

**2018 Board of Directors Retreat
St. Louis, MO
Saturday, October 20, 2018**

In attendance: Cheryl W. Thompson, Lee Zurik, Jill Riepenhoff, T. Christian Miller, Nicole Vap, Matt Goldberg, Ziva Branstetter, Matt Dempsey, Jennifer LaFleur, Steven Rich, Norberto Santana Jr., Jodi Upton

In attendance via video: Matt Apuzzo

Staff in attendance: Doug Haddix, Stephanie Klimstra, Heather Feldmann Henry, Amy Johnston

Thompson called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

President's Update: Cheryl W. Thompson

In the packet, there is a job description for board members. Highlights from the document are:

- As board members, it's our responsibility to donate.
- It is very important to maintain confidentiality.
- The staff's role is to implement things. We need to make sure we don't cross that line because the staff doesn't cross it to do our job.
- Working within the committees, it's important to keep track of things. Committee chairs, please make sure you are putting notes and things in the Google Drive folder that Doug and I created for the committees.

Other things:

- Doug & I had a long conversation with Sarah Glover and others from NABJ. From that conversation, we have agreed that IRE will help with sessions at the NABJ conference.
- We also had a conversation with John Yearwood, asking if IRE might collaborate in some way with Bellingcat.

Previous Minutes:

Haddix asked if there were any questions or corrections that needed to be made to the minutes from the previous meeting. Rich noted that his name was listed incorrectly and asked that it be corrected.

Motion: Approve the minutes with the correction to Steven's name.

Motion made by Goldberg and seconded by Miller. Motion unanimously approved.

Executive Director's Report: Doug Haddix

Membership

- We reached a new membership high of 5,991.
- In preparation of possibly reaching a new high of 6,000, we have some social media and other communication ready to push out if we cross that threshold.

Upton asked if Haddix knew what the churn rate is and how that compares to other organizations. Haddix replied that he did not have that information and that he knows many other organizations have seen a decline in membership.

- Haddix said one area for improvement is marketing and promotion, so a part-time position is being added. That will help with getting the word out and promoting events. Once we have someone in that role with a marketing focus, that should help reduce our churn.
- We can do a better job with membership retention, as well, he said.

Training

- We are currently in the process of hiring a fourth trainer and hope to have this position filled by January.
- This will begin as a two-year position, given the funding we received from the Arnold Foundation. However, we anticipate lining up other funding to extend this position beyond two years.
- Thanks to Lee Zurik for all of his work with the Arnold Foundation, which made this position possible.

Riepenhoff asked if there was a particular skill set that the trainer needed to have. Haddix replied that he and Denise Malan were still working out the details for the position.

Klimstra noted that we are also in the process of filling a 30-hour part-time position that will assist with events, logistics and accounting.

Zurik asked if there were restrictions as to where the person for the part-time position would need to live. Klimstra responded that since it's a contract position, they could live anywhere.

- We have added three additional boot camps and several additional trainings this year. Kudos to the staff for their work on those.
- With the funding we received from the Park Foundation, we were able to award 10 fellowships for each of the additional boot camps. We can now go back to the foundation and say that we were able to provide training for 30 people using the money you gave us.
- We recently had a conversation with the program manager at the Park Foundation, who encouraged us to apply for \$50,000 next year.
- We have been talking with Jodi Upton about offering a boot camp for educators.
- The new positions that we are adding are going to be critical in efforts to continue the growth of the organization.
- We have launched the IRE-Mizzou workshops in September. These workshops are held on the Mizzou campus and we had about 45 people attend the first workshop. The next workshop will be held on Monday morning. Jodi Upton, Matt Dempsey and Jennifer LaFleur will be speaking.

Vap said she had met a couple of students who had attended and that they had really enjoyed the first workshop.

LaFleur noted that she was trying to implement something like that at American University. Haddix replied that this is something that could be replicated on any campus.

Website

- We expect to make the transition to the new website in November.
- The site will be down during the transition, which may take a few days.

Thompson asked many days we anticipate the transition taking. Klimstra responded that it could take 1-3 days. She noted that she is still testing the new site and that everything looks good.

Branstetter asked if we will be notifying members about the site being down. Klimstra said that she and Haddix are working on the wording of the email that will be sent to all members. She also reminded everyone that with the new site, all members will be required to reset their passwords. Haddix noted that when members sign in to reset their password, they also will be required to fill out the ethnicity and gender sections (or opt out of providing specifics for those).

Miller said that we need to make sure we are really communicating with members on this and give them a heads-up about the changes. Several other board members agreed with Miller.

Zurik suggested that we send out the notice soon. Haddix said that we are making sure that the staff schedules work so they have a chance to test it beforehand and so that staff is on hand to answer any questions or help with any problems that might come up once the new site goes live.

Editorial

- Podcast listens are up 25% since June.
- Episodes from the podcast have been played 45,000 times in the last year.
- The number of Twitter followers has increased 6% since June.
- Our Facebook followers have increased by about 2% since June.

Fundraising

- Fundraising is going well.
- In the packet you will see a list of conference prospects that we plan on contacting.
- Our goal for the conferences is \$300,000, and we are doing well on that.
- The list marked outreach are those people that we have either started partnerships with or that we have talked with.
- Adding the director or partnerships position has been transformative. In the past it would have been up to the executive director to handle all of this, and if that were still the case, we wouldn't be this far along.

Miller asked if there was a particular number of trainers that we would like to have. Haddix replied that we have to be careful to meet the demand as we need it and balance funding.

Zurik asked if Haddix could talk about data sales. Haddix said that the data sales numbers have been trending downward for several years. He noted that data is more readily available online than it has been in the past. Data that we used to get, clean and then sell is now available to anyone online at many government websites. Haddix went on to say that our partnership with ProPublica has helped due to the fact that they can sell to non-members, where as we can only sell data to IRE members.

Haddix also noted that Charles Minshew and his students have now catalogued and stored the data we have, which came out to about 30 boxes total. He went on to say that the roles of the staff are changing; for example, Charles is now doing some training.

Upton noted that one of the issues might be whether the datasets are being updated.

Dempsey asked Haddix if he could tell them more about the Data World experiment. Haddix said that Charles Minshew is working on that right now. Data World has a really nice interface.

LaFleur asked how many graduate students are working in the Database Library. Haddix replied that there are three graduate students working there (same level for many years), and that those three positions are paid for by the J-School.

