

MEETING OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB BOARD OF GOVERNORS
May 17, 2010
Myron Belkind, Secretary

Board Chair Theresa Werner called the meeting to order at 6:40pm. Present were President Alan Bjerga, Secretary Myron Belkind, Treasurer Keith Hill, Membership Secretary Angela Greiling Keane, Governors Jessica Brady, Marc Wojno, Theresa Werner, John Hughes, Jennifer Sargent, Mike Soraghan, Rodrigo Valderrama, Ed Barks, Donna Leinwand (ex-officio) plus past president Rick Dunham as president of the Board of the Eric Friedheim National Journalism Library. Not attending: Vice President Mark Hamrick, Governors John Donnelly, Shawn Bullard. Staff present: Executive Director Bill McCarren, Assistant General Manager David King and Sarahanne Driggs, director of membership recruitment.

The Minutes from the April 19, 2010 meeting were unanimously approved.

Proposed Renovations

Assistant General Manager David King briefed the Board on preliminary plans for renovations to the Reliable Source kitchen and the bathrooms on the 13th floor. He said more complete plans would be available for the Board's meeting in May. The important goals of the renovations in the Reliable Source kitchen include increasing the levels of food safety proficiency, menu flexibility and energy efficiency. It is anticipated that all the works will begin after the Club's closing on Friday, July 30, with a projected completion date of Monday, September 6 (Labor Day).

Membership Report

On the recommendation of Membership Secretary Angela Greiling Keane, the Board unanimously approved the application of 23 members (see list at end of Minutes), retired status for 1 member and a six-month hardship dues waiver for 5 members. The number of new members so far this year is 116, compared to 191 for the same period last year. Total members as of the Membership Report to the May Board meeting were 3,334, compared to 3,564 last year.

State of the Press Club Monthly Report: May 2010

Bolstered by a successful cost containment campaign, the Club's financial results in April maintained a strong financial performance for the year, while President Alan Bjerga reported "a lot of cool" professional programs that are benefiting members from a well-attended Journalism Survival Boot Camp to outstanding luncheon speakers.

The twin successes on the financial and professional fronts underscored the dominant theme of the Board of Governors' meeting.

Financial Results

Both revenue and profits in April beat budget forecasts and were substantially ahead of last year, with the key development related to the impact of a "significant control on operating costs."

The result was increased profits of \$132,000 in April, over the same period last year, while comparative revenue increased by \$145,000, meaning that 90 percent of the additional revenue went "straight to the bottom line," Executive Director Bill McCarren told the Board.

"That is phenomenal, because of the controlling of operating costs," said Treasurer Keith Hill.

Nevertheless, McCarren advised the board that the latest financial figures should not be misinterpreted to mean the Club is awash in money.

"Let's not lose sight of the fact that there is not a lot of extra money around," he said. "We are really making good progress financially. But we have a way to go. We are not declaring victory on efforts to control costs and improve our overall financial picture."

McCarren said that the financial outlook looked good for May and June, and he projected that the Club should exceed the Board-mandated reserve target of \$1 million by September despite anticipated losses during the traditionally slower summer period in July and August.

President Bjerga said it is important the Club achieve an ultimate goal of having at least \$3 million in reserves. "That is the road we're on," he said.

Donna Leinwand, past president and former treasurer, said previously the Club lived on a month-to-month basis, "from pay check to pay check."

"Now, we are running the Club like a moderately responsible household."

McCarren also advised the Board that the Club is working as part of a coalition with other organizations to oppose a proposal being considered by the DC City Council to impose a tax on Private Club memberships.

President's Report

Bjerga said he was very pleased with the continuing successes of the Club's professional programs and singled out the 2nd annual Journalism Survival Boot Camp on May 15 that

had at least 100 RSVPs for the day-long program of panel discussions and group sessions centered on the theme, “Surviving and Thriving in a Changing Industry.”

Although the final panel discussion on what needs to be done for journalists on the job front in 2010 and where journalism will be in 2010 was due to end at 4pm, Bjerga said many attendees stayed on until 5pm to continue the discussions,

“I can’t talk enough about the good this program does for the Club,” Bjerga said. The day ended, he continued, with his signing three new membership applications from among the attendees.

Bjerga also pointed to a rich program of luncheon speakers, including seven of Cabinet level rank, an outstanding event May 11 on "FOIA Discoveries" that featured panelists from the Washington Post, Bloomberg News and the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, and a planned program on the press’ relationship with the Obama administration.

