

SPJ Madison Business Meeting

6 pm, Monday, Sept. 10, 2018

Working Draft Beer Company, 1129 E Wilson St., Madison

Members present: Acting President/Vice President/Treasurer Lauren Fuhrmann; Secretary Briana Reilly; Executive Board Member Breann Schossow; Sam Martino; Gordon Govier; Shelley Mesch; Hayley Sperling; Victoria Davis; Natalie Yahr; Emily Neinfeldt.

1. Call to order: Acting President Lauren Fuhrmann calls the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.
2. Approval of minutes: Executive Board Member Breann Schossow motions to approve the minutes without changes. Secretary Briana Reilly seconds. The board approves the minutes unanimously.
3. Treasurer's Report: Acting President Lauren Fuhrmann notes there wasn't much activity over the summer. In all, the club logged \$250 in income from June to August. That came from a \$250 check from the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism for the Watchdog Awards. The club also reimbursed Secretary Briana Reilly \$180 in June for the summer picnic park reservation, the only expense over the period. That leaves an ending balance of \$3,542.32. With Fuhrmann going on maternity leave at the end of September, she suggests doing a quarterly treasurer's report going forward. Executive Board Member Breann Schossow notes there's nothing in the bylaws compelling the club to do a monthly report. Fuhrmann says she will add Schossow to the SPJ bank account. Schossow motions to approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Sam Martino. Approved by the board on a voice vote.
4. Membership Report: Acting President Lauren Fuhrmann says she hadn't looked at membership figures. Executive Board Member Breann Schossow said membership is likely in the low 30s and has asked the national chapter for an update but hasn't yet received one. Sam Martino says he has recruitment materials from the national chapter that he can share with board members.
5. President's Report
 - a. SPJ Summer Picnic recap: Acting President Lauren Fuhrmann notes that with the club's best event being the December Holiday Party, board members tried to replicate that in the summer with this event. But, she said, it ended up turning into past President Mark Pitsch's going away party. Secretary Briana Reilly notes the event was moderately attended, and adds the location and weather were good. But she asks whether members think it's worth continuing to plan in the future. Sam Martino argues it isn't, and the club's time would be better spent on other things. Shelley Mesch notes most newspaper or news publications offices don't have holiday or summer parties, so if SPJ is able to do more to fill that void, the club can likely continue building off of it in coming years. Fuhrmann suggests the low attendance could have been more of a timing issue. People are vacationing and generally busier in the summer, she notes. Victoria Davis suggests holding a similar event in the spring instead of the summer. That way, she said, the event would still be during the school year. Natalie Yahr says she doesn't see the event as much of a loss, given that it was a potluck and therefore the club didn't have to invest much money upfront to pull it off. Executive Board Member Breann Schossow suggests the club hold a similar event again but at a different location and in a different time of the year. Past surveys, she noted, found that weeknights are good for many people. Martino cautions members not to spread themselves too thin, reminding them to keep the club's mission statement in mind. Fuhrmann says the events are aimed to bring people together and grow the chapter.
 - b. WCIJ 10th anniversary recap (Sept. 6): Acting President Lauren Fuhrmann says around 150 people turned out to WCIJ's 10th anniversary celebration.
 - c. Excellence in Journalism, September: Executive Board Member Breann Schossow says she isn't sure she'll be able to attend because it's during WPR's pledge drive. If she is able, Schossow said she could fly out that Saturday and vote, before flying back to Madison later that day. But she says she has also asked nationals permission to vote remotely. Acting President Lauren Fuhrmann said the chapter would subsidize the costs of Schossow's trip if she ends up flying.
6. Upcoming events: Holiday Party: The board decides on Thursday, Dec. 13 as the date for the Holiday Party, after Executive Board members provide everyone in attendance with a rundown of the event and its importance to the club. Executive Board Member Breann Schossow volunteers to reach out to Argus to book space. The conversation turns to who or which organization should be the beneficiary of this year's proceeds. Acting President Lauren Fuhrmann notes WCIJ has been suggested in the past, but she doesn't want the club to single out certain charitable news organizations over others, especially given her position on the board and employment with WCIJ. Shelley mesch suggests using the proceeds for

internships or stipends for journalism students working at unpaid internships. Fuhrmann and Natalie Yahr voice support for the idea, though Fuhrmann dislikes the idea of giving employers an out to not pay their interns. Yahr suggests using the money for scholarships for students to attend conferences or training sessions. She says she will look into more information on scholarships and other funds at UW-Madison. Sam Martino suggests supporting a high school press association, namely the Kettle Moraine Press Association. Mesch also raises the idea of donating to MATC's student newspaper, and says she will look more into their publication.

