

## **SPJ Detroit Minutes – March 12, 2025, via Zoom**

**Attendees:** Marty Fischhoff, Rob Davidek, Beth Konrad, Tracy Wolf, Mark Lee, Peg McNichol, Walter Middlebrook, Monica Williams, Vince McCraw, Annalise Frank, Kennan Oliphant; Marcia Hart, Administrator

**Absent:** Nicole Avery Nichols, Mary Zatina, Christine Ferretti, Brianna Rice, Jeff Payne, Anna Clark

Marty Fischhoff called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

**Minutes** - Vince McCraw made a motion to approve the minutes of the February meeting. The motion was seconded by Rob Davidek and approved by a unanimous vote of the board.

### **Program - Tracy Wolf**

- Tracy discussed the status of the DEI event and shared a version of the flyer. It was planned to be posted that day. A sample of the registration form was shared. There will be a fee of \$5 for SPJ members and \$10 for non-members. Eventbrite will be used for registration.
- Rob Davidek is working with Mark Lee to develop a program around the upcoming Detroit mayoral election. They hope to finalize details early next month. Vince McCraw said NABJ would want to be involved.
- Rob Davidek suggested meeting the candidates at in-person meetings, perhaps at the WWJ-AM office.
- Annalise Frank said there will be a candidate debate at the Mackinac Conference.

### **Region 4 Conference – Tracy Wolf/Peg McNichol**

- The annual Region 4 SPJ Conference is taking place April 4-5 at the Levin College of Public Affairs and Education at Cleveland State University. The flyers were available for distribution. The title of the conference is “The Ever-Changing World of Journalism.” Tracy suggested that the chapter prioritize promoting the DEI event for the time being, before turning attention to the regional conference.

### **FOIA -- Beth Konrad**

- Beth Konrad noted that the FOIA law is stalled in committee.
- Marty suggested we look at a FOIA event in the fall.
- A bill is under consideration to amend the Open Meetings law and would formalize municipal rules for virtual meetings (which were started during COVID).

- Beth noted that she served as a judge this year for the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame. She said she would share a notice of the dinner, which will be held on April 13. There are a record 11 inductees this year.

#### **Contests – Marty Fischhoff**

- This year's Lifetime Achievement Awards honorees are: Sam Logan, who receives the award posthumously for his career as publisher of the Michigan Chronicle; Devin Scillian, former WDIV anchor and children's book author; and Elias Gutierrez, founder and publisher of Latino Press Newspapers. Marty, Mark and Rob will reach out to them for bios and headshots.
- Marty said we will launch the A-Mark Prize contest in April. Our chapter will receive \$1,500 for sponsoring it. There is an opportunity to receive an additional \$2,000 for promoting the competition.

#### **Banquet – Tracy**

- Tracy will begin working on the powerpoint, program and other details of the event.
- Board members were invited to solicit gifts and to consider donating personal donations for the silent auction, which will be managed again by Monica Williams.
- Mary Zatina suggested we invite prior years' Lifetime Achievement honorees (but not comp tickets).
- There will be a flyer produced to promote the banquet.

#### **Communications – Peg McNichol**

- Peg said that she will reach out to the committee regarding access to our Facebook page.
- Marty encouraged all board members to contribute postings to the page.

#### **Membership – Rob Davidek**

- Rob created a Google doc, which details our members, their news organizations and membership status. He will ask the board for prospective members to approach.
- Rob will check with National about including Detroit Chapter membership dues in their renewal notices.

#### **Campus Outreach/Scholarships – Annalise Frank**

- Annalise said she sent out a school contacts list and hopes to refine. This will make it easier to send scholarship notifications next year.
- Marty said the list was a valuable tool, which he planned to use to alert local journalism departments about the regional conference.

## Financial – Walter Middlebrook

- Account balances of Feb. 28:
  - \$22,840.06: Checking
  - 3,278.91: Scholarship savings
  - \$12,596.29: E\*Trade
  - 5,277.16: PayPal
  - \$43,992.42: Total

Next meeting: 8 a.m. Wednesday, April 9.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 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