

Asian American Journalists Association
SPRING 2007 NATIONAL BOARD MEETING
March 16-17, 2007
Hyatt Regency, Miami

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

FRIDAY, MARCH 16, 2007

PRESENT:

Officers: Jeanne Mariani-Belding, National President; Jam Sardar, National Vice President for Broadcast; Janet Cho, National Vice President for Print; Cynthia Wang, National Treasurer; Janet Tu, National Secretary

Board members: Katie Nelson-Arizona; Richard Lui-Atlanta; Ameet Sachdev-Chicago; Gail Rayos-Florida; Kristine Uyeno-Hawaii; Richard Chang-Los Angeles; Caroline Paras-Los Angeles; Frank Witsil-Michigan; Nancy Ngo-Minnesota; Tara Smith-New England; Anne Marie Cruz-New York; Cheryl Tan-New York; Ellen Sung-North Carolina; Jam Sardar-Philadelphia (proxy for Pankaj Paul); Maya Blackmun-Portland; Jennifer Morita-Sacramento; Don Chareunsky-San Diego; Matt Dunn-San Francisco/Bay Area; Jessie Mangaliman-San Francisco/Bay Area; Sharon Chan-Seattle; Athima Chansanchai-Seattle; Suzanne Marta-Texas; Doris Truong-Washington, D.C. (also as proxy for Angeline Hartmann)

Staff: Rene Astudillo, Executive Director; Janice Lee, Deputy Executive Director; Antonio Salas, Membership and Chapter Development Manager

Guests: Ivette Yee and Paul Cheung, 2007 convention co-chairs - for lunch only

ABSENT:

Board members: Ching-Ching Ni-Asia (no proxy); Pankaj Paul-Philadelphia (Jam Sardar was proxy); Angeline Hartmann-Washington, D.C. (Truong was proxy)

1. **Call to Order** (Mariani-Belding)

Meeting called to order at 9:15 a.m.

2. **Roll call** (Tu)

Roll call conducted. Quorum was met.

3. **President's Report** (Mariani-Belding)

Mariani-Belding said she would wait until after the UNITY meeting and send her report by e-mail afterward.

4. **Treasurer's Report** (Wang)

Wang discussed last year's budget turn-around, from the expected deficit to a surplus. One big factor was having chapters involved in funding activities like J Camp.

5. **Executive Director's Report** (Astudillo)

(See documents "Executive Director's Report" and "Fundraising Report," submitted by Astudillo)

Astudillo said last year's budget turn-around was due to a number of factors including the McCormick Tribune grant, chapter contributions to J Camp, and additional donations. He emphasized the need to continue to fundraise, given that much of AAJA's assets are restricted to specific programs. There are some programs that aren't yet fully funded, such as J Camp.

Astudillo said AAJA's accountant said all chapters have submitted their financial reports.

6. **Chapter Business**

Chapter Reports (National Board representatives)

(See document "Chapter Updates," submitted by some chapters' National Board representatives)

Each chapter representative gave a brief update on recent chapter activities. Of particular interest: New York is working with Washington, D.C., on an East Coast mini-conference. Smith said the New England chapter decided it would no longer fund scholarships, instead using the money to fund internships.

Proposed Guidelines for Groups Seeking Pre-Certification Status (Tu)

(See document "Proposed AAJA Guidelines for Groups Petitioning for Chapter Pre-Certification Status," submitted by Tu)

Tu presented proposed guidelines that set out steps that the National Board and groups seeking chapter pre-certification status should follow. She said the proposal attempts to clarify what the Board and groups' responsibilities are.

Blackmun said she felt the \$450 one-time travel assistance, to help the petitioning group defray the cost of sending a representative to a National Board meeting, should not apply to Board meetings held at conventions, since those who go to convention get something out of convention. But she supports the travel assistance to send the representative to a non-convention Board meeting. Most felt the \$450 one-time travel assistance should apply to whichever meeting the petitioning group's representative wants to attend.

Brief discussion was held emphasizing that the Board wants to encourage chapter growth, but that having more chapters also means more costs and time for national AAJA, so it's important to ascertain whether petitioning groups are sustainable. Point was made that the guidelines are good to have since they clarify processes that have been informal thus far.

