

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE NATIONAL
PRESS CLUB NOV. 15, 2004

Sylvia Smith, Secretary

Chairman John Donnelly called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm. Present were President Sheila Cherry, Vice President Rick Dunham, Secretary Sylvia Smith, Treasurer Jonathan Salant, Membership secretary Jerry Zremski, Vice chairwoman Donna Leinwand and Governors Jerry Bastarache, Gayela Bynum, Alison Bethel and Mark Hamrick and General manager John Bloom, Membership director Julie Schoo and Director of member recruitment Sarahanne Driggs. Absent were Governors Jack Cushman and John Gallagher.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Zremski moved and the Board approved the following 27 new members:

Active: Dr. Sue Bailey NBC on-air news analyst; Jeff Bliss, reporter, Bloomberg News; Dahna Chandler, freelance journalist, E*pifany Communications; Md Sharafat Hussain, bureau chief, The Weekly; Joe Kamalick, chief correspondent, Chemical News & Intelligence; Edward McKenna, reporter, Traffic World; Alicia Mundy, reporter, Seattle Times; Maria Young, The Associated Press.

Active under 34: Martin Kady, reporter, Congressional Quarterly; Todd Zwillich, freelance reporter.

Active under 30: Clayton E. Swisher, writer, C & O Resources, Inc.

Active non-resident: Wayne Baker, managing editor, Xenia Daily Gazette; Tsutomu Kanayama, Fullbright Scholar, George Washington University;- Walter Mihailovich, owner, Nacional Newspaper.

Provisional: Dar Haddix United Press International business correspondent.

Provisional under 30: Bradley Hague, freelance photojournalist; Jonathan O'Connell, editorial assistant, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

Active reinstatement: Michael Clark, Freelance; Benjamin Grove, reporter, Las Vegas Sun; James Hogue, president, International Publications; Carol J. Horner, director, Knight Center for Specialized Journalism.

Affiliate non-resident: William J. Howard, president, Discovery Tours; Phil Von Tom, advertising and promotions manager, Hendon Publishing.

Associate: Stephen Pietropaoli , executive director, Navy League of the United States; Katherine Thuermer, director of publications, National Association of Independent Schools.

Associate under 34: Mindy Rae Long, reporter, Transport Topics; Leon Tucker, director of communications, The Black Alliance for Educational Options.

Zremski noted that of the 27 new members, 10 were recruited through the Rolodex campaign and two from a letter-writing effort to embassies.

Total members as of October, 3,793; members a year ago, 3,900.

Zremski moved and the Board approved retired dues status for one member and non-dues status for another member.

Salant raised a question of whether TV talking heads and analysts qualify for active status. Zremski said the same concern would apply to newspaper columnists, and he doesn't want to question that.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Salant noted that the Board will be presented with the proposed 2005 budget at the December meeting and asked members to review the draft budget before then.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Smith reported that the ballot for the Dec. 10 Club elections will show the following candidates:

President – Rick Dunham of Business Week

Vice president – Jonathan Salant of Bloomberg News

Secretary – Sylvia Smith of the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette

Treasurer – Jerry Zremski of the Buffalo News

Membership secretary – John Donnelly of Congressional Quarterly
Governor (three year term, two seats) – Joe Anselmo of Aviation Week;
Maureen Groppe of Gannett News Service; Rod Kuckro of McGraw-Hill
Governor (filling out the remaining two years of a three-year term) – Alan
Bjerga of the Wichita Eagle; Keith Hill of BNA.
Governor (non-voting) Lou Priebe of Priebe PR

In addition, she said the Election Committee is comprised of Peter Urban of the Connecticut Post, chair; Linda Gasparello of King Publications; Toby Eckert of Copley, Lolita Baldor of AP and Suzanne Struglinski of the Las Vegas Sun.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Cherry said there was an incident at the George Soros luncheon at which a protester approached the podium and was removed. She said this generated written protests from people associated with Accuracy in Media, which said free speech was being suppressed at the NPC. Cherry said she wrote a response saying the Club supports free speech but also its ability to protect itself. Dunham noted that a Syracuse newspaper story had inaccurate. Salant said he would call executives of the paper and write a letter to the editor. Smith said the letter should say that board members have publicly available phone numbers, and board members were not contacted. Cherry said she would write a letter to the editor.

Cherry said the Fourth Estate dinner was a success and thanked Bloom and the Club staff. She said Benfred Clement Smith, chairman of the Expo, did yeoman's work along with Bloom, Schoo and the staff. She said 143 people registered, including 33 walk-ins; 133 were NPC members, including 20 intern members. She said 38 recruiters were at the Expo. Smith asked what the cost was; Bloom said he would get the figures.

She said Brian Lamb, founder of C-SPAN, would be the luncheon speaker Dec. 6 and invited board members to sit at the head table.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Bloom said year to date income was \$9 million against a budget of \$8 million and compared to \$7.5 million in 2003. Year to date expenses are \$8 million against a budget of \$7.8 million and compared to \$7.4 million in 2003. The Library lost \$26,000. The members' equity is \$4.8 million for the Club and Library. There is \$3.4 million in reserve funds. Bloom said a

\$52,000 down payment has been made toward the Club film documentary; \$80,000 will be paid at the beginning of the year. \$175,000 has been paid in taxes with the same amount due in December. The balance is due April 15, 2005. The credit loan and all debts have been paid off.

