

### **SPJ minutes – January 11, 2024, via Zoom**

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

**Absent:** Ro Coppola, Annalise Frank, Nicole Avery Nichols, Jeff Payne, Christine Ferretti

Marty Fischhoff called the meeting to order.

Beth Konrad made a motion to approve the December minutes. The motion was seconded by Kat Stafford and approved by all.

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

- Marty Fischhoff heard from Ginny McCabe, SPJ's Region 4 coordinator. She is working on a Regional Conference for regions 4 & 5, April 12-13 in Cincinnati. They are still looking for a venue. The committee meets again next Monday.

### **Contest – Walter Middlebrook**

- We have split the Broadcast Division back to Radio and TV.
- There will be a price increase from \$35 to \$40 for SPJ members, and from \$50 to \$60 for non-members. The other rates are unchanged.
- We will start charging an entry fee for Journalist of the Year and Young Journalist of the Year.
- Beth Konrad noted that we have always lagged behind what other charge.
- Marty said that last year's judges for Journalist of the Year and Young Journalist of the Year suggested that we might want to create a checklist with the criteria for the awards that future judging panels could use.
- Beth made a motion to approve the increases. Peg McNichols seconded the motion, and it was approved by all.
- It was noted that there is no APME contest this year.
- Marty asked the board to start thinking about potential candidates for Lifetime Achievement honorees. We will distribute a list of past winners.

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

- Marty had asked everyone to share information about that day's virtual program with Kat Stafford, discussing her award-winning series for AP on racial disparities in health care. It was a collaboration between SPJ Detroit and the NY & MI Solutions Journalism Collaborative.
- For Black History Month, Mark Lee and Vincent McCraw were working to revive the Trailblazer awards, honoring local African American journalists who have made a difference in the profession and community. After much discussion, it was decided we should look at this as an in-person event for February 2025. This needs to be a positive, well-planned event. Tracy Wolf said that between now and 2025 we need to start looking for people to honor/recognize and we need to look at past Trailblazer honorees.
- Beth Konrad said that plans for a February JOA event have started to fizzle. She had been in contact with potential panelists, including Wayne State faculty members, Michael Fuhlhage and Stephen Calkins. However, Gary Miles and Gannett/Detroit News leaders thought this was not the time for such a discussion. There was consensus that it didn't make sense to hold a JOA event if the Detroit News and Free Press

weren't participating. Peg suggested looking at the history of the JOA, but Kelley said the timing is not good right now, as not much is known now about the plans for renewing the JOA, and we should revisit later. Beth will thank Wayne State University for its willingness to host the event.

- Monica Williams said that the Solutions Journalism Cooperative, of which she is director, has received a grant to host a media access event for healthcare nonprofits, and 40 such organizations might be interested in attending. She is planning to propose to the collaborative that this event be conducted as a partnership with SPJ Detroit and that a \$500 donation be made to our chapter's scholarship fund. The event is scheduled for March 15 at 9:30 a.m. at the Michigan State Detroit Center on Woodward. Mary Zatina said WDET might be interested in participating, and Rob said the same about WWJ.

#### **Scholarships – Kelley Root**

- Kelley said she will continue to reach out to universities.
- Marcia Hart will provide a flyer regarding scholarship information/guidelines for the chapter to distribute to journalism schools and college newspapers in the region.
- AAJA has announced a \$1,000 fellowship for college journalism students, which would also include a mentoring component.

#### **Banquet – Tracy Wolf**

- Tracy said that initial planning on the annual banquet has begun, and she will update the board later in an email.
- We are still looking at locations/venues. The board was asked to make venue suggestions.

#### **Membership – Rob Davidek**

- Rob is working to reconfigure a membership letter to include contest information.
- Walter Middlebrook said we should mention the very lucrative OfficeMax/Depot discount for SPJ members. There are instructions for receiving the Office Max/Depot discount card on the SPJ website.

#### **Other**

- Beth mentioned that the Michigan Journalist Hall of Fame nominations are due January 15 (hard deadline). The awards banquet will be in April.
- Marty reminded the board that Montclair State's Center for Media Cooperation was holding its annual Collaborative Journalism Summit at Wayne State on May 9-10. The organizers have asked journalists and news media outlets to submit ideas for topics and panels to add to the event's program.

Beth made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and approved by all.

**The meeting was adjourned at about 8:56 a.m.**

Next meeting: Thursday, February 8, 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
- Membership Outreach: **Rob Davidek**, Marty Fischhoff, Walter Middlebrook
- Communication Committee: **Kelley Root**, Rob Davidek
- FOIA: **Beth Konrad**, Ro Coppola, Kelley Root

- Banquet: **Tracy Wolf**, Marcia Hart
  - 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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