



RTDNA Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes

Friday, March 7, 2025, 9 a.m. Eastern

National Press Building, Washington, DC | Zoom

ATTENDANCE

In Person: Sheryl Worsley, Tim Scheld, Colin Benedict, Kim Wilhelm, Robert Thomas, Jennifer Seelig, Alicia McDevitt, Stephanie Bertini, Blaise Labbe; Staff: Dan Shelley, Tara Puckey, Michael Sanserino, Christen DeBard, Kelby Dolan, Sharli Davidson

Virtual: Alex Silverman, Misty Montano, Monika Diaz, Lynn Hatter

WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER

Worsley calls the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Worsley and Scheld briefly recap the First Amendment Awards and thank staff for their efforts.

WHO ARE WE: A CONTINUED CONVERSATION

Puckey reviews the highlights from the December board retreat, and then the board splits into four groups to consider next steps.

Each group reports back with key takeaways from a variety of forward-facing prompts.

FUTURE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Puckey shares that staff has been considering an idea to move the date of the First Amendment Awards to coincide with annual conference as a way to find efficiencies and enhance purchasing power.

Board members share some potential pros and cons but are generally supportive of the idea, urging staff to explore the potential.

Puckey also shares that staff also would explore other opportunities to engage RTDNA throughout the country if we combine First Amendment Awards and conference.

RTDNA REPORTING

President Report

Shelley shares some positive feedback from First Amendment Award recipients/attendees.

Shelley also shares some advocacy updates, including:

- A letter RTDNA is signing urging the Senate to deny confirmation to a U.S. attorney nominee who has threatened to penalize journalists for critical coverage of the U.S. government
- Open records laws in New York
- Request for audio from a classified documents case with former President Biden
- Encryption issues throughout the U.S.

Shelley requests a motion to move to Executive Session to discuss proprietary advocacy issues and a personnel matter.

Benedict moves and Duffy seconds. The board unanimously approves.

Duffy moves to exit executive session. Benedict seconds. The board unanimously approves.

Executive Director Report

Puckey revisits the bylaws change addressing [governance](#) and another about post-conference board [meetings](#). The proposed changes will be sent to members March 14, and a board meeting will be held March 28 to vote on those proposed changes.

Puckey updates the board on a variety of grant proposals, including conversations and proposals with the CO2 Foundation, College Board, Press Forward, KFF, the Knight Foundation, Arnold Ventures, and Google.

She also shares updates on the 2025 Edward R. Murrow Awards, highlighting two software changes that have improved the contest. Revenue decreased year over year and fell short of 2025 budgeted figures, so staff will work to adjust spending in other areas to address the shortfall.

Lastly, Puckey highlights a Murrow Review process to address grievances pertaining to Murrow wins. She proposes language to add to the RTDNA website outlining the review process.

Worsley asks for a motion to approve the Murrow Review process.

Silverman moves and Scheld seconds. The board unanimously approves.

Chair Report

Worsley asks for committee liaisons to share updates with the rest of the board.

- Benedict shares some updates on the Education and Ethics committees.

- Scheld updates the board on the work of the Leadership Development Committee.
- Montano describes the work and goals of the Safety Committee to create digital training offerings that be shared broadly in the journalism community.
- There also are updates from the Awards and Finance committees and the Advocacy Advisory Council

Worsley asks for a motion to enter executive session to discuss a privileged legal matter.

Duffy moves and Benedict seconds. The board unanimously approves.

Benedict moves to exit executive session. Duffy seconds, and the board unanimously approves.

Chair-Elect Report

Benedict has nothing new to add that wasn't addressed in his committee report.

Treasurer Report

Duffy reports that industry headwinds have been challenging, and the markets have been volatile. He says the Association and Foundation treasurers are in regular conversation with investment advisors and that we are prepared to make changes, if advised.

Duffy also shares an update on the Association's cash on hand. He recommends purchasing a CD that will give the Association more flexibility.

Puckey describes some of the challenges with cash transactions between the Foundation and Association and what it means for the Foundation's investment portfolio.

Worsley asks for a motion to adjourn as the Association and convene as the Foundation.

Benedict moves, Duffy seconds. The board unanimously approves.

RTDNA FOUNDATION MEETING

Chair Report

Scheld discusses the scholarship/fellowship judging and selection process and says announcements should come soon.

Treasurer Report

Seelig updates the board on the current balances of Foundation accounts and encourages the board to donate in an effort to have full board participation.

Old Business

Scheld shares the process for selecting First Amendment Award winners has been beneficial and showed in the final slate of honorees at the 2025 event.

Scheld asks for a motion to adjourn as the Foundation and reconvene as the Association.

Duffy moves, Benedict seconds. The board unanimously approves.

OTHER BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

New Business

The board reviews a slate of potential honorees for the White and Hogan awards. Worsley asks for a motion to approve the list of nominees as presented.

Benedict moves, and Thomas seconds. The board unanimously approves.

Old Business

None

Meeting Minutes Approval

Duffy moves to approve the minutes from Sept. 13, 2024; Dec. 10, 2024; and Jan. 24, 2025, "en blanc." Benedict seconds. The board unanimously approves.

ADJOURNMENT

Thomas moves to adjourn. Labbe seconds. The board unanimously approves. The meeting adjourns at 1:09 p.m.