

Society of Professional Journalists/Georgia Pro Chapter
MARCH 15, 2017 Board Meeting
Submitted by Lou Phelps, Secretary

MINUTES

Meeting held at 8:00 p.m. by Conference Call.

PRESENT: Ellen Eldridge, President; Lou Phelps, Secretary/Membership; Jay Suber, Mark Thomason, Rebecca Fuchko, Jennifer Matthews, and Sharon Dunten. Dan Whisenhunt joined the meeting in progress at 8:23 p.m. A quorum of the Board's eleven members was confirmed.

ABSENT: Roderic Graham, Neha Negandhi, and Haisten Willis.

FEBRUARY 2017 MINUTES were mailed in advance by Lou Phelps. APPROVED without alternation. Vote was Unanimous.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Dan Whisenhunt reported that there is \$3,470.00 in the bank. There are no outstanding accounts payable.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Events: April 19, 2017 – "Media and the American Muslim community: An open discussion" will be held at the AJC at noon. Kevin Reilly of the AJC will be moderating the event. The Atlanta Press Club is also assisting. Motion was made by Ellen Eldridge to approve \$500 to support the overhead of the event. The costs may not reach this level. Seconded by Jay Suber. Revenue from the event is \$10.00 a ticket for attendees that will cover a boxed lunch. There is a \$132.00 cost for the space. Approved by unanimous vote. Information on the event is on the chapter's website.

FREELANCE COMMITTEE; The Freelance Committee is meeting regularly, chaired by Haisten Willis. Their next event is May 6, a **Freelance Jobs Fair**. The Freelance committee has been working hard on the event, with multiple media companies committed to attend. Attendees will be able to talk 'one-on-one' with editors in attendance. Admission includes boxed lunch. Cost is \$20.00 to attend. Information on the event is on the Chapter's website.

DRONE PROGRAM: Mark Thomason gave a report on the Drone Program. His official pilots test is scheduled for next week, on behalf of SPJ. His goal is to then have a drone that is rentable by SPJ Georgia Pro members. He will provide the training on laws for usage in Georgia, and is developing a proposed fee schedule over the next month to present to the board. Rental will include flying lessons. Rental will be available for 24 – 48 hr time period. The drone will be a DJI Phantom 4 Quadcopter with 4K Camera. Sharon Dunten stated that Region 3 actually owns the drone. Jay Suber asked why we were using drones; why we were doing this? The idea for drones to be used as a journalism resource for members is an idea that originated w Michael Koretzky, Region 3 president, it was explained. SPJ Florida owns three drones.

COLLEGIATE/PRO COMMITTEE: Rebecca Fuchko reported that she has been reaching out to faculty advisors. Her goal is to get a student rep from every college/university in Georgia. Student rep would act as president of the college's chapter.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: Lou Phelps reported that she is working on a membership campaign, and asked the Board to consider in the future making a "Press Pass" a Georgia Chapter membership benefit.

She had previously distributed information on how the program would work, on the criteria used by other media associations use who distribute or sell Press Passes to members. No decision was made.

WEBSITE/NEWSLETTER: Ellen Eldridge is now posting and maintaining the website due to job conflicts by other board members. The March Newsletter was published, aided by Jay Suber.

OPERATING BUDGET DISCUSSION: Treasurer Dan Whisenhunt reminded the Board that an Operating Budget for next year must be approved by May 1, and asked for comments or suggestions. It was agreed that the budget would be adopted at the April board meeting, and that he would email all Board Members a copy of the current budget prior to that meeting.

He then reviewed several annual fixed costs of the chapter, such as web hosting fees, and discussed expense line items that are in the current year's budget, such as marketing expenses. Lou Phelps stated that she believed that Membership revenue could be budgeted at a higher level next year, based on current revenues which are holding steady, and plans to add 10 more members by next year.

Jay Suber stated that he felt next year's Calendar of planned events should be agreed to far in advance, and those events will have costs and revenues; that this should be agreed to as part of the budgeting process. He stated, "I just need to see it codified what the events are."

Lou Phelps suggested that there should be agreed to membership goals, with money to support attaining the goals as well as retaining members.

APRIL MEETING DATE: It was agreed that the April meeting would held as an 'in-person' meeting in the Atlanta area, as agreed to by the board in January. Board members were asked to send Ellen Eldridge proposed dates and times.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m. on a motion by Ellen Eldridge, seconded by Jay Suber. The vote was unanimous.

