



RTDNA Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes

June 11, 2025 / New Orleans, Hotel Monteleone

ATTENDANCE: In-person: Sheryl Worsley, Tim Scheld, Colin Benedict, Jennifer Seelig, Monika Diaz, Alex Silverman, Vince Duffy, Kim Wilhelm, Robert Thomas, Lynn Hatter, Sherri Jackson, and Stephanie Bertini; Virtual: Blaise Labbe, Misty Montano (arrived one hour early because Tara Puckey messed up the meeting start times because of time zone confusion), Alisha McDevitt (ditto); staff: Dan Shelley, Tara Puckey, and Michael Sanserino; Other: Liz Alesse (incoming board member)

WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER

Worsley calls the meeting to order shortly after 9 a.m. She introduces incoming board member Liz Alesse, and the board does a brief round of introductions. Tara Puckey also introduces RTDNA staff on site to set up RTDNA25 at the hotel.

FORESIGHT EXERCISE

Board members split into groups to talk about the future of journalism and how RTDNA can adapt to fit the changing needs of journalists and news outlets. The exercise explores a variety of areas of expertise where RTDNA could make a difference moving forward.

2026 EVENTS

Puckey leads the board in a brainstorming session to consider events and locations where RTDNA could show up in 2025-26 to conduct its listening tour. The goal of these events/visits is to better understand the industry and personnel as the organization considers its future.

Puckey shares an update on the 2026 First Amendment Awards. The Watergate Hotel sent a contract proposal for the 2026 First Amendment Awards.

Silverman moves to authorize staff to sign a contract with the Watergate Hotel for the 2026 First Amendment Awards. Benedict seconds. The board unanimously approves.

RTDNA REPORTING

President's Report

Shelley details the many places RTDNA has been active on the advocacy front, including:

- A federal spending bill that would strip funding from public media
- The PRESS Act and its prospects after the change of administration
- Police radio encryption in New York
- Student journalists at Columbia, who covered protests about the war in Gaza
- Coverage of the deployment of the National Guard and Marines to Southern California, and treatment of journalists

The board engages in a brief discussion about continuity plans after Shelley's planned retirement at the end of 2025.

The board instructs Puckey and Sanserino to develop a transition plan for Shelley's departure and RTDNA advocacy to present at the next scheduled board meeting.

Executive Director's Report

Puckey shares financial reports from the first five months of the year. She also asks board members to assist either in judging the National Edward R. Murrow Awards or in helping to find judges for the awards.

Jackson moves to enter executive session to discussed a privileged legal matter. Duffy seconds. The board unanimously approves.

Benedict moves to leave executive session. Silverman seconds. The board unanimously approves.

Chair-Elect Report

Benedict thanks Worsley and Scheld for their efforts to include him in conversations about the future of the Association as he prepares to succeed Worsley at Association chair.

Treasurer Report

Duffy says the Association is in decent shape, despite projected revenue declines in the next 12-18 months and despite market volatility. RTDNA's investments are up 3%, and savings are in good shape.

Committee Reports

Worsley asks for committee liaisons to share with the board the activities of RTDNA's various volunteer-led committees. Labbe shares the activity of the Awards Committee. Benedict shares the activities of the Education and Ethics committees. Scheld details the work of the Leadership Development Committee, which appointed its first ever slate of candidates for the Board of Directors. Montano shares updates from the Safety Committee, adding that Brit Stack has been selected as Vice Chair of the committee. Worsley highlights the work of the Trust Working Group and how they've prepared for a super session at RTDNA25.

Duffy moves to adjourn as the Association and reconvene as the Foundation. Thomas seconds. The board unanimously approves.

RTDNA FOUNDATION MEETING

Treasurer Report

Seelig shares positive news from the Foundation's investment accounts. She also shares some of the larger expenses the Foundation incurred during the First

Amendment Awards in March. She also encouraged Foundation trustees to donate to the foundation, as it is helpful in soliciting donations from others.

Chair Report

Scheld celebrates the scholarship and fellowship recipients, who are in town for RTDNA25.

Old Business

None

New Business

Scheld is rolling off the board after 10 years of service. He thanks those who helped mentor him as a member of the board and helped support him in his leadership positions.

Worsley thanks Scheld for his service and mentorship.

Benedict moves to adjourn as the Foundation and reconvene as the Association. Jackson seconds. The board unanimously approves.

OTHER BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

New Business

Shelley brings to the board's attention a proposal to sign onto a letter from the ACLU. He recommends RTDNA not sign on to this letter, for fear of being misinterpreted. The board generally agrees.

Worsley recognizes departing board members:

- Misty Montano
- Galean Stewart
- Monika Diaz
- Sherri Jackson

- Sean McLaughlin
- Alisha McDevitt

Old Business

Puckey details the mechanism to elect the next Foundation trustee, which will happen

Meeting Minutes Approval

The board approves minutes from meetings on March 7, March 28, and May 20.

ADJOURNMENT

Jackson moves to adjourn. Silverman seconds. The board unanimously approves.