

2017 Board Retreat
Saturday, Sept. 15, 2017
Kansas City, Missouri

In attendance: Matt Goldberg, Ellen Gabler, T. Christian Miller, Steven Rich, Lee Zurik, Phil Williams, Andrew Donohue, Jill Riepenhoff, Ziva Branstetter, Cheryl W. Thompson, Matt Apuzzo, Nicole Vap

Attending via Phone: Sarah Cohen

Staff in attendance: Doug Haddix, Stephanie Sinn, Amy Johnston

Meeting called to order at 9:08 a.m.

Previous Minutes

Haddix asked if there questions or corrections regarding the minutes from the June board meeting. There were none. Miller made the motion to approve the minutes, Branstetter seconded. Unanimously approved.

Haddix asked if there were question or corrections regarding the minutes from the July conference call. Goldberg asked that his spelling of his name be corrected. Cohen asked about the confidentiality agreement with DocumentCloud and Temple University. Haddix responded that he had spoken to Aron Pilhofer about this and they had agreed to leave it in. Goldberg made the motion to approve the minutes, Rich seconded. Unanimously approved.

Executive Director Report – Doug Haddix

Budget

Most of IRE's money comes in during the second part of the year. There are no changes to the approved budget.

We only pulled \$20,000 from the endowment earnings this year and ended the year with a surplus of about \$100,000. However, there is about \$19,000 pending in employee staff/benefits payments and server costs to close out the transfer of DocumentCloud to Temple University.

Haddix gave a quick explanation of the fiscal 2018 budget. It does not include any pending grant requests from foundations, so revenue could be higher than forecast.

Apuzzo asked why the budget shows a 20% drop in the conference revenue. Haddix replied that that was a conservative number for budget planning.

Zurik thanked Haddix for the one-page budget.

Riepenhoff asked how much a membership costs IRE. Haddix replied that it costs staff time and mailing fees for the IRE Journal.

Cohen asked about adding an additional fee, so that if we partnered with other groups, there would be an additional fee below the regular IRE membership rate if they want to join IRE. Sinn replied that such arrangements would increase processing time for staff. Zurik noted that we should be careful about offering discounts to other groups because it could cause problems with our members, especially if they are members of the other groups that might get discounts. It could lead to a drop in IRE membership revenue.

Miller asked about the IRE Journal costs. Haddix explained that staff time and expenses have been reallocated to reflect organizational changes. Miller asked if there was a reason the Journal is not more web based. Haddix explained that the magazine is a tangible benefit of IRE membership. Apuzzo asked if we had any idea how many

of the members actually read the Journal. Haddix said we don't have hard data on that and would need to conduct a membership survey to get such information.

Donohue noted that investment income was starting off a little slow this fiscal year and cautioned against relying on the total estimated amount.

Haddix noted that individual donations to IRE increased to \$94,000 in the last fiscal year – up significantly from the previous year. Miller asked how much of that comes from donations at the IRE luncheon. Haddix said that it had been dropping each year and was low this year, so most donations come in from the year-end giving campaign and other efforts.

Zurik asked about the credit card service fee line. Haddix said that has to do with our American Express business account (later in the meeting, information from Heather Feldmann Henry clarified that the line item covers the amount that IRE pays in credit card transaction fees when people pay for conferences, workshops and other events with a credit card). Sinn explained that we use the points from the business account to offset travel cost and how that saves the organization money on travel costs.

Zurik asked about the Board expenses. Haddix said this amount is set aside to help any board member that needs financial assistance getting to meetings. Sinn added that it also covers snacks and a few other meeting expenses for board meetings.

Staff Reports

Haddix said he was very happy with how things were going, since this has been a year of transitions. We have hired a new training director, Mark Walker, who will start Oct. 9. Prior to that, he will be joining us next week in Columbia, MO for the staff retreat.

Currently, we have a compelling mix of people on staff right now. We have Stephanie Sinn, Heather Feldmann Henry and Amy Johnston, who have been with IRE for a number of years and have the institutional knowledge. Then we have people like Sarah Hutchins and Lauren Grandestaff, who have been with IRE 5-6 years, and then several new staff members during the past nine months.

We are changing how we plan the conferences. We now have a team comprised of Haddix, Denise Malan, Sarah Hutchins, Lauren Grandestaff, Cody Winchester and Charles Minshew that will work on content. This will help spread out the work.

Haddix asked if there were further questions about anything in the executive director's report. There were no questions.

Membership

Membership looks stable. We are currently down slightly but still up from 2015.

We are working on making changes to the system in order to collect more data, such as the media type and ethnicity. The data we currently have is not complete, and when foundations ask for this information, we do not have accurate data.

Apuzzo asked if members were not filling that information in when they join. Cohen noted that we don't make members provide that information, and that a lot of times they don't take the time to fill it in.

Williams asked if automatic membership renewal was an option. Staff explained that automatic membership renewal is an option but not many people had taken advantage of that. Williams asked if there was an easier way to set up automatic renewals.

Thompson asked about increasing fees for international memberships. Haddix replied that there had been some talk about that but depending on the members, the current fee might be a lot of money for them.

Training

The training report in the packet includes a list of the trainings we have held so far. Also included is a list of upcoming workshops. We have four trainings lined up already for the spring. If you have any suggestions for large cities where we should hold a workshop, please let Haddix know.

We had more than 50 applications for TNT training. Mark Walker will be leading the TNT training based on his experience.

Miller asked if Latino newsrooms were eligible for the TNT training. Haddix said that they are eligible but he did not think we did any specific outreach to Latino newsrooms. Donohue indicated he could help market this.

Custom training is going well. Sarah Hutchins went to the Kansas high school last week that was in the news for its investigation of a new principal. She met with the students that did the story on their principal.

