



IRE Board of Directors Conference Call September 13, 2018

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

Absent: Matt Apuzzo and Norberto Santana Jr.

Staff in attendance: Doug Haddix, Amy Johnston

Thompson called the meeting called to order at 1:01 p.m. Amy Johnston took roll call.

Board President's Update: Thompson

- The George Washington University has agreed to sponsor the mentor breakfast at the CAR conference.
- Met with Dean Kurpius from the MU journalism school. He wanted to make sure we are happy here and that things are going well. He has been invited to the board retreat next month and will either be there in person or will skype in depending on his schedule, since that is Mizzou's homecoming weekend.
- After the events at the Capitol Reporter, I reached out to see how IRE could help. After talking with them, we sent out a note to our membership to ask for volunteers to work at the paper. We had an overwhelming response within hours.
- Mark Walker and I did a panel at the NABJ conference last month and while the turnout was great it was also very eye opening. NABJ members are hungry for investigative training. Doug & I will be having a call with the NABJ president in a few weeks to talk about ways we can collaborate more with the organization.
- I meet with Bill Keller and Mark Rochester, we discussed offering master classes at the NABJ conference in Miami next year. Mark Walker is going to be pitching a session idea of this.
- Based on a conversation with Marty Baron of the Washington Post about donating to IRE, Chris and Doug are working a written presentation for him.
- At Ziva's request, I've asked Phil Williams to continue to handle the Don Bolles Award.
- In October at the retreat I would like to talk about creating a database of journalists of color. This could be helpful for organizations and to those looking to increase diversity in the newsrooms.
- The Reporter's Handbook is needing to be updated. This is something we should discuss at the retreat.
- Please be thinking about suggestions for next year's keynote speaker. We will be discussing that at the October meeting.
- Committee chairs, please be sure to meet with your committee before the retreat next month. Folders for each committee have been created, so you can document what you are working on. Please be sure to update those before the meeting.

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Branstetter asked if Thompson could share those folders again. Thompson replied that she would.

Thompson asked Haddix for an update on the new website.

Update: Haddix

This is something that has been in the works for over a year. We are converting the current site to a new WordPress site. Anyone who has gone through this knows that once you start these projects, you discover issues that you weren't even aware of. While the developer is working on it, there have been some issues, which are causing things to take longer than initially planned. We are currently hoping that the site will go live in October but can't make any guarantees that it will be done then.

In regards to updating the IRE Handbook. Mark Horvit is currently leading the effort to revise the book. We have been in communication with the publisher for the last 5-6 months about revising the book. Per the publisher's request, Mark Horvit and Brant Houston have put together a proposal of what needs to be updated in the book. At this point we are waiting for the publisher to approve the proposal, however I think that they will approve that.

Since the book includes links and websites, there has been discussion about creating a webpage or something like that where we could do yearly updates to the links and websites listed in the book.

The hope is that once the publisher has approved that it will come out next year.

Thompson asked if Mark Horvit and Brant Houston were the only ones making revisions. Haddix replied that they will be reaching out to others to help revise sections once the publisher has approved the proposal. However, since the publisher owns the rights, we can't move forward with this until they approve it.

Thompson asked we could take it to another publisher if the revision isn't approved. Haddix responded that the publisher owns the rights to the book and that it would require a lawyer being involved.

Thompson asked if we knew who would be helping with the revisions. Haddix replied that once we get approval, Mark Horvit and Bran Houston will be in charge of asking people to help with revisions, however it's all contingent on getting approval first. Thompson asked if Horvit and Houston will keep us updated on the progress. Haddix replied that they would.

Thompson noted that she has a special interest in the book since she uses it for her class and that it would be nice to have diversity among the contributors. Haddix recommended that anyone with contributor suggestions for the book, email those names to Mark Horvit.

Thompson asked if there were any other questions for Haddix.

Upton asked if the current website is in WordPress. Haddix replied that it is not but that the new site will be in WordPress. Upton noted the security concerns associated with WordPress and asked Haddix what was being done to ensure those aren't an issue. Haddix replied that security is built into our contact with the developer and that everyone will have to have a password to access the site.

Chris Vachon and I are in Austin for the ONA conference. We have already had several meetings with people and have several more scheduled over the next couple of days.

So far we have:

- Talked with Google about sponsorship for next year's conference.
- Meet with Houston Chronicle/Hearst
- Met with our new contact at The Ford Foundation, who indicated support for renewal of our grant but they don't know the level or duration yet.
- Meet with the Knight Foundation and updated them on all of our projects.

Later today we will be meeting with people from the Democracy Fund.

LaFleur said that she had already sent an email to Chris Vachon about this but she had talked with Gordon Staples about sponsorship for the 2019 CAR conference. LaFleur suggested to Haddix that he might try and meet with Staples while at the ONA conference.

Haddix said that he had been sending regular written updates to the board and that he didn't have any action items that needed to be discussed. He asked if anyone had questions about the updates. There were no questions.

Committee Updates:

Audit committee – Steven Rich

No updates at this time. We expect to have more updates next year.

Member Services – Lee Zurik

We have our first call next week and will have more information at the retreat in October.

Revenue Committee – Lee Zurik

We had a great call last month and have another scheduled for next week. We received a really nice donation from the Arnold Foundation. The grant included \$25,000 for the 2019 IRE conference in Houston and a \$150,000 grant for general operating.

Contest Committee – Jill Riepenhoff

The only thing is that Lauren has been working on revising the contest questionnaire and we should have that ready to present at the retreat in October.

Public Engagement – Ziva Branstetter

We are working to formalize a way to handle requests that come in to us. I need to set up a call before the October meeting so we can decide if we want to bring a formalized proposal to the

board at the retreat. LaFleur noted that IRE use to have an FOI committee that she chaired. She offered to forward any information or notes from that committee on to Branstetter.

Conference Committee – Nicole Vap

I plan to have a meeting before the retreat. I just wanted to say that everyone that came to the NLGJA conference in Palm Springs was very appreciative in what we could provide for them. I think those watchdogs at the conference are really important. I think it's really good for us to be there.

Endowment Committee – T. Christian Miller

There has been some discussion regarding the issue of legacy gifts. Some of the funds that have been set up but don't have enough money to sustain themselves. Some of the issues we are looking at are, what to do with them and do we create a policy that can be used when someone wants to create one but doesn't have enough money to endow it at the \$25,000 level.

Governance Committee – Matt Goldberg

Nothing to report at this time.

Thompson asked if there was anything else to discuss.

Zurik noted the flight prices to Newport Beach were very expensive.

Thompson reminded everyone that October 1 was the deadline to send her agenda items for the retreat.

Thompson ended the meeting at 12:36 p.m.