



Minutes

RTDNA September Board Meeting (Opening)

📅 Wed September 9th, 2020

🕒 2:00pm - 5:00pm EDT

📍 Zoom Meeting

👤 In Attendance

Fiona Conway, Ellen Crooke, Bill Dallman, Christen DeBard, Scott Diener, Vince Duffy, Sherri Jackson, Mark Kraham, Blaise Labbe, Chip Mahaney, Alisha McDevitt, Allison McGinley, Brandon Mercer, Lauren Olson, Tara Puckey, Jam Sardar, Tim Scheld, Dan Shelley, Terence Shepherd, Andrea Stahlman, Loren Tobia, David Wagner, Kathy Walker, Jerry Walsh, Sheryl Worsley, Kimberly Wyatt

I. **Welcome & Roll Call**

Chairman Terence Shepherd called the meeting to order at 2:03 pm Eastern.

- a. **Chair Welcome Remarks**
- b. **Roll Call**
- c. **Assignment of Minutes**

II. **Chairman Report**

a. **Remarks**

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Terence recommends all board members learn more and work harder, to better understand issues of racial equity in the newsroom and in society at large. He thanked Ellen Crooke for inviting him to moderate the TEGNA panel on this issue for the NABJ convention.

Terence noted that he received strong urging from the staff to consider ways to boost diversity on board of directors and among executive committee members, and has committed to doing so as 2020-2021 chairman of nominations.

Governance: Terence recommends that the next chairman look to revise the bylaws and close the loophole that allows a person to run for more than one office during the same election cycle. Governance also should look at the 1-year-membership requirement before a person can run for the board.

Ethics: In addition to covering crime, the organization possibly could use guidelines on Gender Identification, similar to what we have on racial identification

https://www.rtdna.org/content/racial_identification
(https://www.rtdna.org/content/racial_identification)

Also, given recent attention to the Amazon situation (<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/05/26/local-tv-stations-air-amazon-pr-piece-on-worker-safety.html>), it might be smart for us to update our coverage guidelines for use of non-editorial audio and video news releases (https://www.rtdna.org/content/non_editorial_audio_video).

b. **Executive Session: Confidential Matter**

The Board of Directors returned from Executive Session at 2:25 pm Eastern. The professional staff returned.

Decision: Sheryl Worsley made a motion we move into Executive Session, without the professional RTDNA staff, to discuss a confidential matter. Loren Tobia seconds. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote. The Board of Directors entered Executive Session, without the professional staff, at 2:06pm Eastern.

III. **Executive Director Report**

a. **VFA Policy Updates**

Please prepare for this portion. of the meeting by reviewing and watching the (10-minute) video included in the materials.

- General questions about where we are at in the process/what comes next
- How leadership can alert staff to issues in their home state
- What opportunities are there to bring this to local groups/present to journalists state by state
- Help introduce influencers in state and local government
- Voice of the First Amendment Task Force Update
 - New video developed by RTDNA and Barefoot to highlight the great work which has been doing in the last few years
 - Details were sent to the Board on a new 5-point proposal (check your e-mail)
 - This outline was sent to board members.
 - It will be the focus of the Voice of the First Amendment Task Force going forward.
 - Dan asked for the Board to assist in First Amendment and press freedoms projects they know about.
 - Also, the Board should help advise Dan on local journalism meetings and meetings RTDNA can setup for local journalists.

- Task Force has been involved in projects in 48 of the 50 states so far.
- 800 press infractions across the country since the end of May in the United States
 - Majority have come at the hands of police.
 - Engaged in efforts in Washington to reach out to U.S. Senators and U.S. House members. Dozens of letters have been sent already to congressional leaders. Focus right now is with the U.S. House.
 - Legislation which would allow journalists to lawfully record police in certain situations. Issues have developed in recent months where police have been interfered with.

IV. **Treasurer Report**

Tobia reported that finances were stable and that PNC was doing a good job managing our accounts despite the year's challenges.