Haddix noted a Python coding boot camp scheduled for November in Minneapolis. IRE is looking at taking the regular boot camp on the road. We have had an increased demand for the regular data boot camps.

Miller asked if we have considered doing training for college news outlets. Haddix said that in the past we did Campus Coverage. It could be a possibility for a grant-funded project.

Data Services

Charles Minshew has revamped and tightened up processes in the data library. The Dow Jones intern boot camp program went very well this year. We had a large group of 18 students this year and hope to repeat the program next spring.

Editorial

We are looking at doing a major redesign of the IRE Journal. We will also have a new designer, Larry Buchanan of the New York Times. The plan is to have more of a mix of short stories, tips and in-depth pieces. We plan to debut the redesigned Journal in early 2018.

Resource Center

The Research Desk is operating well and has a lot of potential. The contract with Reuters is going well, and we have some other groups that have used the service, including Reveal and Raycom Media. Miller asked if there had been any issues with mistakes regarding the research and what our responsibility would be. Haddix said there had not been any issues and that the indemnity agreement we use for the Research Desk is similar to what we use for the database library data work.

Cohen asked if we use ESRI or QGIS for mapping training. Haddix replied that we recently migrated to QGIS. Rich asked how the change has affected our relationship with ESRI. Sinn noted that they are still exhibiting at the conferences and that the new people at ESRI are interested. Haddix noted that part of the reason we moved to

QGIS is because it's open source, free and can be shared in newsrooms versus Arcview, which has an expensive license.

Williams noted that in the past there have been discussions about the digital rights for publications, like the Reporters Handbook, and asked what the status is of that. Haddix said he had been talking with Lauren Grandestaff about that and that he would look into it.

Strategic Planning – Haddix

We want to start focusing on putting together a strategic plan and we want to get your input and thoughts on things as we start planning.

First exercise: What are the key threats to IRE? Each person should come up with three threats, it can be just a word, a phrase or a sentence.

Board added Post-It notes to the board, and Haddix organized them by themes. Some examples are media decline, cutbacks, economic downturn, etc.

How can IRE be smart about heading off damage to us if these things keep getting worse?

Zurik suggested finding new revenue streams. He noted that down the road we probably won't be able to keep relying on the same media organizations and suggested that we need to be more creative. Apuzzo said that we have to position ourselves so that our value is understood by the people that make the training decision. Donohue noted that we need to make sure that the training is vital. Vap said she thought that research is a great area and that the more we can offer the resource the better it would be. Zurik said he thought that we needed to be more proactive. Just going through the conference list you can see what companies are participating and what companies aren't. We may need to approach those that are there and see how we can be valuable to them.

How do we make sure that IRE is still relevant during future cutbacks?

Branstetter suggested getting the word out about our resources. Once example she cited was the data library. Make sure that people know that when they need data they can contact us or if they need data work that is something we can do.

Donohue said he thought that there is still a percentage that think we are just for investigative reporters.

Cohen noted that if we are worried about attracting new companies, it comes back to diversity. Companies look at that, and it is something we need to improve.

Williams asked about doing a targeted message for people at the higher levels in the companies that would highlight what IRE can do for you.

Zurik suggested getting the word out about the custom data work that we offer and also noted that the cost is very reasonable. Zurik also suggested creating a video about the custom work opportunities. Apuzzo noted that it could show samples of some of the work we have done.

Williams suggested sending a tweet or message out to highlight the work once it has been completed. It could be something along the lines of: "Look at what we can do for you, and it only costs xx."

Branstetter asked about offering something for new conference attendees that would help them take stuff back to their newsrooms, maybe tips on hosting a brownbag or a specific handout. Zurik suggested having a specific

general interest track at the conference. Goldberg asked about selling the panels by highlighting the skills you could learn at the panel. Apuzzo replied that a lot of times what is billed isn't necessarily what you take away from the panel.

Donohue asked how much is this something that can share on social media. Not just sending out a link but telling our story. Vap noted this would allow us to share our story with a wider audience.

Miller asked how often we are able to put ourselves in front of the managers that are higher. Being able to get in front of those people would be great. Maybe offer a session at one of the manager conferences on what IRE can do for them.

Gabler suggested keeping the conference cost low. Several of the board responded that we are already one of the lowest cost conferences around. Discussion ensued on why other conference costs are so high.

It was noted that ONA has a more formalized way that they do recruiting. Cohen asked if we need to look at switching how we handle recruiting since we now have more recruiters attending the conference. Sinn responded that a lot of times, people talking to the recruiters are doing this quietly because they already have jobs. She also noted that there is a difference in how the companies recruit and how they want to set that up.

Apuzzo suggested doing something for the students that attend the conference.

Silicon Valley taking over news training.

Would we be able to compete against someone that is committed to doing online video and that has the digital technology? We should own the investigative training space and we need to be aware of other groups that might be moving in.

Fake news/press freedom group

Vap noted that there is some fear on the management side of things and that they don't want to rock the boat.

Second Exercise: We get someone to commit to giving us \$1 million each year for the next 5 years. Money can't go into the endowment, so what do we spend that money on?

Board added Post-Its to the board with their ideas and Haddix organized into themes to lead the conversation.

Move IRE

Miller said that being in Columbia, Missouri, we aren't in the main media areas. If we had the money, what about moving somewhere else? Currently we aren't part of the coastal media. Cohen responded that she thought that would be a bad idea but suggested having a training center on the coast. Miller noted that younger journalists are starting out at places like BuzzFeed and by moving, we would be taking the mountain to them.

There were several online ideas, such as creating an IRE online school

Rich noted that by providing something like an online school, people who can't attend the conferences or workshops would still be able to get the training.

Lowering costs & providing more training for small newsrooms

Minority and diversity scholarships

It was noted that the minority and diversity issue was also mentioned on the previous board.

Supply investigative reporters to newsrooms that can't afford it.