Budget – Heather Feldmann Henry

- For those of you that are new to the board, please keep in mind that this is the part of the year when there isn't a lot of money coming in.
- Right now the Arnold money is listed but other than that, there isn't a lot to look at. This will however change by January.
- Overall things look good.

Miller asked if the website project was over budget. Feldmann Henry replied that right now it's on target. She went on to note that Stephanie Klimstra has been working with the company on keeping the work aligned with our budget.

Upton asked if we had any idea of what kind of impact the new tax laws would have. Feldmann Henry responded that as of right now she didn't know. Haddix noted he didn't think that it would affect a lot of people based on the individual amounts donated.

New Audit Standards – Heather Feldmann Henry

- We are working on implementing the new standards this year; however, they won't go into effect until 2019.
- One big thing with the new standards is that any fees from our investment returns will have to be netted against the returns.
- We will need to write a few policies regarding things like our endowment fund. Once I have talked with our auditors, I will be sending drafts of the policies to the board.
- There will also be changes regarding restricted donations and unrestricted donations. We will be talking to the endowment committee regarding those policy changes.
- Footnotes will also be different, those will be recorded as general. We will add lots of footnotes, so it's clear as to what we are doing with the money, even those marked as general.

Branstetter asked Thompson if that was why she had encouraged the committees to make sure they were putting notes in the Google document. Thompson replied yes, that's why she had previously mentioned it.

Upton noted that Feldman Henry had previously mentioned that her salary will come from the returns. She then asked where is currently comes from. Feldmann Henry replied that it currently comes from administrative and that she expected that it would change.

Santana Jr. noted that the Journal expense numbers are high. Haddix replied that it's mainly salaries, and the printing and mailing costs are fairly low.

Sager Endowment

We received a donation of \$185,000 from the estate of Eric Sager. IRE received half of the estate. The rest was divided up between his brother and a few other recipients.

Haddix noted that he would like to have the board vote on accepting the donation.

Upton asked if we know anything about Sager and if he was a member. Haddix replied that he was a member and worked on trade publications. However there isn't much information about him. Klimstra noted that Sager had been a member for a number of years.

Motion: To accept the \$185,000 donation from the Eric Sager estate.

Motion made by Zurik and seconded by Vap. Motion unanimously approved.

Now that it has been accepted by the board, we need to discuss how we would like to use the money. The only restriction that we were given was that it is to be used as a scholarship/fellowship in Eric B. Sager's name.

I've discussed this with the staff and they have suggested that we use this money for general fellowships.

Rich suggested that given Sager's background we might want to consider using it for small publications or for people in that area. Vap agreed with Rich.

Apuzzo also agreed with Rich and suggested saying that it's open, no strings attached but that we give preference to people from small publications.

Miller asked if we need to do a little more research, to find out more about his background to make sure there isn't anything questionable. Zurik agreed with Apuzzo and said that given the background the staff has already done, that he thought it would be fine.

LaFleur said that she wouldn't want to assume what someone might have wanted if they didn't specify it. Apuzzo replied that he didn't think it was assuming if we say that we would give preference to specific group or type of publication.

Thompson asked if we do this type of backgrounding on everyone that give us money. Haddix said that we don't background all donors but did look into his background because of the size of the estate gift and the fact that it would be used for a named scholarship/fellowship. The Sager estate gift is the second-largest donation of its kind that IRE has received.

Haddix noted that a committee would be set up and they would review that applications based on the criteria set forth. Thompson asked who selected the committees that review the applications and make the award selections. Haddix explained that he and Chris Vachon select the committees.

Miller said he liked the idea of small or medium newsrooms. Zurik noted that he leaned more toward Apuzzo's suggestion.

Rich asked about leaving it unrestricted.

Dempsey suggested that we reach out to other groups to market these and get the word out about the fellowships.

Upton asked if they could approve it as unrestricted without setting specific guidelines. Haddix responded that they could and noted that we will hold the money for a year before we use it.

Motion: To create an unrestricted scholarship and we encourage people from small or trade publications to apply. Motion made by Upton and seconded by Zurik.

Apuzzo recommended saying that it's open to everyone but we encourage people from small or trade publications to apply.

Miller suggested that the committee/staff look at things and then come back to the board with proposals.

Amended Motion: Move to accept it as an unrestricted donation and request that the staff come up with language by January on how we might come up with guidelines. Motion made by Upton and seconded by Miller. Unanimously approved.

Reserve Fund – Heather Feldmann Henry

Currently the organization is in a strong financial state so we don't need to tap the reserve funds. If we move the money, we can earn 2 percent interest vs. the 0.15 percent now earned in a savings account.

Our investment advisor has suggested a laddered fund that would allow us to access the money after the first 90 days. We would then have access to \$100,000 every 30 days. However, I can't imagine a scenario where we would need this.

I also spoke with Commerce Bank and they suggested a T-bill which would earn 2%. That number is in line with what most everyone has said.

My recommendation is to go with Oppenheimer and set up a laddered investment fund.

Miller asked what the risk factor is. Feldmann Henry replied that it would be in government bonds, which is about the same low risk level as our other funds. Miller asked why we wouldn't put it into a CD. Feldmann Henry said the trade off with a CD is that we won't have access to the money every 30 days.

Upton asked what our flexibility with this was. Feldmann Henry replied that right now it's in a checking account and that if we move it there wouldn't be any penalty. Haddix noted that if we go the CD route that creates more work for Feldmann Henry vs. if we go with Oppenheimer, we already have a manager (at no additional cost). Upton asked if Oppenheimer offered CDs (they do not).

Motion: To accept Heather's recommendation and move the funds to Oppenheimer in a laddered fund. Motion made by Rich and seconded by Riepenhoff. Unanimously approved.

Conference Committee: Nicole Vap

Last year we set a goal to try to increase the professionalism of the panels and to make each panel as dynamic as possible. One of the things we did to help with this was to add moderators to as many of the panels as we could. What do you all think, did it work?

LaFleur said she thought there was some improvement but that there is still room for more. She also noted that some of the moderators acted more like panelists and that the whole switching computers in the middle of the presentation is difficult.

Branstetter suggested that on panels where there are several new people or high-profile people that we make sure there are experienced moderators.

Zurik said that we should definitely continue having the moderator calls. Rich asked if they did moderator calls for both of the conferences or just the IRE conference. Haddix replied that they had started doing those prior to the IRE conference. Staff will do moderator calls for both conferences starting in 2019.

