

IRE Board Call Minutes
June 2, 2009 – 11 a.m. CDT

Board members on the call: Cheryl Phillips, Alison Young, Lea Thompson, Duff Wilson, James Grimaldi, Stephen C. Miller, Lise Olsen, Mc Nelly Torres, Lawan Williams and Phil Williams. Absent: Manny Garcia, Jason Grotto and Marilyn Thompson. **Staff on the call:** Mark Horvit, Jennifer Erickson, and IRE Attorney David B. Smallman.

1. **Call to Order (Phillips):** Phillips called meeting to order at 11:04 a.m.
2. **Baltimore Conference Update (Horvit):** Horvit reported that preregistration for the Baltimore conference is 716. Horvit said the hotel pick-up rate is over 90%. Board members congratulated Horvit and staff for their work in publicizing the event during a difficult time in journalism.
3. **New IRE Policies for Consideration:** Horvit said there is a new IRS 990 form that must be used in the coming year. The form has a section that indicates whether the organization has in place policies on records retention, conflict of interest and whistleblowing. IRE has a records retention policy in place. Horvit said the auditors recommended that IRE adopt the other two policies. The MU system has a whistleblower policy that IRE employees may use currently. Horvit shared drafts of the new policies with board members and ask for revisions by the end of the week. He said the goal is to vote on the policies at the board meeting in Baltimore.
4. **Update on Arizona Project Film (Smallman):** Smallman said he met with Miramax representatives while in California last week. Negotiations are on track and an agreement is being finalized. Thompson thanked Smallman for his service in this matter. Smallman added that Ed Delaney and Myrta Pulliam have assisted on the project as well.
5. **2010 Conference Update (Horvit):** Horvit said things are on track for announcing the location of the 2010 IRE Conference, tentatively Las Vegas, during the Baltimore conference. He expects to have the 2010 CAR location wrapped up soon as well, perhaps on campus at Arizona State University. Horvit said that IRE may have to rent space at the convention center on the Thursday of the conference and asked the board for their input. The consensus was to move ahead with this plan. Young said this is an exciting new model for the CAR Conference, wherein IRE collaborates with a university. This allows for cost savings with seminar space and food/beverage minimums.
6. **Budget Update (Phillips):** Phillips reported that Mark and others have been going through budget and keeping a close eye on projections. The goal is to have a balanced budget for fiscal year 2010. For the current fiscal year, IRE could have a deficit of \$260,000; this would come out of the reserve fund. Horvit said that many factors could reduce this amount, including fundraising for the Challenge Fund for Journalism grant and onsite Baltimore registrations. The amount could be higher if June income is low.

Phillips said that she and staff would review closely the 2009-2010 expenses as the year progresses to determine how reality is matching up with projections. Olsen asked if it would be better to select new start/end dates for the IRE fiscal calendar to reflect times of low cash flow, or to move the CAR Conference to the fall. Discussion ensued. Board members agreed to put this topic on the agenda for a future board meeting. Miller said that the reserve fund was created to assist the organization with cash-flow issues in times of economic distress and that this is such a time.

Thompson commended Horvit for watching over the budget so closely. Phillips recommended that all board members work with staff to help raise money for the Challenge Fund grant.

Thompson said that the endowment fund investments are doing comparatively well; the fund has lost only 8% in a very difficult market. Horvit said the fund will help with the bottom line as the market improves. He said that he would have a full report on the endowment at the Baltimore board meeting.

7. **Plans for Board Meetings in Baltimore:** Horvit said the Thursday meeting would run from 6-9 p.m. at the conference hotel. Dinner will not be provided. Elections are Saturday at the membership meeting. The plan is to vote first on the proposed amendment, followed by candidates' statements and the vote. Candidates may declare until noon on the Friday of the conference. There will be an orientation for new board members at 8 a.m. Sunday at the conference hotel, location TBA.

8. **Meeting Adjournment:** Young made a motion to adjourn; Torres seconded the motion. All were in agreement, and the meeting adjourned at 12 noon CDT.