

These minutes received approval by the IRE Executive Committee on February 25, 2023, via email.

- *Rosenthal moved for approval on February 25, 2023, via email.*
- *Galli seconded that motion and voted “yes” on February 25, 2023, via email.*
- *The final vote total was 4-1 to approve. Hinkle voted “no” on February 25, 2023, via email.*

IRE Executive Committee Meeting Minutes February 24, 2023 | Meeting via Zoom

President Mark Walker called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. CST.

Secretary Josh Hinkle called roll:

- Executive committee members present: At-Large Director Jodie Fleischer, Vice President Cindy Galli, Secretary Josh Hinkle, Treasurer Brian Rosenthal and President Mark Walker
 - Other IRE Board members present (silently observing or speaking when recognized): Kate Howard and Barbara Rodriguez

President’s Comments

Walker began the meeting by saying he had heard of some concerns that he had signed a letter with colleagues from the New York Times relating to the Times labor union’s response to criticism over the outlet’s coverage of transgender issues. Walker stated he signed the letter to support his colleagues and to support independent journalism. He reiterated his support for inclusivity and IRE’s LGBTQ+ community.

- Vice President Cindy Galli asked about the organization’s next move if attendees at the NICAR Conference have questions regarding Walker signing the letter.
 - Hinkle said he had spoken with some board members and the executive director for guidance and had prepared a proposed online public statement from the board. The statement did not take a stance related to the New York Times, its coverage or Walker but instead reaffirms IRE’s commitment to diversity and inclusion for all its members. He said he felt the board should say something publicly.
 - Walker said he is happy to speak one-on-one with any member who has questions.

Executive Session

Hinkle made a motion to enter executive session at 10:08 a.m. CST. Walker seconded the motion, which then received unanimous approval from committee members by voice vote.

- Committee members discussed the letter.
 - Directors Kate Howard and Barbara Rodriguez left the meeting at 11:10 a.m. CST.
- Committee members discussed their annual review of Executive Director Diana Fuentes.

Walker made a motion to exit executive session at 12:01 p.m. CST. Hinkle seconded the motion, which then received unanimous approval from committee members by voice vote.

Walker made a motion at 12:02 p.m. CST to adjourn the meeting. Fleischer seconded the motion, which received unanimous approval of committee members by voice vote.

After the meeting, Walker provided the following written comments that same date to be included on the record in the minutes:

"I signed this letter because I believed in the message it contained, and the importance of our newsroom to continue producing the journalism our audience expects of us.

I'm honored to work at The Times, have tremendous respect for my colleagues, and appreciate the support they've offered me as a reporter.

I've always been committed to serving and supporting all I.R.E. members – including those in the L.G.B.T.Q.+ community – and maintaining a discrimination-free organization where everyone can learn and be supported professionally."