Bastarache asked about the distribution of holiday bonuses to employees. Bloom said the amount divvied up is based on how much Club members donate and that the allocation among staff is based on longevity. Bastarache asked why the amounts aren't higher. Bloom said the distributed amount is based on what members donate. He said \$5,000 was donated last year and distributed over 105 employees. He said in past years the board has sometimes added to the total amount, depending on the Club's financial condition. Zremski said perhaps the Budget Committee should discuss adding money to the holiday fund. Cherry suggested a fund-raising idea for the holiday fund. Smith asked Bastarache for ideas to get members to donate to the fund. Leinwand moved that the Budget Committee look at the Club's financial picture and consider a supplement to the members' donations for the holiday fund. She also suggested the PR Committee do a special campaign to get out the word. Salant said he doesn't like the insinuation that the Club or board did anything wrong in not increasing the holiday fund last year because lots of people don't get holiday bonuses at all.

In response to a question from Bastarache, Bloom said he is waiting for recommendations from the House Committee with respect to the New Year's Eve party.

LIAISON AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Smith said the Photo Committee would like some guidance on a proposed exhibit by an outside organization. The exhibit is called Terrorism in Russia and consists of a series of photos, some of which depict injured people in graphic detail. She said the text would be written by the sponsoring group, Novotsti, the Russian Information Agency, but that the committee has not yet been supplied with the text. The group would pay the prevailing fee, but Committee chairman Jim Wallace asks whether there is a policy on accepting exhibits from foreign governments. He also wants to know if there is any hesitation to use some of the photos, which he thinks probably wouldn't be printed in US newspapers. Leinwand, Salant and Zremski expressed concern about the Club not having editorial control over the cutlines because the photos are on a political subject. Salant moved and the

board approved a motion to reject the exhibit. Dunham voted no, and Cherry abstained.

Bynum said the Events Committee is taking about having a New Year's Eve event in the Reliable Source similar to the 2004 event.

Zremski said the Book Fair is coming up. Smith asked how the authors are chosen and why there is a paucity of celebrity authors. Zremski said he will get an answer. Dunham said he got a rare complaint about the wine dinners. He said a member tried to make a reservation but the event was sold out. He said the member believed Olsson's advertised it before it was in the Record.

Hamrick said he and Tammy Lytle are coordinating with the Jerry Krell on the documentary, which is proceeding apace.

Leinwand said Diane Rehm will be at a Young Members Committee's Cocktails of Champions and that a number of Young Member Committee members are going to the Hungarian embassy to hear Tommy Ramone Dec.18.

Bethel said she has spoken to the Washington Area Black Journalists Association about co-sponsoring events next year, including the possible partnership on a play in February that addresses biracialism.

Bastarache said committees are not getting material to the Record in a timely fashion.

Salant said that once again the Professional Affairs Committee had a forum with no NPC members on the panel. He said when the NPC co-sponsors an event with another group, at least one Club member should be on the panel.

Cherry said there are no reservations for the Nov. 22 luncheon

Zremski said the panel discussion on the politics of gay marriage, which was co-sponsored by the D.C. chapter of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association was well attended and was carried by C-SPAN.

Donnelly said the Committee to Protect Journalists, in partnership with the NPC, would honor four journalists with the 2004 Press Freedom Awards. He also said legislation pending in Congress to revamp the intelligence

community contains provisions that would give the new intelligence director the ability to control freedom of expression and that some journalism groups are tossing around ideas for a letter to the conference committee chairmen. Cherry said she doesn't think the Club should be in the business of lobbying on pending legislation. She said an acquaintance on Capitol Hill told her signing such a letter would violate Standing Committee of Correspondents rules. Leinwand said she doesn't think the NPC is precluded from speaking out on press freedom issues because the Club would be signing as an organization, not as individual members. She said objecting to restrictions on press freedoms is the very thing the NPC should be involved in. Salant said the Club writes complaint letters to federal agencies when they take actions that interfere with the First Amendment and said he agrees with Leinwand. Bastarache said the Club also writes letters to foreign governments when they imprison or otherwise curtail journalists. Cherry said she would not sign on to the letter because the person she spoke to is in a position to know what they're talking about. Zremski asked for the person's identification. Cherry said she was asked not to reveal the person's name. Zremski said if the board is making Club policy based on that information, the board ought to know the identity of the person. Cherry said the board was not making policy because all such letters are discretionary. Smith said it is an abad precedent for the board to go on record saying the NPC is reluctant to take a position on a press freedom issue because an unidentified someone says it would create a problem between the NPC and the Standing Committee, especially because the Standing Committee has no jurisdiction over the NPC. Dunham said when he was chairman of the Periodical Gallery, journalists were not allowed to weigh in on legislation except for bills that had to do with journalism or the First Amendment. He said the prohibition is strict but carves out an exception for journalism issues. He said he thinks the policy is the same for the Daily Gallery.

NEW BUSINESS

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

Smith reported that the new management of the National Press Building will require key fobs to enter the building. Bloom said there will be a system whereby two elevators go to the 13th floor only so that non-tenants will have access to the Club.

Zremski said he, Dunham and Gallagher will meet about the co-sponsorship rules and have put a notice in the Record asking for input. He said an email account – cosponsorships@press.org -- had been established for members' comments.

Smith moved and the board approved the October minutes.
Smith moved and the board approved setting the next general membership meeting for Jan. 14, 2005.

The next meeting is Dec. 13..

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.