

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING
SEPT, 13, 2004

By Sylvia Smith, secretary

Chairman John Donnelly called the meeting to order at 6:45pm. Present were President Sheila Cherry, Vice President Rick Dunham, Secretary Sylvia Smith, Treasurer Jonathan Salant, Membership secretary Jerry Zremski and Governors Alison Bethel, Gayela Bynum, John Gallagher and Mark Hamrick, and General manager John Bloom, Membership director Julie Schoo and Sarahanne Driggs, director of membership recruitment. Absent were Governors Jack Cushman, Jerry Bastarache and Donna Leinwand. (Note: Governor Larry Bivins has submitted his resignation.) Also in attendance was Larry Lipman, chairman of the Futures Task Force.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Smith moved and the Board approved the absentee ballot rules for the Dec. 10 Club election. Smith moved and the Board approved a motion to allow her to appoint the members of the Election Committee closer to the time of the election and to inform the Board of the membership. The Board reviewed the list of active members and informed Schoo of any problems or questions. The election calendar is attached.

FUTURE TASK FORCE

Lipman submitted the task force's final report. He said its highlights include the suggestion that the NPC fulfill its name and become a NATIONAL press organization. To do that, he said, the Club would have to change the way it operates, with the biggest structural change being the creation of a journalism department on the same line level as the catering and membership departments. In response to questions from Board members, Lipman said the budgeting and planning should take place over the next few years. Cherry said she considers the task force report a playbook for future Boards to use by picking and choosing projects to do. She thanked Lipman and commended him and the committee for its work.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

Zremski moved and the Board approved retired dues status for 2 members and a six-month dues waiver for 1 member.

Zremski moved and the Board approved the following 32 membership applications:

Active

Glenn Maffei, reporter, States News Service
Talal Al-Haj, Middle East News U.S. bureau chief
David Givens, Argus Media LTD senior editor
Michael Smith, USA Today design editor
Sylvia Radwan, Global News of McLean writer
Georg Mascolo, Der Spiegel senior correspondent
Gerard Baker, The London Times editor
Daniel Whitten, McGraw-Hill Platts associate editor
Ruben Rotondaro, Freelance

Active Under 30

Richard Aldacushion, Washington Post Writers Group production editor
Karin Fischer, Kiplinger Washington Editors reporter

Active Non-Resident

Emily Rooney, WGBH executive editor/host
Nicoleta Sogor, Freelance investigative reporter (Romania)
Oralandar Brand-Williams, The Detroit News reporter
Kimberly Hayes Taylor, The Detroit News reporter
Dana Dunnan, Freelance

Active Reinstatement

Michael Duncan, Potomac Radio News bureau chief
Jeff Ballou, WTTG-TV Channel 5 news editor/producer

Request for Active Status from Associate

Sharon Freeman, The Hispanic Press director
John Inglehart, Health Affairs Journal

Graduate Student

Lynden Latiak, Columbia University School of Journalism
Forster Amportey Moore, Cardiff University School of Journalism

Associate

Alice Sofield, Chandler Chicco Agency
Sheila Owens, Newspaper Association of America, VP strategic communications
Laura Bradbard, Chandler Chicco Agency media specialist
Rhonda Dean-Royce, National Corn Growers Association communications specialist

Associate Under 34

Keenan Howell, International Foundation for Election Systems press officer

Affiliate

Charmayne Marsh, American Chemical Society
Thomas Sweeney, National Museum of the American Indian public affairs director

Affiliate Under 34

Amy Kalee Kreider, Fenton Communications senior vice president

Affiliate Non-Resident

Barbara Hembree, Federal Home Loan Bank of Indianapolis manager of corporate communications

Provisional Under 34

Derek Sands, Kyoto News assistant correspondent

Total members as of August 2004: 3,745. Total as of August 2003: 3,821 Associates on waiting list: 63.

Zremski moved and the Board approved changing the membership status of John Inglehart to active. Cherry and Salant abstained because they said they had not seen the information circulated about him.

Smith drew attention to new member Nicoleta Sogor of Romania. She suggested the Club consider the creation of a new category of active members for journalists who live and work outside of North America and that the dues be significantly lower.

