

Board of Directors

Conference Call

Jan. 30, 2014

In Attendance: David Cay Johnston, T. Christian Miller, Rob Cribb, Ellen Gabler, Andrew Donohue, Mc Nelly Torres, Ziva Branstetter, Len Downie Jr., Matt Goldberg, Josh Meyer, Stuart Watson, Sarah Cohen, Manny Garcia

IRE Staff: Mark Horvit, Amy Johnston

Johnston called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

Previous Minute:

Torres motions to approve minutes.

Goldberg seconds the motion. Unanimously approved.

Executive Directors Report:

Membership

- High as it has been in a decade.
- Things contributing to this: Conference attendance, large workshop in NY that had 230 people in attendance, growth in student membership.
- Membership In general has been trending up.

Contest

- We had 508
- We have added 3 to 4 screeners to the larger categories. Each entry will still be read by two screeners, meaning that we did not reduce the number of eyes for each entry.
- Branstetter and Watson are the two board members on the judging committee.

Web

- Sarah Hutchins, our new web editor, started this month.
- We have a class where three MU seniors are going to be working with us will each be working 10 hours a week.

Conference

- CAR Conference registration is already over 450. That would already be the third largest CAR conference in our history. We are on track to be larger than last year.
- Jaimi Dowdell has been working on the schedule again this year and is doing a great job, as is events coordinator Stephanie Sinn.

Audit

- 990 has been completed and turned into the accountant.
- It has been sent to the board and posted on the website.
- Audit committee will meet in the next couple of weeks. Then the Audit Committee we will be meeting with the auditor.

Resource Center

- We're putting together a new Beat Books, a collection of the Collected Wisdom columns from the IRE Journal, with a new introduction by Downie.

Document Cloud

- We have a grant from the Knight Foundation to explore sustainability with a consultant, and we're in the middle of that process. The goal is to take the resulting report and use it to form the basis of a grant request to fund operation and sustainability efforts for DocumentCloud. If we don't get additional funding we will be having a serious discussion about the future of the platform.

Johnston moved that the Board go into closed session for a personnel discussion. Meeting went into closed session at 11:21 a.m.

Meeting reopened at 11:25 a.m.

Budget

Horvit summarized the budget through the beginning of the year. He said finances are on track to meet or exceed the proposed budget.

Golden Padlock – Cribb

Cribb said preparation is underway for the awarding of the Golden Padlock. Last year's committee was Donohue, Cohen, Downie and Cribb along with two non-board members.

Donohue, Torres, Meyer and Downie said they were happy to volunteer.

Discussion ensued about possible outside board members.

Election - Horvit

At the last meeting the Board voted to move to all electronic voting. I have been looking at a company called BigPulse. They offer a couple of different ways that we can do the election process. We can self-manage or they can manage the process. They think we can do the self-manage. To do that it will cost about \$1,800.

Cohen supported the proposal and asked that Horvit please think about what need the board to do to help with this process.

Horvit said the Board needed to decide whether to have two separate voting periods – early voting and voting on election day – or to keep voting open throughout that period. He said he and John Green discussed the issue and that the staff recommendation is to keep voting open. Downie and Meyer supported the recommendation. Gabler asked whether this would contribute to a concern that had previously been voiced about online voting reducing attendance at the membership meeting where candidates speak. Cohen said board members could encourage conference attendees to attend so that they can hear from the candidates before casting a ballot.

Board members encouraged creating a way for candidates to address voters online.

Gabler said she is concerned that members won't know how to log in and vote at election time.

Horvit said staff has discussed that and that help will be available at the conference and that extra staff will be on-hand during the membership meeting to aid those voting.

Cohen reminded everyone that the bylaws require that the executive committee be elected immediately after the membership meeting.

Meyer noted that he thought Ellen was right and that we were going to lose people at the membership meeting. He said we need to encourage people to come and let them know why it's important. Horvit noted that Downie mentioned offering a door prize.

Donohue said that online voting could increase overall voting even if attendance is down at the membership meeting. Horvit agreed but cautioned that other groups that have switched to online voting report not having seen a significant increase in ballots cast.

Arizona Project - Horvit

Horvit said there is renewed interest in creating a movie about the Arizona Project, from some of those involved in the last negotiations via a new company. He went through the recent history of those efforts and said that the new proposal involves creating a new piece about the Arizona Project and using it to pitch the film. Discussion ensued and board members were asked to email Horvit with any questions or concerns.

Keynote/Showcase - Horvit

Horvit said work continues to line up a keynote speaker and to put together a showcase panel. Discussion ensued about possible candidates for both the keynote and the showcase and Horvit was instructed to keep the board apprised of progress.

Founders Award: Horvit

There was brief discussion about the Founders Award, which was approved by the board last fall to be given periodically (as opposed to annually). A committee needs to be assembled as a first step. Downie and fellow IRE founder Myrta Pulliam have both agreed to help with the process.

New budget reporting Format- Donohue

Donohue said that he is working with Horvit to create a supplemental budget report that will help Board members have a better understanding of the organization's proposed spending plan. He also recommends a quick orientation form for new Board members to give an idea of the big picture. Sample reports were distributed to Board members.

Cohen and Johnston expressed support and board members overall agreed.

New Business

* Johnston said Torres brought up the idea of creating a diversity committee. Johnston agreed that it's a good idea. He suggested the he and Horvit talk and then he would get back to Torres about it. Cohen noted that the Board has talked about this previously and debated whether this should be a separate committee or a charge given to existing committees to improve the organization's diversity. Torres replied that we keep talking about this but all we do is go around and around about it.

* Cohen asked if the organization was going to look more to doing more webinars and other online training. Horvit talked about what the organization has already done and noted that when he hired a second training director, the intention was for that position to focus a significant portion of its time on online training. However, the group has had so much demand for in-person training that the effort has been slow to evolve. He also noted that a number of organizations are offering free online training and that time needs to be spent researching the landscape. Donohue said it's also important to see how successful such training has been for other groups, financially. Cohen suggested that we should encourage our members to donate sessions they do that are recorded. For example, she is taping sessions for a course she's doing.

Johnston proposes that the meeting adjourn at 12:49 p.m.

Branstetter made a motion to adjourn; Watson seconded.
Unanimous approval.