Dempsey said he thought that we need to continue to emphasize what a good panel is and what it looks like.

Haddix noted that based on feedback from the board last year, we did offer different primers for the speakers and for moderators.

Dempsey noted that back to LaFleur's point, we need to encourage the speakers to collaborate and put their presentations in one place.

Conference Registration Fees – Stephanie Klimstra

Last year the board approved a small increase in the conference registration fees. Even with this increase, though, our rates are much lower compared to other journalism organizations. And our conference expenses keep rising.

In your packet is an analysis of conference registration rates. The thing we noticed when putting together this list is that many other conferences have a larger gap between the rates. Most other organizations go up quite a bit after early-bid rates and start the highest rate two weeks prior to the beginning of their conference.

Zurik asked Klimstra what the food and beverage rates are for the 2019 conferences. Klimstra listed the rates.

One of the things we need to keep in mind is that the IRE conference includes the awards luncheon, whereas the CAR conference doesn't. So attendees have been paying the same rate for each conference, even though at IRE they also get a plated lunch. Last year we charged the same rate for both conferences and increased the rate by \$30 at each level.

Feldmann Henry and I have looked at increasing the rates to \$315 this year. Something to keep in mind is that we don't think we will draw quite as large attendance in 2019 (Newport Beach and Houston) as we will in 2020 when we are in New Orleans and Washington, DC. Both of those cities are more popular.

Dempsey noted that one of the things not built into this are the extra classes. He then expressed concern at increasing the registration rate and charging extra for the sessions. Klimstra noted that most of the hands-on classes are included with the registration fee and that only specialty classes have an extra fee.

LaFleur asked if we should charge for the luncheon. Klimstra replied the concern with doing that would be meeting our food and beverage minimum requirements. She also noted that the luncheon is the only time that all of the attendees are together as a group.

Upton asked if there was a breakdown of how many people register at the early rate vs. the regular rate. Klimstra replied that we don't have a breakdown of those numbers but most people either sign up at the early rate or the regular rate – not the on-site highest rate.

Rich asked about keeping the rate at \$299 and raising more sponsorship revenue. Klimstra responded that she would hesitate to do that because our costs are increasing each year.

Branstetter said that she thought we needed to listen to the people that we pay to study this (staff) and that she thought the cost was reasonable and supported it.

Riepenhoff expressed concerns about raising the rates and having higher hotel rates and that by doing that we run the risk of people finding other places to stay. Klimstra replied that we are still meeting our minimum guaranteed hotel block (to avoid any penalty) but we are only picking up 400 room nights when we have 800-1,000 attendees. Hotels do ask about this, however it's trended this way the whole time I've worked here. Branstetter asked if this is an issue for other groups. Klimstra replied that we need to look at this since we are down about half.

If we are going to raise the rates, now would be the time to do that because we have good hotel rates.

Vap commented that Klimstra does a great job at getting us good hotel rates.

Santana Jr. asked if we talked to the hotels to see if they are unionize and whether or not they pay their workers correctly. Klimstra replied that we do quite a few contacts with Marriott, but I also price out Hyatt, Hilton, etc. Not every city is unionized and we don't pick union hotels specifically, but we do look at that and take that into consideration. We always go above and beyond where we are at those hotels.

Zurik said the he was torn. He agreed with Branstetter and the staff, however he knows what it cost to attend the conference. He went on to say that he gets the staff's point but also doesn't want to raise the rates and price people out of the conference.

Santana Jr. asked about holding the conferences at a convention center or university. Klimstra replied that a convention center is actually going to cost more because at hotels we get discounts and we have contracts with the hotel. We did previously hold a conference at Arizona State University. That conference actually ended up costing just as much if not more.

Haddix asked Klimstra to talk about the bargaining process with the hotels.

With the economy rebounding, hotels are getting more selective about the groups they agree to accept. We have great relationship with Marriott. We are a tricky conference because we take a

lot of space but don't take a lot of sleeping rooms, and we don't want to spend much. It's getting harder and harder to get the space we need, even getting the space on Wednesday for set-up is getting harder.

Board complimented Klimstra and applauded her work with negotiating the hotel rates.

Zurik asked what the awards luncheon costs us. Klimstra replied that it's about \$125,000 depending on the city. She went on to note that managing the affiliates, those costs count toward our credit and makes us look better. Upton asked what were "affiliates" and Klimstra explained that they're news organizations or other groups that coordinate their own meetings/training in conjunction with our conference.

Miller noted that we are kind of getting crunched by this and then asked if there are other alternatives for funding, other than just raising the rates. Haddix replied that yes, we have raised our sponsorship goals for the conference, which will help defray the costs. The fundraising that we have ramped up is helping. Miller asked if the other option then would be to cut things. Haddix replied that, that was correct.

Riepenhoff asked what our financial risk is if we don't fill our room block. Klimstra replied that attrition is normally 80 percent, which has never been an issue before. There is a financial risk to us if we don't sell out, however we normally have to have overflow hotels. Upton asked if we got anything from the overflow hotels. Klimstra replied that we do not.

Upton noted that our rates compared to others are very low and asked about doing a larger increase between regular and on-site registration. Zurik agreed with Upton and said he would feel more comfortable increasing the rate between the regular and on-site.

Discussion ensued about other organizations' rates.

Feldmann Henry gave a quick breakdown of how many registrations come in. For the NICAR conference in Chicago, early-bird registration was 800, regular registration was 450 and on-site registration was 60 to 65.

Dempsey asked how many student registrations there were. Feldmann Henry replied that there were about 100.

Vap asked what the cut off would be for early bird if it isn't changed. Riepenhoff said that we shouldn't cut off the early bird rate until the schedule has been posted. Haddix replied that it's a complicated issue.

Thompson called for a motion.

Zurik said he didn't think that they were where they needed to be in order to have a motion. Rich noted that they needed to make a decision.

Zurik asked about raising the early bird rate to \$305 and cutting it off two months before the conference. Haddix replied that the board was getting too deep into the weeds of administrative operations. Zurik asked what his recommendation was. Dempsey noted that Haddix wasn't saying that adjusting the rate was getting into the weeds but the cut-off dates was getting into the weeds.

Motion – Increase early-bird registration rate to \$305, regular registration to \$355 and on-site registration to \$405 for both CAR & IRE conferences. Registration dates to be determined by the IRE staff.