Wisconsin Petition Update (Tu)

Tu said she is the Governing Board liaison working with the Wisconsin group on its pre-certification petition. Tu said the Wisconsin group has requested that its petition be put on hold for now, since it is re-grouping after its main organizer and liaison left on a fellowship.

Sung mentioned what worked well for North Carolina as it was going through its pre-certification process was Sung going to Camp AAJA while she was a Board representative for At-Large members. Witsil wondered if there's a way for larger chapters to support smaller or emerging chapters in, for instance, going to Camp AAJA.

7. **Pending Business**

2007 Focus Project (Tu)

(See document "Focus Project," submitted by coordinator Abe Kwok)

Tu referred people to the Focus Project update submitted by Kwok. AAJA is working with the Arizona State University journalism dean on a survey of AAJA's membership as the focus project. Sardar asked Board representatives to encourage their chapter members to respond to the survey once it's sent out.

Bylaws Revision Update (Tu)

(See documents "Proposed Bylaws Revisions" and "Proposed Bylaws Revisions Pertaining to Formation of New Chapters," submitted by Tu, which are the proposed revisions submitted by the Bylaws Task Force, chaired by Stanton Tang)

Tu asked all Board members to carefully review the proposed bylaws revisions, and bring them to their chapters for review and input. The Governing Board will be voting on the proposed revisions at the summer Board meeting. Tu presented the following rough timeline for the process:

- Board members should e-mail any comments on the proposed revisions to Tu by Friday, April 13.
- Tu will forward the comments, along with supporting information on the proposed revisions, to the policy committee by Friday, April 20.
- The policy committee will forward its recommendations and comments to Tu by Friday, June 1.
- Tu will send the final document on the proposed revisions via e-mail to National Board members by Friday, June 29. National Board members should discuss the proposed revisions with their chapters prior to the summer Board meeting. Online discussions may also be held among Board members on the revisions prior to the summer Board meeting.
- At the summer Board meeting, there will be one final Advisory Board discussion of the bylaws revisions during the Advisory Board meeting. The Governing Board will then vote on the revisions at its meeting.

Tu said there is only one portion of the proposed bylaws revisions that will be voted on at the Governing Board meeting this Saturday: to increase to 10 the number of full members needed to petition to become a chapter. That is so the Proposed Guidelines for Groups Seeking Pre-Certification Status can also be voted on at the meeting.

ACTIONS NEEDED: See above timeline of actions.

Other (from Fall Governing Board Meeting)

No issue was brought up.

8. **National Convention Reports**

2007 Miami Convention

Update was given later at this meeting, during lunch (see below).

2008 UNITY Convention in Chicago (Astudillo)

The convention dates are July 23-27. Astudillo said it was the recommendation of the four UNITY groups' executive directors to follow the same revenue-split formula as in 2004. There may be some slight changes in registration fees because many of the organizations have increased registration fees for their own organizations' conventions. The gala banquets of all four groups will be held at the convention center. Other association events – such as ELP or Board meetings – will probably be held at convention hotels.

2009 Boston Convention (Smith, Astudillo)

Smith said local chapter members are beginning to identify convention funders and themes. Smith said given the difficulties affecting local media, this is an opportunity to look outside the media box for funders. They are planning to theme the convention around science, medicine and technology, perhaps focusing plenaries and town halls on that subject. They are also trying to make good connections to individual donors and the local Asian community. Smith said the fundraising effort will be widespread – everyone from Burlington Free Press to the Providence Journal, etc.

Smith said, of the non-media companies, they are communicating with pharmaceutical and tech companies. Discussion ensued on whether some companies might not fit with the emphasis of AAJA. Astudillo said AAJA's general policy was to approach media companies first; then in terms of non-media companies, the main restriction is that they not be controversial. But what's considered controversial is something that's been discussed for many years. If there's a question about a specific company, that would be discussed by the Governing Board. Blackmun said the general feeling that's emerged is that such information should be shared. Several members raised concerns about specific companies sponsoring specific workshops or panels in their area of interest/business.

2010 Convention Bidding (Astudillo)

(See documents “AAJA National Convention Chapter Bidding” and “Hosting an AAJA National Convention,” submitted by National Staff)

Astudillo outlined the process for bidding. Bids will be taken at the upcoming summer Board meeting. Staff will then make site visits, and the Governing Board will make a decision in fall 2007.

