

SPJ Georgia Board Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2017
8:00 p.m.

Meeting Held by Conference Call.

Attending: Ellen Eldridge, Dan Whisenhunt, Haisten Willis, Lou Phelps, Jay Suber. A quorum was confirmed.

Absent: Jennifer Matthews was unable to join meeting due to work. Mark Thomason did not attend.

Also attending: Mark Woolsey, Danielle Douez and Toni Stauffer (future board members), and Larry Johnson (with the Cobb County Courier), all of whom are Chapter members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion made by Dan Whisenhunt, seconded by Haisten Willis to approve the October Minutes as distributed. Approved unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Dan Whisenhunt reported on the balance in the checking account; a specific sum was not reported, but he stated that the balance was approx. \$3,000.00. There is \$100.00 more in the bank than in the checkbook, he added, and said he would look into why. He stated that a \$200 check to the speaker at the October Lunch n Learn was issued in October. Eldridge stated that approximately \$67.00 from an old Paypal account was moved into the checking account recently, and she deposited an additional \$25.00 check from a new member - and that may account for the \$100 difference.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **AUDIT COMMITTEE:** Ellen Eldridge reported that she has named four members to an Audit Committee, and has created a Dropbox file for the bank statements, check stubs from membership checks from National and other receipts. She asked Whisenhunt to see if he can resolve the \$100.00 discrepancy, and if he could scan the checkbook. Mark Woolsey, Haisten Willis, Adina Soloman, Danielle Douez were named. She is overseeing the process for the Board.

- **NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT:** Jay Suber, chair of the 2017 Nominating Committee, presented the report on the work of the committee, stating that the work of selecting a SLATE was now completed. Nominee Betsy Bean changed her mind just in the last few days, after being nominated, due to work conflicts. David Armstrong has been replaced on the slate. Suber urged the Board to approach next year with an eye to those who might step onto the Board in the future, and said that those who could not serve in 2018 might consider it in the future.

Suber then thanked those who stepped up to serve for 2018, including Haisten Willis as President; Mark Woolsey as Vice President/President-Elect; Danielle Douez, Treasurer; Toni Stauffer as Student Chapter Board member; and David Armstrong as At Large Board Member. Continuing on the board in 2018 will be Ellen Eldridge, Immediate Past President; Lou Phelps, Secretary, and Jay Suber as At Large Member.

Lou Phelps reported that the postcard to be mailed to all paid members on how to vote has been ordered, and will be mailed the last week of November. The Board has recognized that many members do not open email. And, the website and app to vote from Dec. 6 -7, has been set up. Information on both have been sent to Jay Suber.

- **REMOVAL OF BOARD MEMBER:** Ellen Eldridge made a motion to removed Mark Thomason from the Board “for violating the Bylaws due to missing Board Meetings and inactivity.” Seconded by Haisten Willis. Eldridge stated that he last attended the in-person meeting held at Woodstock in June by dialing in, and that she has made repeated attempts to reach him. Phelps stated that she had been in communication with him on other business matters, and that he hoped to resume publishing in the future. Eldridge told the Board that he had informed her that his attorney had advised him to not be involved until all legal matters were resolved. The vote was unanimous. His term was scheduled to run until Dec. 31, 2018.

- **NEW BOARD MEMBER NAMED:** Lou Phelps made a motion that the opening created by the removal of Thomason not be filled until the new Board meets in Jan. 2018, allowing that board to consider a replacement. There was no second to the motion. Ellen Eldridge stated that she had asked Larry Johnson, from the Cobb County Courier, to join the Board to fill the vacancy, and asked him to join the Board call. He stated that he had returned to J-School, and would not be able to be active until June 2018, but she stated that that was fine as long as he committed to making the Board meetings as required. Jay Suber then seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous. He becomes a Board Member immediately with a term ending Dec. 31, 2018.

- **CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS:** Ellen Eldridge reported to the Board that she had sent out an email to all members asking for volunteers for Chapter projects and tasks in 2018, sent 11/5/17.

- **SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT:** The Social Media Report was not available. Bobby Rodrigo was not able to join the call. Phelps stated that she had spoken with him, and he is in Miami and Puerto Rico working on hurricane relief efforts, but intended to continue to volunteer to help in the future. Eldridge stated she had also identified another volunteer.

- **GRANT APPLICATION:** A Grant of up to \$500 is available for the work of Chapters from SPJ National. Grants can be submitted every three months. The Freelance Committee has voted to submit a grant application toward their planned January Photo Event. The money would be

used to reimburse the Chapter for space rental and for door prizes. Mark Woolsey, currently chair of the Freelance Committee, volunteered to work with Ellen on the application, due by Nov. 30. That event is tentatively set to be held at Indigo Yoga Studio on Jan. 17, 2018. The space will be rented for several hours. Motion made by Haisten Willis, seconded by Lou Phelps to fund \$150.00 for the rental, which may or may not be reimbursed through a grant. Vote was unanimous. Invoice to be sent to Dan Whisenhunt.

- **ANNUAL MEETING:** The Annual Meeting of Georgia Pro Chapter Members will be held from 6 p.m.- 7 pm, Dec. 9, 2017 at Taco Mac in Atlanta, before the 'Holiday Mixer.' The new Board for 2018 will be recognized. Ellen Eldridge suggested that the Board consider the Annual Meeting as also the December Board Meeting, as well.

- **HOLIDAY MIXER:** The Chapter's 'Holiday Mixer' for all members is set for Dec. 9 from 7 pm – 9 pm. at Taco Mac. It will be co-hosted with the Atlanta Association of Black Journalists and the Atlanta Chapter of Asian American Journalists. Total budget of \$600.00. There are already 80 people RSVP'd. The event is free. All members are urged to RSVP.

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m. Motion by Jay Suber; seconded by Dan Whisenhunt. Vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted by Lou Phelps, Secretary.