Miller said he had a point of motion and asked if this will make a difference for the staff. Feldmann Henry replied that we would need to go higher than \$305 for IRE.

Dempsey asked Klimstra what the original option was. Klimstra replied that she recommended \$315 for IRE, which is \$10 higher than CAR.

Amended motion: Increase early-bird registration to \$305 for CAR and \$315 for IRE, regular registration to \$355 for CAR and \$365 for IRE and on-site registration to \$405 for CAR and \$415 for IRE conferences. Registration dates to be determined by the IRE staff.
Motion made by Zurik and seconded by Vap. Unanimously approved.

Conference Locations – Stephanie Klimstra

2022 IRE Conference Options

- Los Angeles, CA: Westin Bonaventure Hotel, has a room rate of \$219 and a low food and beverage.
- Denver, CO: Downtown doesn't have anything but there is a Gaylord hotel that will be opening later this year. The Gaylord does have our dates and the room rate would be \$259, which includes the resort fee.
- Grapevine, TX: This is also a Gaylord hotel. They have our dates available and a room rate of \$219 + resort fee.
- San Diego, CA: Rates there are \$315
- Austin, TX: Rates there are over \$300
- Las Vegas, NV: This is out of the running given the high food and beverage minimums.

Goldberg noted that downtown Los Angeles is a bit of a desert.

We have already signed a contract with New Orleans for CAR in 2020 and we have also locked in Phoenix for IRE 2027. The hotel in Phoenix is the same hotel we had in 2017.

Klimstra was asked her opinion on the Los Angeles hotel. She replied that she doesn't think it's the best space for us.

Discussion ensued about the space being all on one level vs. multiple levels. Klimstra noted that there are very few places where we can have everything on one level.

Vap noted that the Gaylord in Denver will have a lot to offer and that there will also be a train from the hotel to the downtown area, so it will be easy for people to go downtown.

Zurik asked if Los Angeles had a resort fee. Klimstra replied that it does not. Discussion ensued about resort fees.

Branstetter said she wanted to make a strong pitch for Denver.

Goldberg said he thought they needed to continue to have conferences on the West Coast, however he thought that Denver would be good.

Rich noted that the last Denver conference had the lowest sponsorship that we've had and asked if we wanted to do that. He also asked we should go above the \$250 hotel rate. Haddix replied that we are focusing on national sponsorships. Klimstra noted that with the resort fee the hotel rate for the D.C. IRE conference in 2020 will be over \$250.

Goldberg and Santana Jr. both advocated for the Los Angeles location. Klimstra noted that we just barely fit in the Los Angeles property and that if anything changes or if we grow, we would no longer fit that space.

Motion: To approve holding the 2022 IRE conference in Denver. Motion made by Vap and seconded by Branstetter. **Approved** by Apuzzo, Branstetter, Dempsey, LaFleur, Miller, Riepenhoff, Thompson, Upton, Vap and Zurik. **Opposed** by Goldberg, Rich and Santana Jr.

Possible cities for CAR Conference 2022

- Detroit
- Atlanta - \$219 room rate
- Dallas has a couple of options. The Renaissance rate is \$199.
- Minneapolis does not have any space that is big enough for us.
- Nashville has our dates but the room rate is \$265.

What I need is your top two options, so that I can go back and negotiate.

Santana Jr. noted that there have been debates about some states being unfriendly to LGBTQ and if we needed to consider that.

Looking at places where we are currently scheduled, I'm thinking more Atlanta, Nashville or places more to the south.

Goldberg asked if we have had any requests from members asking us to hold the CAR conference in a particular area or city.

Rich noted that Atlanta was pretty good. Thompson asked if they had narrowed it down.

The Board unanimously agreed to have Klimstra look at Atlanta for the 2022 CAR conference.

Thompson called a break for lunch at 12:10 p.m. Meeting resumed at 1:31 p.m.

Conferences Cont'd:

Master Classes

The board unanimously agreed to raise the Master class prices from \$25 to \$35.

Keynote Speakers and Showcases

The board discussed various ideas for keynote speakers for the 2019 IRE Awards luncheon, as well as showcase ideas and possible speakers for the fundraising pitch at the luncheon.

Miller noted that it had been several years since there was a Latino speaker and asked if there were any suggestions that might be a good fit. Vap asked if they had tried asking several people last year. Goldberg replied that they had asked several people last year and it didn't work out.

Showcase Ideas: Capital Gazette/resilience; Perils around the world/journalists being murdered and imprisoned; Security/Keeping sources safe and what can you do to stay safe; Ronan Farrow; tax reporters

Miller said that he thought we should be doing something on security every year and then suggested combining both perils and security and doing it as one session together.

Rich agreed with Santana Jr. that we should do something about immigration and the immigrant caravan. Dempsey agreed with both Rich and Santana Jr.

Haddix reminded everyone that since we are planning to do some Spanish panel sessions, we are only planning to do one showcase. Miller asked what audience we were trying to reach with those. Vap replied that for some it might be much easier for people whose first language is Spanish. Dempsey also noted that this could help with fundraising. Haddix noted that we have had some people decline to speak because they aren't comfortable speaking English, this would give them the opportunity to speak.

Discussion ensued regarding suggestions for additional tracks or track ideas.

Goldberg suggested a panel on the future of funding.

Do we want to continue to do the three tracks: broadcasting, management and storytelling? If anyone has any suggestions on new tracks, please send those to me. We can always do mini tracks for things like immigration, etc.

Rich noted that we need to figure out ways to get as many people in the hands-on sessions as possible. LaFleur said that they use to have people sign up for classes and suggested doing something like that.

Klimstra reminded everyone that the fire codes limit the numbers in rooms.

Haddix noted that we did take the class lines and the feedback from the Chicago conference very seriously. We have added a ninth hands-on room for the Newport Beach conference and we are looking at potentially have off-site space in case we need it.

Discussion ensued regarding reasons why registration numbers might be lower in 2019.

Dempsey noted that we do offer NICAR-Learn and suggested that it would be a good thing to remind members about it.

On-Site badge printing – Stephanie Klimstra

In June the board asked me to check on the cost of on-site name badge printing.

The on-site printing option that makes the most sense would cost about \$9,000 for the CAR conference and then be a bit higher for the IRE conference. Currently it cost us about \$1,200 and takes around 15 hours of staff time, which roughly comes out to \$1,700.