Zremski asked Board members to forward the names of 5 potential members to be included in a membership drive.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Cherry said she received a letter from Ken Jost, the president of the DC chapter of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association suggesting a collaboration with the Club on a panel on gay marriage. She said she told him she prefers the association be on the panel, not a cosponsor and that he touch base with the appropriate committee chairs. She said rather than have groups such as NLGJA or National Association of Black Journalists cosponsor events with the Club, she would rather they join the NPC and then work through the committees. She noted that journalists who cover Capitol Hill and the White House are precluded from lobbying on pending legislation.

Zremski said that when he was chairman of the Professional Affairs Committee, he initiated an effort to reach out to journalism groups to cosponsor events with the NPC, which he said benefits NPC members. He said the event with NLGJA was not a lobbying event but a debate or discussion that would be useful to journalists and would include a representative of a gay advocacy group and a conservative organization. He said the Board should not presume that the event would come from one perspective.

Bethel said committees should have cosponsorships with many groups but that they should be careful about groups with agendas. She said the panel proposed for the gay marriage event was one sided. Salant agreed there should be cosponsorships. He said his impression of NLGJA was that it is an advocacy group. Smith said two Board members are NLGJA members and can attest that it is not an advocacy organization. She said the Club cosponsors events frequently and said the Club is late out of the gate on producing an event on a topic that is such a hot issue in the presidential campaign and in state initiative campaigns. Cherry said it appears from NLGJA's website that it is a lobbying group oriented toward the press rather than a journalism groups of gay and lesbian journalists. Dunham said the Club should cosponsor events with other journalism organizations as much as possible. He said almost everything done through the Professional Affairs Committee this year has been cosponsored or initiated by other groups, so he is baffled why the Club is so late on this issue.

Zremski moved that the Board encourage the Professional Affairs Committee to work with NLGJA to do a debate on both sides of the gay marriage issue with a moderator. Salant proposed, and Zremski accepted, a friendly amendment to change "Professional Affairs Committee" to "the appropriate Club committee."

Cherry said the Board has never told a Club committee what to do, but that she feels more comfortable with it as a Forums Committee event. Bethel said she would suggest it to Forums.

The motion was approved unanimously.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Donnelly said he received notice of Bivins' resignation. He said there are two years left on Bivins' term but that he sees no need to fill it until it is filled during the election in December.

Salant moved and the Board unanimously approved a commendation for Bivins' service to the Club and encouragement for him to remain active.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Bloom said Club income is \$7.4 million to date against a \$6.4 million budget. Expenses are also up.

He said the Board had asked him to come up with something to acknowledge the 25 years of collaboration between C-SPAN and the NPC. He showed members a plaque and said C-SPAN will be creating an exhibit.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Salant said that last year, he opposed a 7 percent dues increase but had promised to bring up a 2004 dues increase of 3.5 percent if the 2003 increase were scaled back to 3.5 percent. He said financials are doing better, but membership is down and dues account for a smaller proportion of the Club's income. He said he supports smaller, more frequent dues increases. He said the Budget Committee unanimously recommended a 3.5 percent increase but there was some sentiment that the increase for affiliates and associates was too high.

He moved a 3.5 percent dues increase for 2005 and accepted Smith's friendly amendment to cap the maximum at \$32, the amount of the increase for actives. During discussion, Bethel said she would not vote for any dues increase because her company would stop paying dues. Hamrick asked what the justification for a dues increase is. Salant said the Club has not yet made up for the fact that for five years there was no dues increase; the percentage of the Club's income from membership is down, which means the reliance on catering is higher, and that brings priority considerations. Zremski noted that if it were not for the building sale settlement, we would be having a break-even year and, in any event, half of the settlement goes for taxes.

On the motion, 6 voted Yes: Zremski, Smith, Salant, Hamrick, Gallagher and Donnelly; 3 voted No: Dunham, Cherry and Bethel. Bynum said she would have voted no if she were allowed to vote. NOTE: The Board subsequently discovered that the \$32 figure was a miscalculation. Via email, Dunham moved that the Board approve a 3.5 percent dues across-the-board increase for 2005 that is not to exceed \$17. (Subsequently the dues increase was approved at the Oct. 8, 2004, general membership meeting.)