Question was asked about holding the convention in Las Vegas or New Orleans or another city without a chapter. Astudillo said the general thought is that if no chapter bids for a convention, the Board would consider having the convention in a city without a chapter. But the preference is to have it in a city with a chapter.

9. **New Business**

Discussion on National Awards Committee (Tan)

Tan wanted to know what Board members thought of establishing a national awards committee, rather than having a different chapter do it each year. Board members thought this would be a good idea, to have some consistency about the criteria for awards and to elevate the prestige of the award. Members offered suggestions such as naming the award to make it more prestigious – like the NAACP Image Awards; and having the judges not be AAJA members. Tan said she could come up with a proposal for how the committee should be structured. Additional suggestions on this should be sent to Tan.

ACTION NEEDED: Tan will draft a written proposal for formation of a national awards committee.

Discussion on Teleconferencing for National Board Meetings (Mariani-Belding)

Mariani-Belding wanted to see what Board members thought of having some participation by teleconferencing. She said teleconferencing wouldn't take the place of in-person board meetings. Rather, it would be for board members who have a valid reason for not being able to attend and are unable to find a proxy. Smith said it would be helpful to allow teleconferencing because of the time and cost factor for small chapters. Marta said teleconferencing was not really practicable, even for a few short hours, and that her chapter decided to fund its National Board representative's travel, if the representative's company doesn't do so, because it's a cost of doing business. Tan said there was great value in in-person meetings. Mariani-Belding concurred, saying the Board should hold in-person meetings. But if an emergency comes up at the last minute for a representative, it can be taken on a case-by-case basis.

Any New Business

Sardar said he would like to present a proposal at the summer Board meeting on online voting for AAJA elections. Anyone with suggestions should contact Sardar before then.

Working Lunch

2007 Miami Convention (Yee, Cheung, Rayos)

(See document "Welcome to Miami AAJA Advisory Board of Directors," submitted by Yee and Cheung)

During lunch, Yee, Cheung and Rayos gave updates on the 2007 Miami convention. Yee said they're in the process of confirming the gala speaker. Paul Steiger of the Wall Street Journal will be the awards luncheon speaker. Yee also said the first round of proposals for programming is in.

Cheung said the opening gala will be at the new performing arts center, about a 10-minute drive from the hotel. They are looking for sponsorships for transportation from the hotel to the gala and also trying to offer other transportation options. They are talking with the local transportation agency about a possible increased run of public transit.

Rayos said they've already secured some funders and are still talking with others, including non-media companies.

Truong said she and Victoria Lim are co-chairing convention programming. They are trying to make each panel appeal to everyone by having print, broadcast, and new media representatives on each. They are also trying to have a lot of skills-building workshops – offering things that people can take back and immediately use.

10. **Announcements**

Summer Board Meetings

The summer Chapter Presidents' and Treasurers' meeting will be Saturday, Aug. 4. The summer Advisory Board meeting will likely be Saturday, Aug. 4, with the Governing Board meeting likely Sunday, Aug. 5 and maybe Wednesday, Aug. 1. A schedule will be worked out soon and Tu will alert people by e-mail of exact dates.

ACTION NEEDED: The exact dates of the Board's summer meetings will be decided, and Tu will send an e-mail to National Board members with the dates.

Chapter Announcements

Truong encouraged people to attend the East Coast mini-conference scheduled for March 31 in Washington, D.C.

11. **Board Committee Breakouts**

(See document "Strategic Plan Update & Board Committees," submitted by Lee)

Breakout sessions for Board committee work for the rest of the day. Then reconvened.

Tu moved to recess. Paras seconded. Motion passes.

