

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB
May 19, 2008
Maureen Groppe, Secretary**

Vice Chairman John Donnelly 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, Chairman Keith Hill and Governors John Hughes, Lou Priebe, Theresa Werner, Jennifer Sergent, Dipka Bhambhani, John Gallagher and Gayela Bynum. Also General Manager Bill McCarren, Membership Director Sarahanne Driggs, Archivist Marlene Justsen, Awards Committee Chairman Mark Schoeff, and former president David Hess, a member of the Fourth Estate Award nominating committee.

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

MEMBERSHIP

Hamrick moved and the board approved the applications of 40 members. Hamrick moved and the board approved retired dues status for two members.

Hamrick said the Membership Committee was unsure how to proceed with the application of a 12-year-old published author. Hamrick said Club rules do not set a minimum age requirement. **Hamrick moved and the board approved the application of Shea Megale.**

Hamrick said the requirement that applicants be sponsored by two members is deterring some people from applying, although applicants can be sponsored by the Membership Committee. Driggs said about half of applicants are sponsored by the Membership Committee. Hamrick said he may suggest a change to the Constitution & Bylaws Committee.

Hamrick proposed that the Club no longer require a \$100 membership fee deposit. Hamrick said the deposit is confusing people since the initiation fee has been waived this year. Also, the change to collecting dues monthly has reduced problems in dues collection. Leinwand said the deposit has outlived its usefulness.

Hamrick moved and the board approved a reciprocal agreement with the Athletic Club of Columbus. McCarren said the Club has worked out an arrangement with the Cosmos Clubs that allows NPC members and their guests to stay at the Cosmos Club.

EFFECT OF CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHY PRACTICES

Justsen said the Club is missing many photos documenting its history because of an unclear policy about who owns photos taken at the Club and when and how Club photographers must give them to the archives. Although she can't find a written policy, Justsen said common practice appears to have been that the photographers owned the copyrights until they died and then they were given to the Club. She said the issues that need to be addressed are both how to retrieve photos that have already been taken under the old system and whether to create a new system for future photos. She recommended a "work for hire" arrangement where either the Club would own the copyright or it would be shared between the Club and the photographer.

The board went into executive session to discuss this year's Fourth Estate Award.

AWARDS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Schoeff said the Awards Committee received 206 entries, an increase of the 193 received in 2007 but below the 280 received in 2006.

Groppe moved and the board approved the Awards Committee's recommendations for this year's winners, with the exception of two categories for which the judges still need to pick winners.

Smith thanked Schoeff and the Awards Committee for their long hours and excellent work.

BOARD AND COMMITTEE LIASON REPORTS

Scholarship -- Is meeting in May to pick the graduate scholarship winners.

Events -- Hosted three play readings by Club members, karaoke, and a Dinner& Movie event in April. Upcoming events include showing "Indochine," a wine tasting, and the annual picnic June 28.

Freedom of the Press -- Chose Toni Locy and Balil Hussein as this year's Freedom of the Press Award winners.

Book & Author -- Upcoming authors include Sen. Jim Webb, Jeff Shaara, and Ted Sorensen. The committee is sponsoring a "Book Bag Bingo" at the annual picnic.

Young members -- Upcoming activities include two Breakfasts with Champions, a rafting trip, Pub Quiz, and a night at the Hungarian Embassy.

House -- Approved price increases for non member breakfasts (now \$10), omelettes at brunch (from \$5.99 to \$10), NPC luncheons (to \$20 for members and \$28 for nonmembers). Also, instead of all beers being reduced at happy hour, one light beer and one regular beer will be featured.

Professional Development -- Upcoming events include a seminar on interpreting polling data and on applying for international fellowships.

Photography -- Had a full house for a tribute to Margaret Bourke White. Photographer Rex Stuckey is speaking at a future event.

History -- Is working on a summer film night, its oral history schedule and a field trip to the Radio & Television Museum in Bowie.

Communications & Marketing -- Promoting the centennial DVD, the 5K race, the book fair and luncheon speakers.

Books & Brunch -- Discussing "In the Country of Men."

Speakers -- Going strong including the April event with the Rev. Jeremiah Wright.

Newsmakers -- Held 33 events so far this year including a May event on press coverage of the presidential race.

International Correspondents Committee -- Hosting a recruitment reception and an international quiz at the annual picnic.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Bjerga said the Club had its second best month ever in April. May will have three payrolls so profits won't be as high. Bookings are picking up for June but cash flow will still be tight in the slow summer months.

Bjerga moved and the board approved waiving the requirement that competitive bids be sought for renovation to the library and Fourth Estate. Smith said the Club is working with a contractor approved by the building who the Club has a relationship with. The work needs to be completed during the slow summer months and bidding the

project could delay work. The Club will also save money by completing the two projects at the same time.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

McCarren said he started and Employee-of-the-Month Award and gave the first award to longtime employee Andrew Price. The board gave Price a standing ovation.

Smith moved and the board approved an honorary membership for recently retired cook Mike Woods, who worked at the Club for about 40 years.

McCarren said he is raising room rental rates and reviewing the discounts given to members. The biggest increase will be in the ballroom, which will increase from \$2,300 to \$3,000 in June. McCarren said members are offered discounts of varying amounts for different rooms and he's looking at standardizing the discount. Priebe said the rental discount is a significant member benefit to affiliate & associate members and their clients.

McCarren said the luncheon with Rev. Wright doubled traffic on the Club's Web site. The Club ranked 71,000 in traffic, however, and needs to get up around 35,000 to draw significant advertising revenue.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Smith said the feedback she's received on the proposed library changes has been mostly excellent.

Smith asked the board to consider a question raised at the May General Membership meeting about why cameras are not allowed at lawmaker events in the McClendon Room.

Smith said the two members who produce The Record each week have said they can't do it after Labor Day. Smith has asked for volunteers to come forward by June 1. Donnelly asked about paying people to produce The Record or using interns. Smith said she's not comfortable with unpaid interns, who would also have to be supervised, and she asked where the money would come from to pay for hired help. Leinwand said she is not confident the Club could sell ads to cover the cost of paying people to produce The Record. Hamrick said paying someone even minimum wage is an expensive way to get an inferior product. Smith questioned whether a weekly printed Record is needed if the Club is sending daily emails. Leinwand said some members don't have Internet access. McCarren said copies could be printed out and posted around the Club, or members could receive automated phone calls of upcoming events.

The next meeting was set for June 16.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:51p.m.

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