

SPJ Georgia Board Meeting Minutes
Feb. 20, 2021

Present: Ashlyn Webb, Stell Simonton, Jack Zibluk, Rahul Bali, Pam Dorsett, Jennifer Maddox, Nicolle Sartain, Mark Woolsey, Curt Yeomans

The February agenda was approved.
January minutes were corrected and approved.

Treasurer Report

Our available balance is \$4,436.14. The check sent to Savannah State has been returned twice. Ashlyn and Nicolle will reach out to contacts there. The check to GSU has not been cashed but Pam will monitor this.

Committee Reports

Advocacy Committee

Filming will begin sooner than expected for the **law enforcement training video**. Ashlyn reported that she and Charlotte toured the set at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center. The Georgia attorney general has approved the script and Ashlyn has provided it to the board. Filming will start March 5 and several board members will be present. We still need some well-known journalists to provide narration.

Freelance Committee

The board, along with the Freelance Committee, set an April 13 date for the **panel presentation on covering extremist groups**. The committee will shoot for a panel of three or four people. At least eight names were suggested: five reporters, two or three experts to provide background and an FBI representative. Pam will contact Henry Schuster, Mark will contact the FBI again, Ashlyn will contact a UGA expert, Nicolle will contact CNN reporters and Stell will contact AJC reporters. All will try to relay information to Mark and Pam within a week.

Student Affairs Committee

Rahul reported that press credentials are being issued to student journalists on a case-by-case basis during the pandemic. A student for Georgia College & State University at Milledgeville gained a press pass and reported for a week from the State Capitol. After the pandemic ends, the Capitol press office may create a policy.

Events Committee

Two new events were planned.

Ashlyn noted that journalists are being restricted from some public health facilities as they carry out vaccinations. We will offer a **Zoom event April 27 for journalists on accessing these facilities and gaining public health data**. Ashlyn will seek panelists from the Georgia Department of Public Health and either the First Amendment Foundation or the UGA First Amendment Clinic. It was suggested to contact reporters Andy Miller and Max Blau.

We will also plan a **mid-June event on journalists and law enforcement** that draws on the training video that is underway. It is scheduled for June to incorporate any new police reform legislation that could pass the General Assembly. We will consider a future event about legislative redistricting if that occurs this session.

Old Business

Brainstorm **training for college political science programs**. This was put on hold.

Green Eyeshade Awards. Ashlyn is working with the regional director on this. Our role will be to solicit submission and judge the awards

New Business

Feb. 27 **meeting with national SPJ President Matt Hall**. He is interested in getting to know the Georgia SPJ chapter and make connections between national and local chapters. Among the topics we'd like to discuss are outreach to the public about journalism and the value of a national SPJ education committee. Jack Zibluck will bring these up.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will March 20 at 10 a.m.