

### **SPJ minutes – March 14, 2024, via Zoom**

**In attendance:** Marty Fischhoff, Kelley Root, Rob Davidek, Beth Konrad, Tracy Wolf, Mark Lee, Walter Middlebrook, Monica Williams, Mary Zatina, Peg McNichol, Annalise Frank; Administrator Marcia Hart

**Absent:** Ro Coppola, Nicole Avery Nichols, Jeff Payne, Kat Stafford, Vince McCraw, Christine Ferretti

Marty Fischhoff called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

Beth Konrad made a motion to approve the February minutes. The motion was seconded by Mary Zatina and approved by all.

### **President's Report – Marty Fischhoff**

- The chapter received a request from the University of Michigan Wallace House for Journalists to identify SPJ members who might want to participate in a one-day training session on newsroom safety for journalists covering the 2024 elections. The training would be sponsored by the Wallace House, the Reporter Committee for Freedom of the Press and the International Women's Media Foundation. Unfortunately, the date they chose presented a conflict with the upcoming Collaborative Journalism Summit in May. The Wallace House thanked us for this information and said it would be back in touch.
- Rob Davidek will host a group of Estonian journalists who are visiting Detroit as part of the International Visitor Leadership Program tomorrow afternoon at the WWJ 950 studios.

### **Programming committee update – Tracy Wolf**

- Tracey Wolf noted that she was super proud of the SPJ Detroit's support at the Health Care Media Access Day, on which the chapter partnered with the local Solutions Journalism Collaborative. The event was organized by Monica Williams, who thanked everyone for their participation. She said that she received positive feedback from the nonprofits who attended the event. Kelley Root thanked Monica for a good event with good parking at a good location (Michigan State's Detroit Campus). The chapter will receive a donation of \$500 from the Solutions Journalism Collaborative for its scholarship fund.
- The committee organizing the Region 4-5 Conference meets weekly. Tracy has been our representative on the committee, and she has organized panels on sports and food, which will be moderated by Wayne State's Perry Farrell and Marty, respectively. Tracy also designed the conference flyers, which we will distribute to our members and to local university journalism programs. Walter Middlebrook, Tracy and Marty will be attending the conference. Walter and Marty will be serving as Resume Doctors to help students at the conference improve their application materials.
- The Collaborative Journalism Summit, of which the chapter is a partner, takes place on May 9-10 at Wayne State University. SPJ Detroit members can attend for free, but tickets for the receptions on Wednesday and Thursday have limited space. Those interested should register soon.

### **FOIA Committee – Beth Konrad**

- Beth Konrad said that legislation to expand FOIA proposed by State Senators Ed McBroom and Jeremy Moss was voted out of committee. Next step is a vote by the full Senate and for the State House to take up the legislation. But there still seems to be some hesitation on the part of legislators to enact the package of bills. Rob mentioned a discussion that MAB is hosting virtually later that afternoon, which interested parties must register to join. Pe McNichols said that she has been studying other FOIA proposals, including the BRITE Act being offered by some House Democrats. Kelley said she would gauge the interest of The Detroit

News in a FOIA program, mentioning that the newspaper ran a story on the topic the day, which she would forward to Max White for the SPJ Detroit website

#### **Contest – Walter Middlebrook**

- Walter reported that we have six (6) JOY and five (5) YJOY nominees. Two different panels will judge them this year.
- Marty said Lifetime Achievement honorees are Luther Keith, Carolyn Clifford and Kirt Dozier. We are requesting bios, headshots and someone to introduce them at the banquet.
- Beth noted that the Michigan Hall of Fame banquet is March 18. Honorees include Molly Abraham, John Bebow, Carolyn Clifford, Eric Freedman, Jeff Gilbert and Larry Lee

#### **Scholarships – Kelley Root**

- Kelley said she is making plans for judging the scholarship applications. There are six (6) applicants.

#### **Banquet – Tracy Wolf**

- The price of banquet tickets was discussed. It was decided as follows: \$65 for SPJ Members, \$80 for non-members, and \$650 for a table of ten.
- Tracey suggested holding an auction or drawing – maybe consisting of five gift baskets. Board members should reach out to potential donors of items for this purpose.

#### **Membership – Rob Davidek**

- Rob Davidek is sending out membership letters.

#### **Communications – Kelley Root**

- Kelley asked that we send a Save the Date for the banquet as soon as possible.

#### **Financial – Walter Middlebrook**

- Walter reported that our checking account balance is \$17,950.82, the scholarship account is \$3,277.98, E\*Trade is \$11,629.98, and PayPal is \$543.46. The total is \$33,402.24.

#### **Other**

- We will try to meet in person this summer.
- Walter informed the board that Jack Harned has died. He had been a long-time supporter of SPJ Detroit, held a retreat at his home and had organized programs in the past. His wife Eileen was our photographer for many years.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and approved by all. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:02 a.m.

Next meeting: Thursday, April 11 at 8 a.m.

#### **Committee Assignments (chairs in bold text)**

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- Programs: **Tracy Wolf**, Katrease Stafford, Walter Middlebrook, Beth Konrad, Ro Coppola, Mark Lee, Monica Williams
  - Membership Outreach: **Rob Davidek**, Marty Fischhoff, Walter Middlebrook
  - Communication Committee: **Kelley Root**, Rob Davidek
  - FOIA: **Beth Konrad**, Ro Coppola, Kelley Root, Mary Zatina, Peggy McNichol
  - Banquet: **Tracy Wolf**, Marcia Hart, Monica Williams
  - Campus Outreach: **Beth Konrad**, Kelley Root
  - Finance/Fundraising: **Walter Middlebrook**, Marty Fischhoff
  - Bylaws and elections (nominating committee): **Walter Middlebrook**, Beth Konrad, Marty Fischhoff
  - Contest: **Walter Middlebrook**
  - Scholarship: **Kelley Root**, Beth Konrad, Annalise Frank
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