Williams noted that we would need to be careful doing something like that and reminded everyone that after the Arizona project, IRE was sued, which could be a potential concern.

Miller suggested something like Teach for America but for journalists. This would be something where we could send young reporters to news deserts. These would be young journalist that are fresh out of the school and we would sponsor them to go into these areas and work in newsrooms. Several of the board agreed that this was a good idea. Goldberg suggested that the membership services committee create a task force to look into this.

Create a larger international footprint – An international conference, more international trainings

It was noted that there has been debate in the past as to whether or not we should plant flags in other places.

Thompson said she thought it was a good idea and several others agreed. Miller asked why wouldn't we want to do that. Thompson noted that there is a need for it. Discussion ensued regarding the need for international training.

Other ideas

Williams suggested a hashtag that could be used to highlight good journalism.

Apuzzo asked about embedding people in newsrooms for a certain amount of time so that they can do a bit of training and help get a feel for the newsroom. After a certain amount of time they would come back or move to a different newsroom. Haddix noted that we have started doing webinars for past TNT winners, which allows us to continue to reach all of the newsrooms that we have been in.

Cohen suggested trying to improve the quality of speaking at the conference and maybe doing something similar to a TED talk training.

Donohue asked about doing a study to find out what the needs of our members. Miller suggested doing a listening session at the conference, where they can hear more about the needs from members themselves.

Cohen suggested holding seminars around the country in libraries and other public places, to help educate the public about what we do.

Meeting adjourned for lunch at 11:43 p.m. with the plan to resume at 1 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 1:12 p.m. All present except Steven Rich.

Contest Committee – Jill Riepenhoff

We have a really great contest committee this year, which is also very diverse with four judges of color.

The proposal in the packet is one that I worked with Lauren Grandestaff to put together. This is what we think will work best. The first part of the proposal is to make innovation a single category. There isn't anything in the rules that say it has to be split into size categories. The second part of the proposal is to split broadcast and print into four categories:

Current broadcast breakdown

1. Network syndicated
2. Market size 1-20
3. Market size 21+

Proposed broadcast breakdown

1. Network/syndicated
2. Market size 1-20
3. Market size 21-50
4. Market size 50+

Current Print breakdown

1. Large print: 350,000 circulation+ (largest single day including digital replica)
Entries in this category last year included the Tampa Bay Times and Minneapolis Star Tribune (metro papers) competing with national publications (USA Today, AP, New York Times, Wash Post, WSJ, ProPublica, etc.)
2. Medium print: 151K-349K
Last year's entries included Sun Sentinel (the smallest) through Dallas Morning News. Others in this category: Indy Star, The Oregonian, Salt Lake, Arkansas, San Jose, KC Star, Pittsburg Post-Gazette, Milwaukee, Cleveland, NY Post, Boston Globe, Newsday, Arizona Republic, Atlanta, Philly Inquirer, Houston and a bunch of statewide publications in Texas, Alabama and Oklahoma (The Frontier).
3. Small print: Less than 151K
Last year's entries ranged from the Southeast Missourian (11,000 circ) to the Cinci Enquirer (144k)

Others in this group included Austin, Charlotte, Miami, Omaha, Raleigh, Virginian Pilot and San Antonio. On the smaller side, there was The Desert Sun, Belleville, both Charleston papers, The Patriot-News, Dayton.

Proposed Print breakdown:

1. **National/International News:** newspapers with **+400k** circulation (largest single day, including digital replica); wire services; network or syndicated TV; magazines, weeklies and online-only media with a national **and/or international** audience and a **focus on multiple issues and beats with a staff of 40 or more**. For partnerships or collaborations, please enter by the largest organization involved.
2. **Multistate/Regional News:** newspapers with **+399k-250k** circulation (largest single day, including digital replica); Top 20 television markets; magazines, weeklies and online-only media with a **multistate, or regional audience and a focus on multiple issues and beats with a staff of 20-40 employees**. For partnerships or collaborations, please enter by the largest organization involved.
3. **State/Metro News:** newspapers with **249k-100k** circulation (largest single day, including digital replica); **21-50** television markets; magazines, weeklies and online-only media with a **state, metro, or local audience and a focus on multiple issues and beats with a staff of 6-20 employees**. For partnerships or collaborations, please enter by the largest organization involved.
4. **Hyper-local/Single-issue News:** newspapers with **<99k** circulation (largest single day, including digital replica); **Below 50** television markets; magazines, weeklies, and online-only organizations with a **hyper-local audience or a single-issue focus with a staff of five or fewer employees**. For partnerships or collaborations, please enter by the largest organization involved.

Apuzzo asked if this would add more awards. Riepenhoff said it would be a wash since we would be changing the innovation category to a single award.

Donohue said it seemed like there are some regional categories that are being lumped into larger categories and asked why we don't redraw the line. Riepenhoff said that is what they are doing by adding a fourth tier.

Cohen noted that the lowest level was geared for those very small newsrooms, and then there are really two mid-levels. The small category is for the very small newsroom. Riepenhoff responded that IRE does training for the small newsrooms and this gives them a place to compete.

Donohue said he thought making the difference between the metro and the multistate was going to be very difficult.

Apuzzo asked why we couldn't have a small top tier and have more people competing in the middle.

Cohen noted that the point is to encourage people to submit their work, and that is why we have the different categories. Part of the point is so that people feel like they have a category to enter. A lot of the regional could be online only, and some of the statewide could go other places. This is a way for us to make sure people know where they fit for the contest.

Donohue asked if we know there is a lack of people applying. Riepenhoff responded that yes, numbers were down last year, and once you go through the judging process, you see the gaps.

Vap said she could only speak for the broadcast side of things but thought that having four categories was a good idea.

Riepenhoff went over all the different award categories and talked about how it is a wide net.