Committee Liaison Reports

Book and Author Committee

Upcoming book raps include:

- May 18: Ben Bradlee and Quinn Bradlee will in appear to discuss their book, *A Life's Work: Fathers and Sons*.
- June 7: Andrew J. Young and Kabir Seghal will speak about the book they co-authored, *Walk in My Shoes*.
- June 14: Fred Thompson will offer remarks about his book, *Teaching a Pig to Dance: A Memoir of Growing Up and Second Chances*.

The committee is enthusiastically pursuing a September 22 event with Ingrid Betancourt who will discuss her harrowing ordeal in *Even Silence Has an End: My Six Years of Captivity in the Columbian Jungle*. Another possible book rap for July centers on *USA Today* reporter Jim Michaels, whose book is called *A Chance in Hell: The Men who triumphed Over Iraq's Deadliest City and Turned the Tide of War*.

The committee considered a second request from Donna Leinwand and Alan Bjerga to have a book rap for a book about three women and pregnancy. The committee reiterated its position that the event could be held in the McClendon Room if desired, citing that the amount of work that goes into the preparation for a book event is the same for the library staff regardless where it is held in the club.

Committee Chair John Clark is searching for a member to coordinate the committee’s popular Book Bag Bingo game at the annual NPC picnic this year.

Book Fair Committee

The Book Fair Committee has confirmed over 30 authors for the club's 33rd Annual Book Fair and Authors' Night. The committee is well on its way to its goal of 95 to 100 notable authors for the Book Fair. Authors wishing to apply to the Book Fair may do so by accessing the online author application form at <http://www.press.org/bookfair/application> . October 5 is the submission deadline for authors.

Sponsorship and media contacts are being pursued. Mika Brzezinski will serve as this year's honorary chair.

The NPC Library board agreed with the Book Fair Committee recommendation of no Book Fair admission charge for NPC Members and a \$5 charge for non-members.

Communications and Marketing Committee

The Communications and Marketing Committee will be working with the NPC Library board to more effectively promote fundraising events including the 5K, Fourth Estate Dinner, and Book Fair. This committee also continues to support other club committees in need of counsel to better promote their events.

Speakers Committee:

Upcoming speakers:

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

June 9: Ashley Judd, actress, will discuss the controversial practice of mountain top removal coal mining.

June 10: Energy Secretary Steven Chu.

June 21: Dr. Edward Miller, dean and CEO, Johns Hopkins Medicine.

June 23: Oliver Stone will speak about his latest film, "South of the Border", and political issues it addresses (Speakers Press Conference)

July 7: Venus Williams, tennis champion

July 16: Tony Horton, Celebrity Fitness trainer and Creator, P90X. HE will address the nation's obesity epidemic and its impact on declining fitness levels among U.S. military recruits. Horton will lead the audience in a P90X workout designed for military training at the National Press Club's first Speakers "Boot Camp" luncheon.

Books & Brunch

The next meeting will be June 19 will discuss "Evening in the Palace of Reason: Bach Meets Frederick the Great in the Age of Enlightenment" by James R. Gaines.

History & Heritage:

The History & Heritage Committee is set for the building rededication on May 19. The committee also is preparing for the commemoration of the NPC/WPC merger scheduled for July 24. As for oral histories, David Broder's interview has been postponed until May 27, but in lieu of that, Bill Hickman interviewed 1994 NPC President Gil Klein.

Awards Committee

The annual Press Club awards are proceeding on pace. Awards chair Jonathan Salant reports that all entries have been picked up and two panels have turned in their results. He has asked for one winner and one honorable mention from each panel. The deadline for responses is June 6, and the results should be ready for the June Board meeting. The awards dinner is set for Aug. 2.

International Correspondents Committee

The 6th Annual International Membership Recruitment Reception will be from 6:30pm to 8pm on Wednesday, June 9. Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of Indian independence leader Mohandas K. Gandhi, will speak on the important role press freedom has had in India's history.

Photography Committee

The guest speaker at the next meeting of the Photography Committee on May 27 will be committee member Michael Foley, **Michael Foley**, who will discuss "Travel Photography: The Journey is the Destination." He will describe how a photo trip can start at the window seat of a plane. He will provide tips for taking great travel shots and for optimizing them using Photoshop. Michael's topics will include: using various focal lengths, shooting at different times of the day, creating panoramic shots, and the value of carrying a small camera and a tiny tripod. Michael is a freelance photographer, world traveler, and a consultant to the World Bank.