COMMITTEE AND BOARD LIAISON REPORTS

Smith said the House Committee is concerned over its perceived lack of responsiveness from staff about food and beverage items. It wanted the Board to know, and the chairman will discuss specific concerns with Bloom.

She said the Photography Committee will have a reception Oct. 8 to open the members' photo exhibit and to mark the 100th anniversary of Margaret Bourke-White. The curator of the Phillips Museum, an expert on Bourke-White, will speak. Max Desfor, a contemporary of Bourke-White is also on the agenda.

The committee is in pursuit of the New York Post "It's Gephardt" front page and the next-day correction.

Dunham said the 5K drew 600 participants and raised at least \$12,000 in entry fees. The silent auction was a success, raising about \$4,500. There was about \$21,000 in cash sponsorships with a total income of \$38,000 to \$40,000 before expenses. He thanked everyone. The Board presented an appreciation gift to Bloom for his work on the race.

Bynum said 14 vendors have signed up for the holiday bazaar.

Salant said Professional Affairs has been slow. He said he also spoke to the chair about the lack of NPC members on panels.

Salant moved and the Board approved a commendation for Dunham, Benfred Clement Smith and staff members Melinda Cooke, John Bloom, Joann Booze, Meina Booze, Michelle Licht, Hope Dunn, David King and Tom Glad for their hard work on the 5K.

Cherry reminded Board members that the jobs expo is Nov. 12 and said bureaus that are hiring are most welcome.

Zremski said the Speakers Committee should make a strong effort to book prominent Democrats because the lineup of Cabinet members appears lopsided. He said it's great to have Cabinet members, but this close to the election gives the appearance of favoritism.

Donnelly said the NPC joined with other groups to sign a petition protesting several recent court rulings holding journalists in contempt.

NEW BUSINESS

Smith reminded the Board that the next general membership meeting is Oct. 8 at noon.

Zremski moved and the Board approved that Board members have until Sept. 20 to review the list of active members in preparation for the Dec. 10 election and inform Schoo of any concerns.

Salant said he appreciated the staff listening to his concerns about the appearance of the Membership Directory and acting on them.

The Board adjourned into executive session to discuss legal matters. It returned to open session.

Smith moved and the Board approved the minutes of the July meeting.

The next meeting is Oct. 18, 2004.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

2004 ELECTION CALENDAR

September 13	Board review of Active roster Absentee ballot rules approved
	Board appoints Election Committee
September 23	Notice in Record that nominations open Oct. 12
October 12	Nominations open
November 12	Nominations close Candidate bios and photos to Record editors
November 18	Ballot, candidate bios and photos appear in Record Copy of ballot posted on web site and bulletin board
November 29	Candidate campaign materials due for Club mailing
December 2	Mail-in requests for absentee ballots due
December 9	Walk-in requests for absentee ballots due
December 10	Elections – polls open 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.

ABSENTEE BALLOT RULES

1. ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUESTS:

Starting on the cover date of the NPC Record containing the sample ballot, an eligible member may obtain a ballot by turning in a personally signed request to the business office that is:

- a) Received by close of business eight days before the election, accompanied by a stamped envelope addressed to the member's home or temporary address, but not the member's business if it differs from home; or
- b) Delivered in person during business hours, until the close of business on the day before the election.

2. ABSENTEE BALLOTS MUST BE REQUESTED ONE AT A TIME:

Each member must request an absentee ballot separately. Bundled requests will not be honored.

3. ABSENTEE BALLOT SUBMISSION:

Individual ballots may be returned by mail, messenger or in person until the polls close. Multiple ballots bundled in a single package or delivery will be disqualified.

4. ABSENTEE BALLOT ENVELOPES:

Along with each absentee ballot the club will provide two return envelopes, one for placement inside the other. The outer envelope shall identify the voter and the inner envelope shall not. Outer envelopes shall be retained for 60 days after the election.

5. ABSENTEE AND LIVE BALLOTS REPORTED SEPARATELY

Total absentee and total live ballots cast shall be reported separately.

6. PUBLICIZING ABSENTEE BALLOT RULES:

These rules shall be printed in the Record containing the sample ballot, and linked prominently on the Club's Web site.