Cohen said that when they reviewed the contest size groups in 2010, they didn't have any place to put online only. The attempt is to find a way to let those people enter. We previously had a committee that looked at this for years before we made changes last time.

Donohue asked Riepenhoff to talk more about the staff size verses the circulation. Riepenhoff said staff size is for online entries since they don't have circulation size.

Branstetter asked if we had talked to other organizations to find out what they do. Riepenhoff said they had contacted ONA but hadn't heard back.

Donohue said his concern was that it could be really confusing and asked if there was a way to make it simpler. Riepenhoff said there isn't a way to make this simpler, it's whatever the circulation levels are or staff levels.

Thompson said she was having some trouble with the way the categories were named.

Apuzzo said in looking at the number of entries for the categories, this seems solvable, since there aren't a huge number of entries. The other thing is there are a limited number of organizations that apply for these, why not just adjust the numbers on the categories that we already have. Donohue asked if there was evidence that the categories are keeping people from applying. Riepenhoff replied that they are trying to encourage more people to apply.

Discussion ensued about whether four print categories were needed.

Cohen said that they need to not think about what has happened but what we want to happen.

Gabler said she thought it was weird to split the multistate and regional. Riepenhoff said she didn't agree because there is a difference in the resources. Branstetter noted that there has always been a difference.

Riepenhoff noted that this is one of the few contests that has categories for investigative reporting.

Zurik reminded everyone that the contest committee came up with this recommendation and that it's based on their experience. Thompson replied that it was only part of the contest committee.

Gabler said she had heard from editors that it's confusing and that she is concerned this will be even more confusing.

Goldberg noted that at this point the options are to adopt it as is, ask the committee to come back with different title and a few other change, or we can adopt some of it and make changes to other parts. He went on to say that he would prefer the committee to take a look at this again and come back to the board. It seems to just be an issue with the print categories.

Williams said he was having flashbacks to this discussion last year and that he thought they had gotten away from the broadcast and print. He said he was confused by the discussion where they changed the rules. Cohen said that the print and broadcast is just short hand.

Rich joined the meeting at 1:50 pm.

Williams had some concerns about the difference in the market sizing.

Donohue asked if it was worth coming up with a statement about the type of work they wanted to see. Cohen replied that if they are going to do something like that they need to survey the members. Branstetter said they need to survey the members for other information anyway.

Gabler asked about not allowing cross filing, where they can apply for more than once category. Riepenhoff said they could do that. Zurik pointed out that it could hurt revenue. Cohen reminded everyone that the contest committee can move stories into different categories.

Goldberg asked if everyone agreed that making innovation a single category made sense. Donohue asked if they could talk about that.

Riepenhoff explained that the innovation category has moved a lot. Two years ago they received entries that weren't clear on what the innovated part was, so this year they added the question, what was innovative about the project. Most of the answers were that they created a database.

Cohen noted that many people applied for the category as a safety and that there wasn't a lot of innovation.

Gabler said that when she judged that category it caused problems among the judges. She then asked if it was possible to move that into another category. Several of the board said that they didn't think Gannett would be OK with that and would not recommend it.

Cohen and Gabler both asked about getting rid of the award. Several of the board said that they didn't think that was a good idea. Miller suggested that part of the problem could have been that it was sliced too small.

Goldberg asked the group if the consensus was to change it to one category and for the broadcast, add a fourth category. Does anyone oppose this?

Vap said she fully supported it. Apuzzo asked if there were any broadcasters that opposed this. No one did.

Williams asked if they were doing 1-25 or 1-20 market sizes for the largest broadcast category. Goldberg said let's do 1-20 and the others agreed.

Goldberg then suggested that they have the committee go back and look at the print categories and come back with a proposal for the board.

Discussion ensued regarding making a statement about the type of work that we want to see.

Motion – Accept the first two suggestions and make the innovation award one category. Use the proposed breakdown for broadcast and request the committee to submit a new proposal for print.

Goldberg made the motion and Branstetter seconded it. Unanimously approved.

Cohen asked if there was something they could do to encourage more small news organizations to submit work. She said she would love to see more submissions and more diversity in the entries. Miller suggested using the new newspaper partnership to help market to the small newspapers.

Diversity Effort in Membership

Self-Identification Survey

Once we have completed updates to the website, we will be sending a blast out to our members asking them to self-identify. The thought is to ask the members to go into their account to update their own information so that we don't have to go in and do this for every member.

The plan is to put together a well-worded email that will be sent out the membership asking for their help with this.

Goldberg said he didn't think any of this needed to be required, that we just want to ask them for the information. Zurik asked if we can make it required but give them the option to say they don't want to share the information.

Sinn noted that they needed to decide how they wanted to do this, so that the website update could be completed.

Goldberg asked Cohen if there was some issue with asking people to identify their gender. Cohen said that in the past we haven't wanted to get into this since it is a sensitive issue. Branstetter said she didn't think gender was a huge issue for IRE.

Goldberg asked if they wanted to make it a requirement but include the option not to identify. Haddix clarified that they were currently discussing gender and said his recommendation was to not make it required. Sinn noted that currently we do not require gender or ethnicity. She went on to talk about how the new ethnicity options would be listed.

Williams asked if funders ever asked about the gender break down. Haddix replied that funders typically ask about ethnicity and media type and occasionally ask about the staff breakdown.

Discussion ensued regarding the wording for gender.

Miller asked about the media type. Sinn replied that we are working on moving that on the website so that it's easier for people to access that. She also noted that we can make that a required field. The consensus among the board was to make media type a required field. Discussion ensued about the media types that are currently listed.

Sinn noted that with revamped website, members will be required to update their password and she asked if we want to make them update their information at the same time. Goldberg replied that we do want to do that at the same time.