7. Discussion: Board membership: Acting President Lauren Fuhrmann says the club will hold board elections in January, adding she'll stay on as acting president until then. At that point, Executive Board Member Breann Schossow will step into the role. Other roles open then, Schossow says, would be a social media director or newsletter head. Victoria Davis expresses interest in social media, while Shelley Mesch says she would be interested in being an Executive Board member. Schossow notes individuals cannot join the Executive Board unless they first pay SPJ dues. She also highlights the need to talk strategy soon, including the best ways to serve area news media. Sam Martino suggests reaching out to higher profile names to join the board, but Hayley Sperling says many older journalists are transitioning out of the industry. Schossow says young journalists have time to devote to this organization. On other board roles, Secretary Briana Reilly notes the club could opt to split up the vice president and treasurer positions, which Fuhrmann currently holds as a singular role. Meanwhile, Schossow suggests subsidizing membership rates for any board members who join this year. Mesch seconds and the board unanimously approves it.

8. Discussion: Replacing Mark Pitsch on the Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council: Sam Martino expresses interest in joining. Executive Board Member Breann Schossow motions to approve, and Gordon Govier seconds. It receives unanimous approval. Acting President Lauren Fuhrmann says she will tell FOIC head Bill Lueders.

9. Discussion: Speed dating event: Executive Board Member Breann Schossow recaps the spring 2017 event, which brought together editors, journalists and journalism students alike.

10. Discussion: Post-general election panel: Secretary Briana Reilly says she's been in talks with UW-Madison officials about NPR media reporter David Folkenflik moderating a panel for the week after the November election. She says journalism professor Katy Culver told her there were already plans in the works for UW to host a panel with Folkenflik called "Media After the Midterms: Journalism Ethics in a Contentious Age" that would touch on the general election results. Culver had invited Reilly and SPJ to partner on UW's event, a suggestion Reilly says the club should take up. Members agree, and suggest the club get a table at the event to promote SPJ. Stickers could be available at the table, they say, to handout. Members also agree to hold a speed dating event this fall, as well as partner on the panel. Members also discuss having SPJ members available at the speed dating event for "Ask a Journalist" Q&A's with journalism students who are waiting to talk to editors.

11. Discussion: Hunter contest: Shelley Mesch makes a motion to approve the Hunter award this year, seconded by Executive Board Member Breann Schossow. It receives unanimous approval.

12. Next meeting: Mon., Oct. 1: Sam Martino says he will be unable to attend, and Acting President Lauren Fuhrmann will be out on maternity leave. Executive Board Member Breann Schossow says she will lead the meeting. Members agree to hold it at Next Door Brewing Company.

13. Action: Reimbursements: Acting President Lauren Fuhrmann requests \$19.95 for plates from the summer picnic. Executive Board Member Breann Schossow makes a motion to accept, and Secretary Briana Reilly seconds, followed by unanimous approval.

14. New Business: Sam Martino suggests adding the Speaker's Bureau to the next meeting's agenda, and he calls on members to review the mission statement next month as well. Executive Board Member Breann Schossow says a happy hour event with Craig Gilbert of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel is in the works for Sept. 27. Hayley Sperling suggests that members hold office hours during the day to talk to journalism students or young reporters to offer advice. She says those hours could be held over lunch at various coffee shops, adding there are many who work in Vilas, like her, that could take the lead.

15. Adjourn: Sam Martino motions to adjourn at 7:14 p.m. Acting President Lauren Fuhrmann seconds, followed by unanimous approval.