Haddix said he would look at the finances and get back to the board about this.

Upton asked if it would be possible to get sponsorship for the on-site name badges. Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of having a sponsor name on the name badges.

Contest: Jill Riepenhoff

The contest has been generating less revenue in recent years. Part of the reason for that is the entry numbers are down and the expenses have increased. Contest entry fees have been \$55 for the past 10 years with no increase.

To help with expenses, Stephanie Klimstra will be handling travel arrangements for the judges. We could also add someone from Mizzou to the contest committee; this would also help strengthen our ties with Mizzou.

While I don't know that the board has to set these, we wanted you to look at pricing for the contest. In your packet you will find a breakdown of how our contest fees compare to other organizations. Currently we have a flat fee for contest entries while other organizations have sliding scale fees.

Also we have changed the divisions to help encourage small news organizations to enter.

Miller noted that the biggest complaint he hears is about the length of the entry form. Riepenhoff replied the Lauren Grandestaff has revamped the form and cleaned it up as much as possible and eliminated a lot of unnecessary questions. One of the suggestions I made regarding that issue was eliminating the section for advice to other journalists.

Miller suggested that maybe advertising the fact that the form is shorter would be a better idea than changing the pricing.

Riepenhoff also recommended that we add a category for sports reporting and that the category be one size fits all. Vap and Zurik agreed with Riepenhoff that it's a good idea.

Miller asked about the reasoning behind creating a sports category vs. something like education reporting or some other specific reporting area. Riepenhoff noted that most all other groups have their own contests for beat reporters. For example, health care, education, etc., all have their own contests.

Upton agreed with Vap that by adding this category it would encourage investigative reporting in an under-reported category.

Haddix asked in general which pricing option the board would prefer.

The board unanimously agreed that they prefer sliding scale option 1. If a sliding scale is not possible, then they agreed that entry fee should be raised to \$75.

Contest Submissions by the Board

The subject of allowing board members to submit contest entries has come up again. After talking with Lea Thompson and Mc Nelly Torres, it was decided that we would allow this in hopes that it would help increase the number of candidates that run for the board; however, this has not helped or made any difference at all.

At this point I would strongly recommend that we go back to banning board members from having involvement with entries that are submitted to the contest.

Branstetter said that had she known this might be changing, she wouldn't have been involved with helping on some of the projects she did. Vap agreed with Branstetter and noted that she doesn't always have a say in which projects she helps with.

Zurik suggested voting on it or making the change and saying that it wouldn't start until next year.

Upton said she agreed with Riepenhoff and thought they needed to find a balance. Branstetter noted that when the change was initially made, it wasn't just about getting more people to run for the board, it was putting more standards on ourselves and holding ourselves as board members, to a higher standard. I think we need to give some warning and not change the rule midway through.

Miller agreed and said the overall feeling seems to be that this would affect the board members in a negative way.

Dempsey agreed with Riepenhoff but noted that it's a very hard issue.

Thompson said there would need to be a motion on this.

Discussion ensued about how the contest judges have to recuse themselves if they have ties to the work being reviewed.

Santana Jr. suggested taking the board out of the equation. This would mean that there was only one board member heading the committee and the rest of the committee would be made up of non-board members. Riepenhoff replied that the issue with that is that sometimes there are problems that come up that can only be dealt with by the board and the executive director.

Upton asked about recruiting past board members and presidents to be on the committee. Discussion ensued about how that might work.

Zurik asked if they were overthinking it since there are only two or three board members on the committee. Thompson replied that there are currently three board members and two elected people that do the contest judging.

Miller said he thought Riepenhoff was right, this is our thing. I feel very strongly that we shouldn't be outsourcing this, this is something that we need to be handling as a board.

Thompson reminded everyone that entries are first sent to pre-screeners, who narrow things down. Entries are then sent to the judges for selection.

Upton asked about bringing in an independent arbiter. Branstetter replied that there are already rules in places for things.

Currently the way things stand is that the contest's chair entire news organization cannot enter the contest and for committee members, it's anything they have touched.

Miller asked about changing it to say anything they have touched or supervised.

Discussion ensued regarding what the rules are for the Phil Meyer award.

Zurik said he would suggest that several of the board members come up with something regarding this issue and then bring it back to board.

Miller asked Riepenhoff if this was change was coming from the contest committee or from her. Goldberg noted that the contest committee only judges, they don't actually form any opinions on these matters. Riepenhoff replied that this is something that has been weighing on her and that after this year she feels that it's an important issue that needs to be addressed. Rich said that he didn't think any board member should be able to receive a medal.

Motion: To form an ad hoc committee to explore this issue. Motion made by Upton and seconded by Zurik. **Approved** by Branstetter, Dempsey, Goldberg, LaFleur, Miller, Rich, Santana Jr., Thompson, Upton, Vap and Zurik. **Opposed** by Riepenhoff. **Absent** Apuzzo

Riepenhoff noted that this needed to be done before December when the contest opens.

Thompson asked who would like to volunteer for the committee. Upton, Riepenhoff, Vap, Miller, Goldberg, Santa Jr. and Dempsey volunteered.

Vap said she thought the committee needed to study this and come up with suggestions or a proposal. Riepenhoff replied that since the rule was changed there has only been one other contest committee chair other than her and that was Branstetter.

Apuzzo re-joined the meeting at 3:22 p.m.

Miller said he would like to discuss the Phil Meyer award is separate from the contest and asked that if there was time on Sunday that it be discussed.

Public Engagement – Ziva Branstetter

For a quite a while we have been receiving requests asking for IRE to get involved in various issues. When those requests come in, Haddix send those to the Public Engagement committee. When dealing with these requests, it's often hard to explain to people why we don't do these. Some of the reasons why we turn these down are because there are other organizations that deal with these issues, we don't want to add to the staff time, we don't want to add expenses and we don't want to add our name to things because we don't have any control over these things.

We need to have something or some policy on how we handle these requests.

Proposal for the board:

As a general policy, IRE's public engagement committee will review all requests sent to the committee by IRE staff or members for committee consideration.

Requests for IRE to file an amicus brief or sign onto an amicus brief in a legal case will generally be rejected as has been our past practice unless IRE has some obvious direct interest in the case.