Diversity Member Outreach & Partnerships

There has been discussion about collaborating with other organization to help increase diversity. Cheryl recently attended the NABJ conference and found out afterward that we could have had a booth at the conference.

Zurik suggested offering a deal where is someone is at a conference for another organization, and they sign-up for IRE membership, we give them a discount on membership. Goldberg asked if they wanted to agree to do something like that.

There was discussion about other organizations that have upcoming conferences that we could possibly collaborate with:

NABJ (Detroit) August 1-5 (Detroit Marriott at Renaissance Center)
 AAJA (Houston) August 8-11 (Houston Marriott Marquis)
 NAHJ (Miami 2018) - dates not available yet, website not published yet

Cohen noted that in the past there had been talk about IRE collaborating with other organizations to hold conferences.

Outreach to HBCU

Thompson noted that in the past we have held watchdog workshops at HBCU's.

Zurik asked if we could set a goals to hold x number of workshops at HBCU's. Haddix replied that that when doing something like that we have to make sure that it falls within the parameters of the grant. He went on to say that we could partner with other organizations, as long as it's meeting the requirements for the grant.

Diversity Task force

Goldberg said that he had asked Ziva and the governance committee to look at this issue. We know that we need to infuse diversity into the board. Ziva would oversee the taskforce to identify people that we think might be good candidates for the board.

Branstetter said that she felt strongly that they do not want to put people on the board just to be putting people on the board and that they need to be intentional.

Goldberg said he would like Ziva to be the only board member on this, and that he thinks they need to make sure it is a diverse group. His hopes are that the group will make some great recommendations.

Apuzzo said that it seems a bit weird to have the board pushing candidates. Goldberg said this is more of a way of identifying talent and encouraging them to become more involved in the organization. He went on to say that Ziva will be involved solely with identifying talent and getting them involved in committees, etc. This is an effort to help find people that we need to encourage to get more involved.

Discussion ensued about diversity effort and involvement.

Goldberg said that they should make the task force a little bit recruiting and a lot of research. Branstetter suggested getting information from people and then coming back to the board. She also suggested make some

calls to find out what roadblocks there are. Goldberg suggested that she do that and then come back to the board.

Diversity – Contest

What can we do to increase contest entries among diverse journalists?

Thompson replied that we could move the categories. Goldberg asked if we needed to do some newsroom outreach.

Zurik reminded everyone that this is a multi-year issue and that they need to continue doing outreach.

Thompson noted that this is a big problem and that it is a problem in newsrooms.

Meeting broke at 3 pm. for a 15-minute break.

Member Services – Lee Zurik

The member services committee had a call a couple of weeks ago. We want to formalize the student sponsorship program that usually happens in September. Our goal is to make sure that we do this regularly every September.

One thing that we would like to start is a conference diversity scholarship fund. This would be a scholarship to bring people of diversity to the conference. The suggestion is to make the pitch at the 2018 awards luncheon at the conference. The fund would run all year and people would be able to give throughout the year. I think we as a board should raise enough money to give one away for the next conference.

Cohen said they need to make sure that we aren't pulling too much away from everything else. Haddix said he agreed with Lee about doing a dedicated thing at the award luncheon and thought that more people would give.

Miller said that just to be clear, the pitch at the award luncheon would be specifically for this fund. Zurik replied yes.

Another suggestion is that when doing the end of year fund raising drive that we give people the option to donate to a specific fund. Williams noted that there are a lot of different funds that people can donate to.

Zurik asked if we could have a section on the website that list diversity efforts that are being made. Gabler noted that this would help display all the things that have already been done. Branstetter offered to help with this. Goldberg said he didn't see any reason they couldn't do this.

Cohen noted that Mark had tried to do this last year and had started a list. Haddix said he would check with Horvit about this.

Zurik asked for ideas about who should make the pitch at the conference and suggested that it be a very dynamic person. Haddix asked for recommendations from the conference committee.

Conferences – Stephanie Sinn

Locations

Everyone has a map that lists the cities where the conferences will fit based on current numbers. You can see that we have a few more options for the CAR conference than we do for IRE. The map shows the CAR cities in

green and the IRE cities in red. The list of cities has notes that include potential issues, such as limited hotel options, expensive and other potential issues.

We have been looking at doing West, Central and East. In looking at the West, we have limited options and the hotel rates are going to be higher. Los Angeles only has one hotel that would fit our group, and the hotel might be a tight fit.

There are options for getting into DC, however the things to remember about DC is that we have a lot of people that commute, so there could be attrition issues or we might have to pay for space. Currently we are too big for the hotels in Boston but one option would be to split between two hotels. Another issue is the prices at the hotels.

The first thing that we need to decide is what room rates are you comfortable with. Some of the bigger cities are going to have higher rates.

Thompson asked about Atlanta. Sinn said we would have to be split between a couple floors.

Cohen asked if it was time to reconsider if they wanted to keep doing the awards at the luncheon or if they want to do something different. Sinn noted that we would still be on the hook for food & beverage fees and that we get sponsorship for the luncheon. It was also noted that while there are people that don't like the luncheon, there are a lot of people who do like it.

Cohen asked if we have gotten too big for Philadelphia. Sinn said she had crossed that off the list since there were some issues last time we were there. She said we could potentially do two different hotels there.

Apuzzo asked if by not doing the luncheon if that would change the hotels available to us. Thinking outside the box, is there a way to still get the IRE conference feel and get rid of the luncheon.

Cohen asked about flipping the conferences and having IRE in the spring and CAR in the summer. Sinn replied that it would change the room prices.

Cohen said wanted to hear what Sinn thought was reasonable and asked her to remind everyone what the pricing had been the last couple of years and what the pricing is for the coming years.

