

**MINUTES  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS  
JAN. 11, 2017  
CONFERENCE CALL**

SPJ's Executive Committee was unable to reach a quorum for the conference call, therefore no business (motions) could be conducted. However, it was decided to conduct the call so that those participating could hear the report from the Society's independent audit firm.

The call took place at 4:15 p.m. ET on Jan. 11, 2017.

In addition to the call, committee members received the report a week in advance and were given the opportunity to review and ask questions.

Following the call, an e-mail was sent to executive committee members asking them to accept the audited financials via consent vote.

All seven responded to accept the audited financials.

Below are the notes from the Jan. 11 call.

Present for all or a portion of the call were Immediate Past President Paul Fletcher, Vice President of Campus Chapter Affairs Sue Kopen Katcef, at-large member Bill McCloskey.

Staff members present for the meeting were Executive Director Joe Skeel, controller Jake Koenig, Bookkeeper Sarah Beck and Associate Executive Director Tara Puckey. Representing Greenwalt CPAs were Amanda Meko and Jennifer McVey.

**FISCAL YEAR 2016 AUDIT**

The purpose of the meeting was to consider the draft of the Fiscal Year 2016 audited financials.

Meko shared that the independent accounting team no disagreements with and received full cooperation from staff.

She noted the Society had one immaterial misstatement, but the accounting firm agreed with staff not to adjust the Fiscal Year 2015 financials.

It also recorded an adjustment to a payment received from Google. The payment (\$100,000) to fund the Google News Lab training program should have been categorized as a multi-year grant. Therefore, it was adjusted on the balance sheet. This adjustment had no impact on the bottom line.

Although the team did not identify any operational deficiencies, it did offer a best-practices recommendation. The audit firm recommended that SPJ consider a credit card policy. This

policy could be helpful in times of misuse, as well as provide parameters on who will have cards, how they may be used and the distribution of any points earned. Skeel said he would prepare a policy for board consideration.

McVey walked committee members through a few of the financial statements, specifically the Statement of Activities and the Statement of Financial Position.

She noted that the society returned a clean report, which is the best rating an organization can receive.

McVey explained that SPJ had a slight decrease in revenue, mostly related to fewer grants received from the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation. The decrease was related to the Foundation managing its own training programs instead of granting that money to SPJ. She did point out that revenue from association management increased as the result of three new clients.

She reported that SPJ's unrestricted net assets increased. In 2015, SPJ could survive 5.8 months at the current expense level (assuming no new revenue came in). In 2016, that increased to 7.6 months. McVey said the recommended amount is 3-6 months.

One correction was made to the drafts, reclassifying about \$5,500 as permanently restricted for the First Amendment Forever Fund endowment. This was mistakenly earmarked as temporarily restricted.

The call ended at about 4:45.