V. **2019 RTDNA/F Audit Presentation**

Must start at 3 p.m.

Representatives from Greenwalt Accounting presented the financial audits for both the Association and Foundation. The reports were clean and they reported that the finances were well accounted for in the prior year.

- a. **2019 RTDNA Audit Presentation**
- b. **2019 RTDNF Audit Presentation**

VI. **Chief Staff Officer Report**

a. **September Sweeps Update**

September Sweeps is currently underway. Attendance is obviously not what the conference would be, but we're seeing good engagement and are happy with sponsorship support.

b. **Murrow Awards Celebration Update**

The Murrow Awards Celebration is in production and will "air" in early October. Sponsorships are coming in and we're pleased with how things are flowing so far.

c. **RTDNA21 Conference Recommendation**

Staff recommends that RTDNA enter into a contract with Hilton Denver City Center for the 2021 conference to take place Sept. 24-25, 2021. The site visit was exceptional, the space is good, and they were willing to work with the organization on additional contract aspects particular to cancellation amid the pandemic.

Decision: Walker moved to accept staff recommendation, Scheld seconded and the motion passed.

VII. **Foundation Meeting**

a. **Adjourn as Association and Convene as Foundation**

Foundation meeting began at 1:10 p.m.

Decision: Motion to adjourn as association and convene as the foundation by Sheryl Worsley. Seconded by David Wagner. Motion passed with no opposition.

b. **Chair Report**

c. **Treasurer Report**

After paying out scholarships this year, about \$35k, the account balance at PNC is just shy of \$1.9 million, Loren, Dan and Kathy have met monthly. We are still up \$18k in our investment account this year. We know we will have some bumpiness in the market.

d. **New Business**

Shelley reported on the Bob Horner Scholarship: He was an honoree at FAD in March. Paperwork was executed last week and we now have the funds in house or will be soon. \$50,000 donation for annual award of \$2,500 for college students. We must notify him/son of recipients. If there's not enough in the corpus we need to contact Bob, who will make up the difference. Puckey reported that we are currently announcing this year's scholarship/fellowship winners. Once applications are open for a new class, this scholarship will kick things off.

e. **Old Business**

f. **Adjourn as Foundation and Convene as Association**

Decision: Motion to adjourn as foundation and reconvene as association by Kathy Walker. Second Chip Mahaney. Motion passed with no opposition.

VIII. **Committee Reporting/Work**

If committees do not have *new* activity to report, please consider "giving back" your time so we can shorten the virtual meeting.

a. **Ethics Committee**

Tim Scheld gave a report regarding new coverage guidelines and projects completed by the ethics committee, including one to work with others on some new guidelines that may relate to coverage of race and crime.

Decision: Brandon Mercer moved to accept the recommendation of the committee to move forward on the project, and Vince Duffy seconded. Motion passed.

b. **Awards Committee**

Jam Sardar explained progress from the committee and some things they're addressing, including the amount of public versus private radio stations that produce news.

c. **Moonshot Committee**

Kathy Walker reported that the Moonshot Committee met with staff to talk through some anniversary ideas and the brainstorming was productive.

d. **Governance/Membership Committee**

Blaise Labbe talked about the activities of the committee over the past few months, which included some possible changes to bylaws related to elections and eligibility. Vince Duffy shared his praise of the committee for working to tackle some really critical issues to our processes.

e. **Nominating Committee**

The nominations committee discussed White/Hogan winners and was reported by Vince Duffy in Jerry Walsh's absence.

Decision: Jam Sardar moved to approve the White slate and was seconded by Ellen Crooke. Motion passed.

Decision: Jam Sardar moved to approve the Hogan slate and was seconded by Sheryl Worsley. Motion passed.

IX. **New Business**

X. **Old Business**

XI. **Adjournment**

Decision: Jam Sardar made a motion to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Mark Kraham. Motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.