Conference hotel rates:

2017	2018	2019
CAR in Jacksonville – \$159	CAR in Chicago – \$199	CAR in Newport Beach – \$204
IRE in Phoenix – \$189	IRE in Orlando – \$166* <i>*Includes trolley ticket</i>	IRE in Houston - \$205

Sin said that ideally, we need to look at locations for 2020 & 2021.

Donohue ask what cities would be possible if we went up to \$250. Sinn said that San Diego and Boston would be couple of the cities that we could look at.

Branstetter asked if it was possible to lower the registration costs if the hotel rate goes over \$250.

Zurik asked if we go to one of the more expensive cities if it would be possible to line up a cheaper hotel. Sinn said we might be able to do that for maybe 100 nights, however we have to fill a certain number of nights.

Haddix reminded everyone that the economy has gotten better so the hotels don't need us because there's more association and convention business again.

Gabler asked about using event or conference centers. Sinn said conference centers will cost us more because we can't negotiate as much. With hotels, all of the services are through one vendor, with conference centers there are a lot of different vendors.

Apuzzo asked if by going to a convention center and taking more of a hit, if it would allow our members to get more of a discount on their travel and hotel. Sinn noted that by going to a convention center, we would take a big hit on internet and other costs. Haddix noted that the conferences are a significant portion of our revenue, so if we start taking big hits, we will have to make cuts other places.

Sinn asked if the board considered Denver and Las Vegas western cities. They replied that they did. Sinn then asked if they wanted to go back to Phoenix in 2027. The board replied that they did and several noted that they really like the 2017 hotel.

Sinn then asked about centrally located cities. Some of the cities suggested were Indianapolis, Chicago and New Orleans. Several people said they really enjoyed being in New Orleans and that they would like to go back. Sinn asked if they considered Texas in the central area. Everyone agreed. Sinn replied that we have outgrown San Antonio unless we split between two hotels. Several board members asked about Austin, and Sinn responded that it's currently too expensive.

Sinn asked about eastern cities and the board agreed on Atlanta, Boston and Baltimore. Sinn said she would have to check on Boston and Baltimore.

Haddix shared the IRE conference registration numbers from 2002 to 2017. Discussion ensued regarding the cause of the jump in numbers.

Sinn said that the feedback from the board helped give her some ideas for IRE conferences and that she would reach out for proposals.

Sinn then asked if there were any cities that the board really like for the CAR conference. They suggested Pittsburgh, Milwaukee, Kansas City, Columbus, Nashville and Phoenix.

Cohen said she thought Denver would be good along with Louisville. Sinn noted that in Louisville some of the international members had problems getting flights in and that it was something we should keep in mind.

Conference Pricing

The last sheet that was handed out has the conference registration prices from 2014-2017. A couple of things to keep in mind is that currently the food & beverage is manageable. For 2019 though we need to look at how we are going to cover that. I don't want it to come as a surprise to you when 2019 comes around.

Riepenhoff asked if next year in Newport Beach, to meet the food & beverage, if we raise the registration rates could we provide coffee. Sinn replied that on average right now coffee is running \$90-\$100 per gallon before service charges and taxes. We already do a welcome reception and the Phil Meyer reception; we could offer a luncheon or something. We have discussed that in the past.

Haddix pointed out that Sinn was saying is that those are the costs, and we need to make sure that IRE is recouping the cost. Branstetter said she thought this is the most fiscally responsible way to recoup the cost.

Sinn said that right now the IRE & CAR conference registration fees are the same. The idea is to increase the CAR registration to \$300, which is an increase of \$15 and increase IRE registration to \$310, which is an increase of \$25.

Apuzzo asked if it could be \$299 rather than a straight up \$300.

Zurik asked why we need to do an increase this year. Sinn replied that the idea is to do two small increases rather than one big increase. Zurik said he likes that the conference is affordable and noted that when you get over \$300, that crosses a line in his mind. He went on to say that he didn't want to increase it just to increase it.

Goldberg noted that the idea is that we are going to have to raise it when other prices are higher. Apuzzo asked if the idea was to raise it and use any extra for the 2019 conference. Haddix responded that we aren't sure if there will be an overage in 2019.

Cohen noted that more employers seem to pay for people to attend the CAR conference verses the IRE conference, where it seems like more people have to pay their own way.

Zurik asked what we thought the labor charge would be. Sinn said in Philly labor was around \$20,000 and that was with three hands-on rooms. Now we have 6 hands-on rooms, so it will be even higher.

Cohen said she was reluctant to question the staff about the pricing. She noted they had already looked at the pricing and that they work hard to keep the prices low. Several of the board agreed with her.

Apuzzo and Zurik said they were inclined to keep it under \$300 for as long as possible.

Goldberg asked if the consensus was to keep it at \$299 for both the CAR and the IRE conferences. Apuzzo replied yes.

Sinn said she wanted to have options for 2020 and 2021 conferences ready for the board by first quarter next year.

Code of Conduct – Matt Goldberg/Matt Apuzzo

Prior to the IRE conference in New Orleans, we came up with a code of conduct that we call the IRE Principles.

IRE Principles

Investigative Reporters & Editors is committed to providing a friendly, safe and welcoming environment for all, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical ability, age, appearance or religion.

IRE supports vigorous debate and welcomes disagreement, while maintaining a civil and respectful community. Anyone who feels they have been discriminated against, harassed, threatened, intimidated or has other concerns should contact IRE's executive director or IRE staff members.

IRE may take any action it deems appropriate to deal with those who violate our principles, including exclusion from our events, forums and listservs. Confidential complaints and concerns can be made in person or sent to IREhelp@ire.org or left via voicemail or text at 573-880-5473.

Apuzzo noted that he wasn't aware that this existed and that it was such a big issue. He went on to say that, he has been approached by some colleagues who thought IRE needed a code of conduct for the CAR conference.

Haddix noted that we do have a code of conduct for both conferences but that it's call IRE Principles. He also noted that we have had several different people that have raised the question about a code of conduct for IRE.