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

SATURDAY MARCH 17, 2007

PRESENT:

Officers: Jeanne Mariani-Belding, National President; Jam Sardar, National Vice President for Broadcast; Janet Cho, National Vice President for Print; Cynthia Wang, National Treasurer; Janet Tu, National Secretary

Board members: Katie Nelson-Arizona; Ameet Sachdev-Chicago; Gail Rayos-Florida; Kristine Uyeno-Hawaii; Richard Chang-Los Angeles; Caroline Paras-Los Angeles; Frank Witsil-Michigan; Nancy Ngo-Minnesota; Tara Smith-New England; Anne Marie Cruz-New York; Cheryl Tan-New York; Ellen Sung-North Carolina; Jam Sardar-Philadelphia (proxy for Pankaj Paul); Maya Blackmun-Portland; Jennifer Morita-Sacramento; Don Chareunsky-San Diego; Matt Dunn-San Francisco/Bay Area; Jessie Mangaliman-San Francisco/Bay Area; Sharon Chan-Seattle; Athima Chansanchai-Seattle; Suzanne Marta-Texas; Doris Truong-Washington, D.C. (also as proxy for Angeline Hartmann)

Staff: Rene Astudillo, Executive Director; Janice Lee, Deputy Executive Director; Antonio Salas, Membership and Chapter Development Manager

ABSENT:

Board members: Ching-Ching Ni-Asia (no proxy); Richard Lui-Atlanta (no proxy); Pankaj Paul-Philadelphia (Jam Sardar was proxy); Angeline Hartmann-Washington, D.C. (Truong was proxy)

12. **Call to Order** (Mariani-Belding)

Meeting called to order at 9:05 a.m.

13. **Roll call** (Tu)

Roll call conducted. Quorum was met.

14. **National Convention Reports – 2007 Convention Assignment Updates** (National Board representatives)

(See document “Convention Assignment Highlights,” submitted by Lee)

It was noted that Friday’s convention update reports neglected to include updates on 2007 convention assignments. Board members each gave updates. Of particular note: The Arizona, Chicago and Texas chapters are working on the silent auction. They request high-dollar-amount items from chapters. Mariani-Belding asked that they inform the Board where to send auction items once they know. Michigan chapter is working on special awards judging – Witsil asked for more entries to widen the candidate pool. Philadelphia and Sacramento chapters are coordinating volunteers – Morita asked chapters to look for volunteers.

15. **Governing Board Elections** (Tu)

Election was conducted to fill the Governing Board position vacated by Michael Rocha. Dunn was elected to fill Rocha’s term.

16. **Board Committee Discussions and Proposals**

Finance (Wang):

(See document “Finance Committee Reference Documents,” submitted by Lee)

Wang is chair. Wang said Sachdev, Paul, Chan and Sung are also listed as members of the committee. She's unsure if Sachdev and Paul wish to continue. Tu was added to the committee.

Wang handed out a rough draft proposal of revised fundraising guidelines. She explained the proposal is an attempt to clarify some vagueness in the past regarding, for instance, what constitutes "controversial" companies. Wang said she would like the Governing Board to vote on the guidelines at the summer Board meeting, and asked everyone to get back to their chapters with the proposal to solicit feedback and suggestions. Chapters should keep in mind that the policy would apply to them, as well as National.

Blackmun asked that the guidelines clarify language on what is a "skills building workshop" versus "training workshop," or "panel." Astudillo asked that the guidelines spell out in the affirmative what AAJA can take non-media money for: town halls and receptions, for instance. Feedback should go to Wang well before the summer Board meeting.

Wang also outlined other planned actions for the finance committee:

- Identify who will be on the endowment sub-committee.
- Achieve 100 percent participation of the Advisory Board and chapter boards in donating to the endowment campaign.
- Ask each Advisory Board member to come up with five names of local people to approach for fundraising by the summer Board meeting. At the summer Board meeting, Wang will ask each Board member to have the chapter contact one person on their funding list.
- Encourage each Board member to set a personal fundraising goal.

ACTIONS NEEDED: Wang will lead further online discussion of proposed revised fundraising guidelines. She will then craft a proposal to present at the summer Board meeting. Advisory Board members will come up with names of five people in their locale that could be approached for fundraising.

Policy & Issues (Blackmun):

(See document "Inquiries about Advertising on AAJA Website," submitted by Lee)

Blackmun is chair. Ngo, Chansanchai, Morita and Smith are members.

