirement that someone must be a member for 10 years before applying for retired dues status. Leinwand abstained. The bylaw change will be presented at the May general membership meeting. Hamrick said the change will aid in recruiting new members from the U.S. Information Agency Alumni Association. Hamrick said he didn't know what the net financial gain or loss would be. Leinwand said retired dues status is a reward for being committed to the Club and asked why the change wasn't targeted to the specific group. Hamrick said he thought there would be more support for a blanket change in the bylaws. Zremski said the USIAA members may have the time and inclination to be very active in the Club.

Hamrick proposed lowering student dues to \$99 and cutting non-resident associate dues from \$564 to \$299. Hamrick said the current \$173 dues for students makes it hard to recruit them and the Club should have more than 24 student members, given the number of colleges and universities in the area. The change in non-resident associate dues would bring them closer to the \$167 charged to non-resident active and affiliate members. Bynum and Bhambhani said charging students \$14 a month is not a lot. Sergent suggested trying a marketing campaign to students first. Bjerga and Leinwand said they're not opposed to reducing dues, but this may not be the time to do it, given the Club's financial situation. Smith agreed the timing may not be right. Hamrick withdrew his motion. Hughes commended Hamrick for exploring the issue and said cutting dues to increase participation is the right direction for the Club.

Hamrick moved and the board approved authorizing McCarren to talk to the Newseum about purchasing membership for all Club members. McCarren said Newseum membership could be a good recruitment and retention benefit. Zremski said there's a lot of member interest in the Newseum. Leinwand suggested also pursuing having the Newseum display Club artifacts.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE LIASON REPORTS

Scholarship -- Is meeting this month to pick this year's winners.

5K - This year's race is Sept. 13. The race needs to gross \$100,000 to fully fund the scholarships. Last year's race grossed \$62,000.

Book & Author -- Eleanor Clift spoke and Geraldine Brooks is coming.

Affiliate/Associations -- Toyota is contributing \$10,000 to the Centennial and the Newseum bought a table for the Club to use as it wants.
Young members -- Activities include a night at the Canadian Embassy, a pre-Centennial Party party, and Pub Quiz.
Freedom of the Press -- Spoke out in support of Toni Lacy.
Strategic Planning -- The non-member survey needs to be redone.
Broadcast -- Doing two shows on the Centennial; XM has proposed airing a show on the presidential race from the Reliable Source Friday nights.
Travel -- All trips for 2008 are planned and 2009 planning has begun. The committee is shifting away from European trips because of the low dollar.
Books & Brunch -- Meets in April to discuss "The Year of Wonders."
Photography -- AP's associate general counsel is speaking on photo copyright laws.
Nonresident members -- Various activities have been scheduled for the approximately 40 non-resident members coming to the Centennial.
House -- Good feedback on the new wine glasses.
Speakers -- Upcoming speakers include Eli Manning, the CEO of the Mayo Clinic and Stan Lee of Marvel Comics.
Newsmakers -- Held 17 events so far this year.
International Correspondents -- Had panel discussion on Cuba.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Bjerga said the Club's small loss in February was the fourth straight loss. While there's reason to believe revenues will get better in the spring as they always do, the Club doesn't have as much reserves to draw on during slow times. Bjerga said the board has time now to plan for a cash crunch.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

McCarren said he will present plans to the board next month for dealing with the financial situation. He's spoken with staff about ways to cut costs and raise revenues.

The board went into executive session to discuss personnel issues.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Smith said she spoke with board members, Club members and former presidents about new ideas for the library. There's widespread support for moving the computers to the 14th floor and creating a multi-purpose room for training, library-sponsored events, Club committee events and for catering clients. The reconfigured space would also include a reading room and possibly a small conference room. **Smith moved and the board approved having her work with McCarren on cost estimates and an architectural concept for the project. Gallgaher, Bhambhani and Sergent voted no.**

Smith moved and the board approved the following nominations for one-year terms on the library board: Smith, Zremski, Leinwand, Donnelly, Ann McFeatters, Rick Dunham, Bill Hickman, Dena Bunis, Ed Lewis and Tony Culley-Foster.

Smith moved and the board approved Zremski to a two-year post on the 4th Estate Award selection committee; Tammy Lytle and McFeatters to three-year terms. Bhambhani voted no.

Smith said McCarren has worked with the staff on activities for the Centennial week that won't cost the Club money. Smith has been interviewed about the Centennial by The

Washington Post's TV magazine and by Roll Call. She said the Newseum is giving the Club 50 tickets for its March 29th preview day.

OLD BUSINESS

Hill reported the outcome of an email vote on the following motion he made Feb. 27: I move that the board instructs General Manager Bill McCarren to thank the management of the National Press Building for preparing a lease for space on the 4th floor and inform the leasing agent that the board has determined that the library will remain on the 13th floor and, therefore, the lease will not be signed, and the National Press Club relinquishes any hold on that space. The board approved the motion. Smith, Hamrick, Hill, Groppe, Bhambhani, Hughes, Leinwand, Gallagher, Bjerga and Werner voted for the motion. Donnelly voted against.

NEW BUSINESS

Sergent said she found problems with 43 of the 71 jobs links on the Club's Web site. The board discussed whether it's better for the Club to have its own job listings or utilize outside ones. Sergent said she will come back to the board with suggestions.

Bjerga moved and the board approved the following motion: Reservations in the McClendon Room are only available to members. Groups reserving space in this area will need to do so through a member attending the event. Bjerga said the Club has been granting free space to journalism organizations and that erodes the benefits of membership. Smith said the board should send the groups a letter informing them of the change and also pointing out that breakfast is not free to nonmembers. Hamrick suggested the letter also mention that the Club is waiving initiation fees this year.

The next meeting was set for April 21.

The meeting was adjourned at 10 p.m.