Riepenhoff asked if people have used this. Haddix replied that people have been using it.

Board Account Fund – Jill Riepenhoff

The idea is to create a fund, with donations from current and past board members, to help board members who might not be able to afford to travel to the board meetings. By asking current and past members to donate, this would ensure that we are not using IRE money or taking money away from IRE for this fund.

If we are interested in doing this, we would also need to set up a process to vet requests. To be clear the fund would not be used to fund a trip to the conference.

Goldberg noted that the idea is that it would be managed by IRE and that donations would be tax deductible.

Gabler asked if we already had money set aside for this. Haddix replied that there is money set aside for this but so far it hadn't been used. Gabler said she worried about hitting people up for money too often. Vap noted that it would be more of a tangible thing.

Cohen said that it sounded more like an operating budget thing and noted that they already try to keep the cost of running for the board low. We only meet in person twice a year. She went on to say that she wasn't sure having a separate fund was the right thing to do.

Donohue noted that it is already in the budget and said he was not sure they should add another fund.

Cohen said that she thought going to the past board members, who have already paid their own way, would be taking away from other funds.

Zurik said he didn't think it should be up to the executive director to decide who on the board could use the fund. Branstetter suggested that the board president should make the decision. Miller said he didn't think it should matter who makes the decision, be it the executive director or the board president.

Cohen said what she was hearing was that they needed to increase the line item and come up with some guidelines for using the money. Miller replied that he felt like it was an honor system.

Goldberg said that since they don't have any experience with this, that he thought they should keep things the way they are. Miller replied that he thought there needed to be a point person for requests. Haddix suggested that it be the board president. Miller then suggested that the vice president be the point person if the president makes the request.

Term Limits – Goldberg

This item is born out of the concerns of some of the board.

Zurik said that one of the things they have discussed was creating movement and diversity on the board. People knowing that at least two or three seats were going to be opening up on the board might encourage people to run.

Cohen noted that one complaint they heard when they were looking at changing the Articles of Incorporation was that there is too much turnover, since very few people run for more than three two-year terms.

Gabler suggested having the incumbents declare earlier so that members would know how many seats would be open and how many people are running for re-election.

Apuzzo noted that many people don't know about the process or deadline unless they are looking for it. Gabler responded that it's part of the board's responsibly to make sure people know about this.

Branstetter said she thought a 6-year limit was good, and that if the candidate declared earlier that it would be great.

Cohen noted that this would require a change to the by-laws and that this would be a huge change that they should make sure not to take it lightly.

Goldberg noted that there did not seem to be a consensus.

Riepenhoff said that if nothing else, she thought they should consider limiting the terms for the contest committee.

Cohen said that if they wanted to do make these changes, they need to research it and start publicizing it to the members because it's a big change.

Branstetter said she thought having the incumbent board members declare earlier was a good idea. Several of the board agreed with her. Goldberg suggested having the incumbents declare a month earlier than the other candidates did.

Cohen reiterated that she thought they needed to do some research on this rather than just deciding to do it and noted that they could always have a call about it later on.

Gabler asked if it could just be a gentleman's rule that the incumbents would declare earlier.

Goldberg said it would be something they could do that wouldn't necessarily require names, it could be just getting a general consensus. He went on to say he didn't think it would hurt to have the board president put something out to the membership about it. Gabler thought that they might want to make sure the person putting the information out isn't someone that is running for re-election.

Riepenhoff asked that everyone make more of an effort to recruit for the contest committee.

Meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

2017 Board Retreat
Sunday, Sept. 16, 2017
Kansas City, MO

In attendance: Matt Goldberg, Ellen Gabler, T. Christian Miller, Steven Rich, Lee Zurik, Phil Williams, Andrew Donohue, Jill Riepenhoff, Ziva Branstetter, Cheryl W. Thompson, Matt Apuzzo, Nicole Vap

Not in attendance: Ellen Gabler, Sarah Cohen

Staff in attendance: Doug Haddix, Stephanie Sinn, Amy Johnston

Meeting called to order at 9:11 a.m.

Endowment Committee – Andy Donohue

Documents were sent to everyone with this information. There are few questions that I need to discuss with Heather. Things are a little low right now but we are not concerned given that it is early in the fiscal year.

Williams suggested that given the current environment it might be a good time to do a fund raising drive. Haddix said he had been talking with Chris Vachon about this. Williams said he would pass along some information he has to Haddix.

Conference Committee – Nicole Vap/ Cheryl W. Thompson

The conference committee met and went over the evaluations from the IRE conference. The biggest complaint from attendees was the Wi-Fi. Another major complaint was that several of the panels didn't go well and seemed to have technical issues.

We also analyzed all of the speaker reviews and compiled a list of the sessions that had low marks on the evaluations. Thompson went over some of the reviews. Haddix cautioned that response rates typically are very low for evaluations, so they should not be taken as scientific, instead as more anecdotal information.

Sinn talked about the room monitors and their responsibilities to help troubleshoot during sessions. Goldberg suggested putting something in the front of each of the rooms that listed bullet point items.

Other concerns expressed were that women panelist aren't getting a chance to speak as much as the male panelists and many panels were the same each year. Goldberg asked if it would be beneficial to expand the committee so that there are more people to help line up the panels and they could then help give some direction to those that are speaking. Thompson said she thought each panel needed a moderator.

Apuzzo noted that panels need to be focused on specific take-aways and suggested that maybe we need to change the format of the panels. Rather than one person speaking for 10 minutes and then the next person has 10 minutes, maybe we need to be more active with the panels. Goldberg replied that maybe we need to do a bit of both.

Several of the board agreed that there is a need for tipsheets. Thompson noted that one of the best panels had tipsheets.

Vap remarked that Cohen previously had a great idea of doing something like a TED talk training.