Merely lending IRE's name to a brief without taking any other action doesn't seem to be an effective

way of impacting the situation. Other groups exist to advocate for greater transparency and the rights of journalists, including Reporters Committee for the Freedom of the Press and the Committee to Protect Journalists.

When the engagement committee receives requests to write letters or statements on behalf of individual journalists threatened with jail or otherwise under duress due to their jobs, the committee is inclined to agree with such requests as a show of support, particularly for IRE members.

Similarly, the committee is inclined to agree with requests that IRE's board support or oppose proposed legislation or rules related to transparency and press freedom. These statements, if approved by the engagement committee, must be written by the committee or its designee and not by other organizations to ensure they are consistent with our mission and values.

These decisions have not been subject to full board approval in the past and we recommend that practice continue. (IRE receives a fair number of these requests and quick decisions are usually needed.) If there is a decision the committee chair believes should have board input, the chair will refer the matter to the executive committee.

Riepenhoff asked how many requests we receive. Branstetter and Haddix both said it was quite a few, with most of them needing an immediate response.

Normally if IRE doesn't have a direct interest, we don't get involved.

Miller asked if there need to be a motion. Thompson and Haddix replied that it wasn't necessary, mainly this is just to get a feel for where the board stands on this.

Vap noted that something to consider was that if we were to sign onto one of these and a funder didn't like it, it could be an issue. Several agreed with Vap.

Revenue Committee- Lee Zurik

The document in the packet has an overview of everything including a list of foundations/grants and a list of conference sponsors from 2014 to 2018.

Haddix reminded everyone that DocumentCloud was not included on this report, as it operated as a separate entity under the IRE umbrella.

Miller asked what caused the 2017-2018 jump. Haddix replied that in 2016-2017 we received a number of single grants and in 2017-2018 we received several multi-year grants. He went on to say that he didn't think we would have as much this year because we signed some multi-year grants this past year.

Rich asked if we accepted an anonymous donation from a person or if it was from the group anonymous. Haddix replied that it was from an individual who wished to remain anonymous, not the group.

Dempsey asked what they should do if there were people that they thought we should reach out to. Zurik said they should send them to Chris Vachon and Haddix. We want to make sure we are consistent with our asks and those that we are taking money from. Any questions or questionable groups are brought to the revenue committee.

Member Services – Lee Zurik

An issue that has come up recently is that some of our long-time members are feeling left out. Many of these people have given a lot of time to the organization. One of the ideas that we have come up with to help with this issue, is that once a year we will send an email out to past board members. Not only will this be an update but it will let them know we still care and want them to be involved. My recommendation would be to send this out in December. Haddix replied that he had talked with staff and they suggest sending it out in January instead so it doesn't get lost in the end of year and holiday stuff.

Dempsey asked what the point of this is and if it was a call to action. Zurik replied that it's more of an update not necessarily a call to action.

Branstetter suggested adding something where they could let us know that they would like to be involved or how they would like to be involved.

Miller asked if we couldn't send them a holiday card or something instead of an email. Zurik said that it's a lot of extra cost.

Santana Jr. asked if we could recognize them at the awards luncheon by maybe having them stand up.

LaFleur noted that we have several longtime members who have been very involved that were not asked to help or be involved in events that we had in their cities. They were not included in the planning of the event and they weren't even made aware of the event until IRE contacted them asking them to send students to the event. This looks really bad.

Upton agreed with LaFleur that it was bad.

Haddix noted that in one case, there was an error with staff planning. We are taking steps to include and follow up on this like this. We are having more discussions during the planning stages to help ensure that this doesn't happen again.

Haddix explained that the other issue that came up was a bit different. That issue had to do with someone who wasn't asked to speak. The thing to keep in mind is that when we are in a metro area, not everyone is going to get asked to speak. This is especially true when we are holding an event where there are only 6-8 speakers. While we would like to include everyone it's just not always possible.

Vap suggested having a session where people that have questions or want to learn more about IRE, could talk to some of the people who aren't able to speak.

There was some discussion about the Hire IRE initiative for data services, research desk and custom training.

LaFleur said that she has had a couple of people tell her that they had contacted IRE but never heard back. Before we start pushing the Hire IRE, I want to make sure that we have the staff we need and can accommodate any jobs that might come in. Haddix replied that we should be able to do that, there are several people that do that work and they can help with this.

Thompson and I have been discussing starting a diversity mentorship program. This would be something that would happen throughout the year and would be separate from the mentorship program at the conferences.

Vap suggested that next step would be to get let them know about IRE and find people that don't know about us.

Klimstra noted that the Ida B. Wells diversity fellows might be a good place to start. They already get a membership and they are typically new members. Thompson and Zurik both thought that would be a good idea.

Santana Jr. asked if we could do something at other organizations conferences. Vap agreed that it might help bring people in.

Discussion ensued regarding mentoring.

So we will have the committee work up something on this and bring it back to the board.

Endowment Committee – T Christian Miller

We have a number of small funds that never reached the level of an endowed scholarship or fellowship. These funds don't generate enough interest to be awarded but they still have money in them. The question is what do we want to do with these funds.

The committee's recommendation is;

The Committee thought the easiest way to deal with the smaller funds is to spend them down for the purpose for which they are intended. In doing so, we should make a point of recognizing winners of the awards so that, should a family member ask what's up, we can point them to the people who were given the opportunity intended by the gift. We would recommend allowing the executive director and his team to determine the exact cut-off level for such funds, but it seemed to us that a figure of \$20,000 might allow for a final round of fundraising to reach the \$25,000 limit. To that end, we wondered whether it might be worth a round of advertising at our conference and in the journal to let people know about these wobbler funds and their purpose, in case they wished to donate or apply.

The other issue is what we want to do regarding future funds. What do we do if they are below the \$25,000 level? Do we have different levels, etc.? The committee is going to discuss this more and bring recommendations to the board.

Thompson asked if there were any questions.

Motion: To accept the recommendation to spend down the funds.

Motion made by Riepenhoff and seconded by Rich. Unanimously approved.

Zurik moved that the board go into executive session to discuss personnel.

Meeting was adjourned for the day at 4:50 p.m.

