

SPJ Detroit Minutes – July 10, 2025, via Zoom

Attendees: Marty Fischhoff, Rob Davidek, Tracy Wolf, Mark Lee, Peg McNichol, Anna Clark, Mary Zatina, Vince McCraw, Briana Rice, Jeremy Allen; Marcia Hart, Administrator

Absent: Kennan Oliphant, Nicole Avery Nichols, Jeff Payne, Christine Ferretti, Walter Middlebrook, Monica Williams, Beth Konrad, Annalise Frank,

Marty Fischhoff called the meeting to order at about 8:07 a.m.

Minutes –The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of the board.

President's Report

- The SPJ Foundation has \$12M in its endowment. It has used its funds to help the national SPJ organization through its recent financial difficulties. It also provides grants, funding various projects, including documentaries. But it rarely supports chapter activities. It is hosting a webinar on July 17 to explain the process for submitting grant proposals.
- Campus Outreach – Wayne State and Michigan State universities may be interested in reviving their campus SPJ chapters. Marty suggested that each member of the Campus Outreach Committee adopt a local college journalism program, SPJ student chapter or student newspaper. We have had contact with U-M and Wayne State programs recently and will renew those conversations when school resumes.
- The national SPJ convention, MediaFest 25, is taking place in Washington, D.C., on October 15-18. Mary is planning to represent the chapter.

Programming – Tracy Wolf

- Everyone agreed that the Mayoral Candidate Forum on Small Business Policy was an excellent program, and the partnerships with the Michigan Black Business Alliance, Detroit PBS and Detroit NABJ helped make it a success. Marty thanked all the chapter members who were involved, including Mark Lee, Rob Davidek, Tracy Wolf, Vince McCraw and Annalise Frank. The video will be posted on the SPJ Detroit website.
- Mark noted that we have produced some great events over the past year.
- Tracy discussed the Summer Happy Hour Networking Event on August 14, from 5:30- 7 p.m., at Roar Brewery, the city's first Black-owned brewery. The event is open to all members, colleagues and journalism supporters. The board was encouraged to share the invitation.
- We have not received confirmation for the Google Tools workshop that we have requested for August 19 at WWJ Newsradio 950. Marty will reach out to Rod Hicks, who had been the SPJ official, in charge of the program. He recently accepted a position as the executive editor of the St. Louis American.

Contests – Walter Middlebrook

- A-Mark contest. We received a great response with a total of 21 entries. Marty is working to recruit judges for the competition, concentrating on journalism faculty members with newsroom experience. He thanked Anna Clark who has helped him identify potential judges. Winners will be

announced during an awards ceremony and reception to be held at the Atwater Brewery on September 23. We received \$2,000 from the A-Mark Foundation for promotional purposes.

Communications – Peg McNichols

- Peg wants to meet with her committee to discuss the chapter's website and Facebook platform, as well as the possibility of launching a newsletter. Rob Davidek suggested the newsletter be published monthly. Dorothy Hall, our web site administrator, has offered to design a newsletter template.

Membership – Rob Davidek

- Our current Detroit Chapter membership is about 47. Hopefully, we can boost the membership at our networking event.

Financials – Walter Middlebrook

- Account balances of June 30, reported by Marcia Hart in Walter's absence:
 - \$6,615.24 Checking
 - 7,219.16 Scholarship savings
 - 13,014.65 E*Trade
 - 20,747.32 PayPal
 - \$49,159.78 Total

Other News

- Vince announced that the documentary "Beyond the Headlines: The NABJ Journey," will be shown at the Detroit Black Film Festival on Sept. 26.
- A summit on the Crisis in Local News will take place on July 22 at the Detroit Athletic Club. Admission is free and open to the public. SPJ Detroit board member and Editor and Vice President of the Detroit Free Press, Nicole Avery Nichols, will be one of the featured speakers.
- Our good friend, Sarah Rahal of The Detroit News, has accepted a reporter position at the Boston Globe. She has been the president of AAJA Michigan.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 a.m.

Committee Assignments (chairs in bold text)

- Programs: **Tracy Wolf**, Walter Middlebrook, Beth Konrad, Mark Lee, Monica Williams, Briana Rice, Anna Clark
- Membership Outreach: **Rob Davidek**, Mary Zatina, Walter Middlebrook
- Communication Committee: **Peg McNichol**, Christine Ferretti, Tracy Wolf
- FOIA: **Beth Konrad**, Mary Zatina, Peg McNichol

- Banquet: **Tracy Wolf**, Marcia Hart, Monica Williams
- Campus Outreach/Scholarship: **Annalise Frank**, Kennan Oliphant, Christine Ferretti, Briana Rice, Anna Clark and Beth Konrad
- Finance/Fundraising: **Walter Middlebrook**, Marty Fischhoff
- Bylaws and elections (nominating committee): **Marty Fischhoff**, Mark Lee, Rob Davidek, Peg McNichol, Walter Middlebrook
- Contest: **Walter Middlebrook**, Jeff Payne, Marty Fischhoff