

MINUTES
SPJ Detroit Chapter Board Meeting
Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2009

Location: The Jewish News, Southfield.

Present: Colleen Clement, Jack Harned, Walter Middlebrook, Gloria Olman, David Sachs, Jim Schaefer, Tom Stanton, Ann Zaniewski and administrator Donna Remer.

Absent: Andy Chapelle, W. Kim Heron, Janet Mendler, Steve Raphael and Jerome Vaughn.

Clement called the meeting to order at 8:42 a.m.

Minutes – Harned

Oct. 22, 2009, meeting. The minutes were corrected to reflect that Clement, not Zaniewski, presented the Generation J information. Motion to approve as amended by Olman, seconded by Sachs. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer’s report – Olman

Olman noted the following balances: \$11,867 in checking and \$14,081 in the Laurain CD. She said she had made the \$500 deposit for the JOY banquet. Olman is having the chapter’s accountant review a notice from SPJ National about a Dec. 15 filing deadline. (Later during the meeting Olman received a call from the accountant, who said the chapter should not file anything on Dec. 15 because it had already filed the correct forms in spring.) At its next meeting, the board will consider whether it is necessary to have the accountant do the lengthier filing.

Budget – Remer

Remer reported that a check has been received from the Detroit Free Press for the spring banquet. She also noted that a \$51 check had been issued to the chapter after the bankruptcy proceedings involving the Oakland Press. Remer polled the board related to the purchase of stock for award certificates and found support for purchasing a two- to three-year supply of the stock.

Programs – Zaniewski

Several possible programs were discussed:

v Helen Thomas. She will be in town for a university commencement address, and Zaniewski is working to try to secure her for a chapter program.

v Roxana Saberi. Zaniewski is working with Saberi’s publicist to see if she is available for a program. A freelance journalist, Saberi was imprisoned in Iran in 2009.

v “Show the Love” benefit. Middlebrook shared details of the event, which the chapter is co-hosting with NABJ. It will be held Thursday, Nov. 24, at PJ’s Lager House on Michigan Avenue in Detroit. Luther “Badman” Keith and his band have volunteered to perform. Tickets will be \$20 with all proceeds going to out-of-work journalists who apply or are nominated for assistance. Food and drinks will be available for purchase.

v Pulitzer reception. Harned will check on the availability of the Birmingham/Bloomfield Art Center for a Friday, Jan. 22, chapter celebration of local Pulitzer winners. Once the location is secured, members will invite Pulitzer recipients and decide how to handle refreshments.

v Speed-pitching. Middlebrook suggested the chapter co-sponsor (with the News and Free Press) a Spirit of Diversity program in fall 2010. It would include a speed-pitching exercise involving young journalists.

v Digital television. A national tour related to the Digital Television Report may be coming to Detroit in February. Middlebrook said the chapter could co-host the event. He will have more information later.

v Journalist websites. The chapter will consider hosting a workshop to help out-of-work journalists launch their own web enterprises.

In brief -- Clement

v Alternatives to internships. The Free Press has eliminated its summer internships. Board members briefly discussed alternatives that are being considered, including weekend and weeklong programs.

v Shield law. SPJ National is supporting a compromise related to the proposed shield law.

v Judges. SPJ National is seeking judges for its annual contest.

v Hall of Fame. The Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame will host its dinner on Sunday, April 18. Nominations are being accepted through Jan. 15.

JOY banquet – Harned

The date has been set for April 14, and the banquet hall has been secured. Harned said the focus is now on finding a guest speaker who will be a draw. Award nominations also will be sought soon, too. Remer will post links on the website. Various candidates were mentioned.

Awards contest – Remer

The deadline for entries will be Friday, Jan. 22, and Remer would like to encourage more individuals to enter. Board members opted to reduce the contest mailing to a one-page promotion in the next newsletter, with full details available online as a PDF file. The goal is to have the newsletter/contest promotion in the mail by the second week in December. Board members will vote on new categories by email.

PayPal – Remer

The chapter will use PayPal on its website. Remer outlined the costs: There are no monthly or annual fees for the level of service the chapter would need, but 2.9 percent of every payment would go to PayPal, along with a 30-cent per-transaction charge. Board members discussed adding a surcharge to each transaction, but decided not to at this stage.

Laurain Scholarship – Sachs

The form has been updated, and the chapter is hoping to be able to accept electronic submissions. Remer is looking into creating a PDF application that can be filled out online.

Membership – Stanton

The Facebook page will be launched this week, Stanton said.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Stanton

Detroit SPJ Secretary