St. Louis, Missouri
Sunday, October 21, 2018

In Attendance: Cheryl W. Thompson, Lee Zurik, Jill Riepenhoff, T. Christian Miller, Nicole Vap, Matt Goldberg, Ziva Branstetter, Matt, Dempsey, Jennifer LaFleur, Steven Rich, Norberto Santana Jr., Jodi Upton

In Attendance via Video: Matt Apuzzo

Others in Attendance: Dean David Kurpius of the Missouri School of Journalism (in person) and Lea Thompson (via video)

Staff in attendance: Doug Haddix, Stephanie Klimstra, Heather Feldmann Henry, Amy Johnston

Thompson called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Haddix introduced Dean David Kurpius, dean of the journalism school at the University of Missouri. He then asked that everyone introduce themselves.

Dean Kurpius

The dean thanked the board for inviting him to the meeting and allowing him to spend time getting to know everyone.

- IRE's relationship with Mizzou is very important.
- The collaboration that IRE has with the students and the work you do is critically important.
- Doug has done a great job of making sure your relationship with the school is even stronger than it was before. We have an agreement that every time he's in town that he meets with me.
- The IRE-Mizzou workshop that was just held drew 45 students which is great and beneficial to the students.
- We are continuing to work on increasing diversity at the school, not only among the faculty but also among the students. We are creating a space for students to come and succeed.
- We have a new program for high school students that Mark Horvit started last year. This is an investigative workshop that brings students of diversity in and offers them training. While the program is limited to 25, we would really like for you to look in your community and find those students and send them to us. This is about changing the face of the industry.
- IRE is very intertwined with this process. When you all clean data, you have trained those students to do that and your training them and helping them to be more marketable.

Dean talked about each of the six community-facing newsrooms that are part of the school: Missouri Business Alert, Global Journalist, KBIA-NPR, Target 8 @ KOMU-NBC, The Missourian/Statehouse news program, and VOX (a monthly magazine).

He went on to talk about plans for replacing the building where IRE is currently located and how they plan on using the space in the new building. He also noted that he sees IRE becoming even more involved with the J-School.

- We train the best journalists in the world and we serve the community. This is the community where you all come in.

Vap noted that she is always surprised by the number of MU grads that she hires that have never heard of IRE. She went on to suggest that they encourage all students to have investigative skills and to teach them how to collaborate. Kurpius replied that they should probably brand IRE more and that he planned on talking with Haddix about that the next time they meet. As for the collaborating, we are making changes to our strategic plan which will help with that. We also need to make sure that IRE is baked into it so students know about it up front.

Dempsey commented that when he was in school the only reason he know about IRE was because his roommate mentioned it.

Zurik asked how the dean saw the school's relationship with IRE evolving over the next five years. Kurpius replied that it's going to grow and IRE's going to train more students. He encouraged IRE to get more involved in the high school program and have people nominate students to come and attend. Overall it's a very important relationship.

Miller asked what enrollment was and what other types of diversity they were working on. Kurpius said that race was the easy issue, he had done that at LSU. In terms of spreading that out. We talk about rural whites being similar to African Americans, they are generally first-generation college students, not a large support system. And there are a surprising number of similarities between the two groups. Enrollment for university freshman is up 13 percent. We don't have the enrollment number of J-school students yet but I believe it's up.

The dean talked about how much hands-on newsroom experience MU students get prior to graduating and how the school gets feedback from recruiters and employers, which the school uses then to continue to improve.

IRE's relationship with the school is great and continues to grow and be important to us.

Video Archive project: Lea Thompson, via video

This is a huge project that both Lauren and I have been working on for quite some time.

I believe that we have the best archive of broadcast in the world. For those of you who might not know, tapes and DVDs have a tendency to fall apart after a number of years, and because of that, a good portion of what we have has most likely already fallen apart.

While the project to save the tapes has been in the works for several years, this effort now includes everything, not just the tapes but also the print and audio.

One good piece of news is that Deluxe Media has offered us a discount on Option 1. They have offered this in good faith we will start raising money to move forward with this project.

Vap asked how we plan to raise the money and if it would affect fundraising for IRE. L. Thompson replied that the plan was to try and get one funder. What the board will need to decide is if it will be willing to give naming rights. Depending on which option you all pick, we might need to go to multiple funders.

Goldberg noted that we have been talking about this for years and while we continue to wait we lose more tapes. The funders that we are looking at approaching for this, wouldn't be the same people that IRE goes to for money. Personally, I would love to see the board move forward with this.

Scenario 1 just includes baking and digitizing the tapes. Branstetter wanted to know if there was a two-pronged approach where we could bake the tapes as we continue to do fundraising. L. Thompson replied that they didn't want to nickel and dime this. Due to delays we haven't even started fundraising yet. I feel that if we go ahead and raise the money we can just go ahead. We can't just keep waiting, we are going to have to go ahead with something. These tapes aren't going to last forever and a lot of them have probably already been lost.

Miller commented that he has always supported this project and if we bring in outside funding, it could be beneficial in other ways.

Riepenhoff asked if there would be any impact on the staff in terms of time and money. L. Thompson replied that her suggestion is for Haddix to decide which one he likes. She noted that that staff would still have to get the materials to Deluxe Media, especially after the contest. With scenarios 3, 4 and 5 members could access stories directly online.

Dempsey asked what impact this would have on the contest entries. Would those be submitted directly to Deluxe Media or will the staff have to send those? L. Thompson replied that we can do this any way we want to.

I don't think we can really do it all until Doug and the staff figure out how they want to do this. The committee and I are willing to go out and raise just the basic money to save the tapes. It's whatever you decide to do.

Motion – We empower this committee to move forward to raise money and save the tapes.

Haddix recommended to the board that they look at all of the costs, including the cost of staff time. This would require that we set up an operation and hire someone to process the boxes. Tapes would need to be labeled with a barcode and since meta data isn't included, staff would also have to do that. If we only do the first option, IRE would receive the digital archive on about 40 hard drives. Since hard drives can be corrupted this would require us to pay for cloud storage space, something that isn't included with this cost. Shipping cost maybe higher, since we have to have special archival shipping materials. I would strongly recommend that we not use staff or students for this because we don't have the training for this.

Amended Motion– To go ahead with the project but make it staff and revenue neutral.

Deluxe media would actually store this and I think there need to be a study by Doug and the staff to what the exact cost would be.

Amended Motion: The board allows the committee to move forward to try and raise money for the archive project but the project should be staff and cost neutral to the IRE.

Motion made by Goldberg and seconded by Miller. Unanimously approved.

Code of Conduct – Steven Rich

In the last few months I've heard from a lot of young members that feel like we need to update our code of conduct. We are going to get more and more people that are deciding which conferences to attend based on the code of conduct.