Miller said he thought that it was all good but in reality these are a bunch of working journalist and that it's a lot of extra work.

Goldberg said that they are doing better but that they need to get this done earlier. Vap replied that by getting done earlier they can make sure there is diversity. Haddix said the staff is working on a new schedule and will start posting things sooner than we have in the past. Sinn noted that in the past we have waited on the last-minute stuff, like the Pulitzers to be announced, so that we can include some of the winners in sessions.

Apuzzo asked how the conference committee can get more involved in coming up with panels early on and what the involvement the committee has with that. Vap said they started meeting in January to put together teams. Donohue asked if they could start now.

Riepenhoff that they also try to included award winners and finalists from the IRE contest in the panels.

Goldberg said he had heard from several people that they would like to have more non-journalists as speakers.

Miller asked to hear from the staff. Sinn said she thought that having moderators is a good idea but reminded everyone that would mean moderators for 150 panels.

Rich said he thought it was important that one person on the panel know what the panel is. Williams said it seemed like the simple solution was to create a team. Goldberg said the easiest thing to do would be to create a sample panel that others can look at and use as a template. Branstetter suggested making a video that can be shared with the speakers. Sinn noted that they already send out information on the best practices, however it comes back to getting them to watch the video.

Apuzzo said that they need to strongly encourage people to have a tipsheet. Thompson asked about imposing a deadline for the speakers to submit their tipsheets. Sinn replied that we could do that but they won't necessarily have them done in time for the deadline.

Haddix noted that these are all really great ideas, and reminded everyone that one issue is that it's really hard to get people to commit to doing some of this.

Apuzzo asked about having people speak on multiple panel sessions. Haddix replied that we do have people that speak on multiple sessions. There are a lot of talented people and we want to have diversity on the panels.

Sinn said that she had talked with Marc Emerson, from NMR, about possibly doing something where there is a desk for speakers to preload their presentations to make sure that everything works in advance.

Donohue said that they heard some complaints about people that didn't know how to use a PC because they only use a Mac and vice versa. Rich said he had heard about the same issue with the hands-on classes. Sinn replied that we have both PC and Mac labs, and that they could let the trainers know.

Riepenhoff said that we need to make sure people are using IRE's data and not their own.

Vap noted that these were all good ideas and asked people to email suggestions to the committee.

Goldberg led discussion about keynote speaker ideas. Some of the top names were Jeff Bezos, Scott Pelley, Kevin Young, Dean Baquet, Marty Baron, Jorge Ramos, Jose Diaz-Balart and Jake Tapper.

There was also some discussion about asking John Oliver to tape something that could be used during the awards luncheon.

Discussion ensued about what members want to get out of the keynote.

Goldberg proposed getting rid of the head table and do a smaller stage so that award winners can come up to accept their award. Several said they thought it was a good idea.

Donohue left at 10:25 a.m.

Public Engagement – Phil Williams

The first thing I wanted to talk about is the Don Bolles Medal. I was disappointed that I could not be there to award this for the first time. It has been suggested that one of the board members or staff fly to Mexico to present the award to Miroslava Breach Velducea's family.

Goldberg noted that there was a lot of positive feedback from the award and noted another fantastic thing was that he ran into someone afterward who had worked with Don Bolles, and this person texted Don's son about the award.

We have had some discussions about how to build on that that positive feedback. One of the things we have talked about is writing up information about the award so that the staff can create a webpage that will include past winner. The webpage would also have a way for people to submit nominations for the award. Haddix noted that the page has already been created and has the past winner listed.

The next step would be to make a push on social media and various other news organizations to let people know that we are accepting nominations. The deadlines that are looking at be around the same time as the contest deadline.

Also last year we set the precedent that we would pay to have someone come and accept the award. The question is do we need to look at setting up funding for that. Goldberg agreed that they should look at funding for that. Haddix suggesting getting someone to help fund that. Miller said he thought it seemed like a lot of work to create a fund for a few thousand dollars to bring someone in.

Goldberg reminded everyone that this is not a required award; the board only awards it when they feel it's merited.

New Business – Goldberg

Goldberg asked if there was any new business.

Vap said that would like to look at different way for the board to keep up with each other and cut down the number of emails. She suggested a Slack channel or something similar.

Miller replied that he was OK with continuing to use email and Thompson agreed with him. Haddix said that IRE has a Slack channel and he could ask Sarah Hutchins to set that up for the board.

Rich suggested separate channels for the committees.

Goldberg asked if there were any other new items. No one else had any other items.

Goldberg then said he wanted to circle back to the exercise that the board had done yesterday and asked Haddix what his thoughts were regarding threats to IRE.

Haddix responded that he thought the threats that the board had gravitated to, such as changes in the industry, cutbacks, etc., are threats to IRE but he also thinks that there is opportunity there.

He noted that we have a few large grants that only have a few years left before they end, which is causing him some anxiety. He went on to say that, he would be working with Chris Vachon early on in her tenure to address those.

Haddix also asked the board to think more about how they could help with fundraising in the future.

Discussion ensued about board making asks for donations.

Williams asked if there was a document or something that Haddix could give to the board that highlights the value of IRE, which in turn could be shared with people they approach for money.

Goldberg asked for the staff's thoughts. Sinn noted that we are going through changes with new staff and figuring out how to make that work and that with the new growth, there's a learning curve.

Goldberg thanked the staff for all of their hard work and noted that the board was very happy with the work Haddix has been doing.

Branstetter noted that it had been a great board meeting. Several of the board agreed with her and said they enjoyed being in Kansas City. Sinn reminded everyone that the board retreat could be held anywhere, and if they wanted to hold the meeting in a different city next year, they could.

The board thanked Goldberg for his work.

Goldberg made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 a.m. Apuzzo seconded. Unanimously approved.