Membership Committee

Membership Committee Chairman Joel Whittaker is looking into the idea of offering an "inactive" member category. The membership staff is looking at the numbers for that.

The committee is assisting in updating membership rules to ensure they best reflect the changing face of today's journalists.

Eric Friedheim National Journalism Library

Rick Dunham, president of the board of the Eric Friedheim National Journalism Library, reported on the professional activities organized through the library.

He said the day-long Journalism Boot Camp on May 15 had been a “huge success” thanks to outstanding speakers, good organization and a successful promotional campaign. He said that Susan Heavey, chair of the Professional Development Committee, deserves “the accolades of everyone for pulling off a complex program.”

Other upcoming professional development programs:

June 10: Programs on Web 2.0 tools, Advanced Google Search Techniques and Twittering.

June 11: Blogging Basics.

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

Dunham also thanked the NPC board for its nearly 100 participation in making donations to the Eric Friedheim National Journalism Library, which he said would facilitate the library receiving grants from organizations that look to see the extent of support from boards of governors.

Freedom of the Press

An event on press relations of the Obama White House is being planned.

Newsmakers

There had been 7 Newsmakers so far in April, bringing the total for the year to 32.

5K

Fundraising efforts for the 5K race on Saturday, July 17, are going well.

Wine Dinner

Top Chef contestant and local chef, Spike Mendelsohn, will be guest for a Chef/Author Dinner on June 7 to highlight his new book. The dinner will feature a reception followed by a 5-course meal designed with recipes from Spike's book. The meal will be paired with Spikes' choice of beer or wine depending on the target for the specific course. Cost is \$70 for members, \$93 for nonmembers and each diner will receive a copy of the book!

Travel Committee

The trip to Turkey this month has been sold out.

Events Committee

A documentary series will begin in July patterned off last year's successful series.

House & Bar Committee

More activities are being planned for the Game Room. Also, the chess tables are to be replaced.

Young Members Committee:

The committee is hosting with the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association a reception and discussion on June 7 on openly gay appointees in the Obama Administration.

The next meeting of the Board was scheduled for June 14, 2010

The Board adjourned at 9:20 pm.

New Member Applications Approved

Active

Michael Bolden - The Washington Post, Development & Transportation Editor; Leonard Doyle - Unfreemedia.org, Editor, Writer, Admin; Ron Mokwena - Misha & Friends Media Inc., Executive Producer

Active Reinstate

Richard Eisendorf - Freelance Consultant, Advising Producer, Advisor to TV Productions

Active Non-Resident

Leslie Theresa Bono - York Daily Record, Freelance Writer/Sports; Karen Fawcett - Paris New Media/ConsumerTraveler.com, President/Writer/Head of Content; John W. Flores - Self Employed, Freelance Writer/Biographer/Researcher; Arne Hoel - Freelance/Documentary Photography/The World Bank, Photographer/Principal Documentary Photographer; Muneerah N. Warner - Funerals Today Magazine, Editor, Journalist, Reporter

Active Under 35

Sharmistha Chakraborty - Outlook Business Magazine, Consultant/Washington Correspondent; Molly Hooper - The Hill Newspaper, Staff Reporter, GOP Leadership Beat

Active Under 30

Jason Kane - PBS NewsHour, Desk Assistant

Affiliate 65+

Alan Levine - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General

Affiliate 65+ Reinstate

Raphael Calis - Institute for Palestine Studies, Director

Associate

Susan Rae Baker - Future Endeavors Life & Business Coaching, President/CEO; James Huske - Graduate School – USDA, Chief of Staff; Carolina Klein - International Monetary Fund, Senior HR Specialist; Jerry M. Ray - Self Employed, Corporate Communications

Associate Reinstate

C. Naseer Ahmad - AZI Consulting Inc., President; Timothy J. Heitmann - Recovery Audit Specialist, CEO

Associate Non-Resident

Richard Lawrence Cassin - The FCPA Blog, Cassin Law LLC, Editor/Writer

Associate Non-Resident Reinstate

B. Kwan Choe - Samyang & Nature, CEO

Building Tenant

Elizabeth Dunlap - Tax Foundation, Development Associate; Daniel Morris - U.S. Department of Treasury, Program Analyst