In looking at other organizations' codes, we are behind, and these changes would help bring us up to where other organizations are.

Not only do I think we need to update the language but we also need to make people aware of this. Right now people don't know what is covered or how things are handled.

Apuzzo noted that he had previously raised this issue and feels like that if this is something that is important to people, there isn't any downside to us having a more robust code of conduct.

Vap thanked Rich for taking the time to research and put together the information on the issue. She noted that if we are going to talk about recruiting more younger people, than this is important.

Zurik asked Rich if he had brought any of these conversations to the board. Rich replied that he didn't have the individuals' permission to do so and had not brought it to the board or staff.

Zurik noted that when they had previously looked at this, they had feedback from a lawyer and that he wouldn't feel comfortable approving anything without first talking to an attorney.

Branstetter thanked Rich for his time in putting this together. She noted that she didn't think the part about what people are supposed to do is as specific as it could have been. She also noted that she likes the fact this covers from whole conference from beginning to end.

We need to make the policy clearer on what people should do.

Miller noted that he and Ellen Gabler had previously looked very closely at this. We very carefully crafted the principles to fit IRE. I don't think we need to try and be other groups. I'm in favor of publishing the principles but I think we need to be careful.

Apuzzo said he was 100% in agreement that we shouldn't be policing what is said but we should have a more clear method of letting people know that they shouldn't feel harassed.

Rich asked about removing the line.

Riepenhoff said that she agreed with Miller. It's a slippery slope if we start naming specific things. I'm also uncomfortable with the beginning-to-end language, I think that's a dangerous situation to get into. I'm not saying we don't look into these but we want to make sure we aren't making ourselves the police.

Dempsey said he agreed with Rich on this. I think we should be policing the conduct. To Rich's point, we are just catching up to other organizations.

LaFleur replied that she thought there was a happy medium here. I think we need to identify what we consider harassing. There have been numerous discussion about this issue on Slack.

We need more information about this.

Goldberg agreed that these are all good points and that we need to publicize it more. I think we have to improve what is here and be responsive to member concerns but I agree with Zurik, we also need to make sure we are protecting IRE. I think we need to take our time and talk with a lawyer about this.

Vap said she was very concerned about some of the points, such as the harassing speech and suggested working on the language regarding that. Rich replied that he thought it would be fine to remove the line about harassing speech. He noted that most of the issues that had been brought to his attention are not about harassing speech but harassing behavior.

Riepenhoff noted that last year we had a lawyer review the code and she had specifically said that we shouldn't list everything because there is no way to image everything that might come up. Rich replied that we could remove that sentence and acknowledge that it's very specific.

Background on the current code of conduct – Doug Haddix

Last fall/winter we had a thorough review of the code of conduct. We had a lawyer that is one of the leading national experts on this issue work with us to put this together. The code was sent to the executive committee for review before it went to the board.

One of the things that the lawyer specifically encouraged us to remove was the telephone hotline because that opens IRE up to a legal liability. There is also the practical issue of a 24/7 hotline and who is staffing that. Requiring the staff to do that could be an issue.

In looking at a lot of the other codes, they don't take responsibility from the first to the last minute and they don't explicitly list things out.

The board has two responsibilities: one is to protect the organization and one is to our members.

Some of the places where we publicize the code of conduct: main conference page has it listed verbatim; it's included in the letter of invitation sent to speakers; it's included in the email sent to all attendees; it's listed on the mobile app; and there are printed signs posted in various locations around the conference. If anyone has suggestions on other ways to publicize it, please let us know.

Vap noted that in looking at the website we call it the IRE Principles rather than the code of conduct. Haddix noted that he approved adding "code of conduct" to the website and did so last year so that it would show up in Google searches. The board in 2016 adopted the document and called it "The IRE Principles" rather than a code of conduct.

Goldberg asked if there was a reason that we can't have something when they register for the conference or maybe a check box where they have to accept the principles. Several people agreed that it would be a good idea to do that.

Motion: To refer this issue to the Governance Committee and have a lawyer review this.

Motion made by LaFleur and seconded by Riepenhoff. **Approved** by Apuzzo, Branstetter, Dempsey, Goldberg, LaFleur, Rich, Riepenhoff, Santana Jr., Thompson, Upton, Vap and Zurik. **Opposed** by Miller.

Rich asked that the proposal be used as a starting point.

The Governance committee asked that Rich join the committee.

Student Governance Committee – Steven Rich

This proposal would create a small committee to discuss any issues and then bring those issues to the board. This committee would primarily focus on younger membership, which would also help to get them more involved.

LaFleur asked how it would work with the membership committee. Zurik suggested that it could be a sub-committee and suggested that Rich chair it.

Thompson noted that members can bring those issues to any board member, who would then bring it to the board. Rich responded that the problem is that they all come to him.

Miller noted that the board has a responsibility to the membership and that Rich is doing exactly what he is supposed to be doing.

Branstetter said that for financial reasons she thought we need to make sure we are bringing in younger members. We need to be able to compete for the younger members. Thompson replied that was her reasoning for adding younger members to the committees.

Dempsey agreed with Rich. We want to keep the support of the people who have been heavily involved, however we also need to get the next generation involved. This would give us a lot of opportunities to bring young people in. A subcommittee would be beneficial.

Haddix noted that we have other ways for students to get involved which include: contest screening, writing for the IRE Journal, podcasts and a variety of other ways.

Motion – Create a three-member subcommittee with the focus on young and student members. **Approved** by Santana Jr., Rich, Branstetter, LaFleur, Vap, Upton, Dempsey / **Opposed** by Miller, Zurik, Goldberg, Riepenhoff, Thompson, Apuzzo
Motion carries 7-6.

Miller asked what the definition of young would be. Rich replied 35 or younger.

Strategies for getting more international journalists involved – Jill Riepenhoff

While we have previously discussed this issue, it has come back up again and I think we need to have a discussion about this. Are we as a board doing enough to promote this and are we missing the international voice on the board?

Santana Jr. said he didn't think there was a need for a committee to get more people involved. Instead he suggested that they need to listen to what people are telling them. He went on to note that this is specific subset that brings specific things to the organization.

Zurik suggested that Riepenhoff put something together and then bring it back to the member services committee, who will then review it and bring it to board if necessary.

Thompson agreed with Zurik.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:52 a.m.