Regarding taking ads on AAJA's national Web site, she said the national office gets requests from time to time to advertise on the Web site. She said, philosophically, the committee is fine with taking ads on the Web site. The committee is waiting for details on the fundraising guidelines, so criteria for taking ads on the Web site can dovetail with those guidelines. Question was asked if other journalism organizations take ads on their Web sites. Some do; some don't. Some Board members said if AAJA decides to take ads, they should not be pop-up ads.

Regarding bylaws revisions, Blackmun said they could have a report ready so the first revisions are ready to vote on by the summer Board meeting. The committee will also probably come up with a schedule for future bylaws revisions, to avoid piecemeal revisions.

ACTION NEEDED: Prepare committee report on bylaws revisions for Governing Board vote on the revisions in August. Propose schedule for future bylaws revisions.

MediaWatch (Tan):

(See document “MediaWatch Committee/Representatives, Tracking Update Report & Guidelines,” submitted by Lee)

Tan is co-chair. Nelson, Chareunsky and Uyeno are members.

Tan said the committee has written many responses and letters and coordinated several columns posted on the AAJA Web site.

Tan said co-chair Kwok has been trying to step down for 18 months and the committee is looking for people to take over as co-chair. Uyeno and Chareunsky said they would talk to people they know to see if they want to do it. Tan said they are trying to parcel out the duties of the chair, for instance, having different co-chairs or others on the MediaWatch board rotate being in charge once a month or so.

Tan said in the past they’ve asked each chapter to designate a MediaWatch person, but not many signed up to be on the listserv. So now they’d like to require that each chapter designate a MediaWatch person to participate on the listserv.

ACTION NEEDED: Each chapter designates a MediaWatch liaison. Uyeno and Chareunsky see if they can find a co-chair.

Marketing & Communications (Cruz):

Cho is the new chair (Rocha was chair before). Cruz and Rayos are members.

Cruz, who edits DateLine AAJA, said the committee would concentrate on DateLine and also resurrect research in setting up a speakers bureau. Cruz said she’d like to get DateLine out in April and November.

Mariani-Belding asked the committee to consider involving AAJA’s associate members who are PR professionals in marketing efforts.

Membership & Chapter Development (Sachdev):

Sachdev is chair. Paras, Chang, Lui and Dunn are members.

Regarding membership dues, Sachdev said the committee is considering proposing a \$5 raise in dues in 2009. He said current membership dues are \$55 for full members, \$20 for students. The last time full membership was raised was in 1999 from \$49 to \$55. And the last time student dues were raised was in 2004 from \$15 to \$20. AAJA’s membership dues are currently about on par with NAHJ but far below NABJ.

Regarding retention rates, Sachdev said AAJA’s retention rate is about 60 percent a year, and new members are added each year. The committee would like to increase those numbers. The committee thought of ways to increase the membership retention rate, such

as financial incentives for chapters. For instance, if a chapter gets at least 90 percent retention of full members, maybe they would get more of a share of membership funds.

Question was asked if AAJA could do a rolling, 12-month membership. Sachdev said it would be hard to that, in terms of accounting and keeping track.

Regarding classes of membership, Sachdev asked what people thought of the gold membership and of establishing a platinum membership level above that – maybe for \$250 - and what people would get for those membership levels. Consensus was to set gold membership at \$100 and platinum at \$250. Sachdev proposed starting the platinum membership level next year, with the rest of the dues going up in January 2009.

Consensus was to raise full and student membership dues in 2009 so full membership dues would be \$60 and student membership would be \$25. 2-year full membership could then be \$110 and 2-year gold membership could be \$190.

Regarding corporate membership, Sachdev said the question is whether to open AAJA's corporate membership to non-media companies. The committee thought that could be done, but suggested calling them something other than "corporate members" - perhaps "friends of AAJA" or "diversity supporters."

Regarding the general membership meeting at the convention, Sachdev said the committee would like to have a more formal membership meeting, with the president speaking on the state of AAJA and what it's doing to address challenges in the industry. And then hear from members.

Sachdev emphasized Board members should take all these suggested proposals back to the chapters to get feedback.

ACTION NEEDED: Advisory Board members will give feedback on membership dues increases, membership levels, etc, to Sachdev. Sachdev will have written proposals ready for Governing Board votes on raising membership dues, and on the different membership classes, by the summer Board meeting.

National Programs (Marta):

Marta is chair. Truong, Mariani-Belding, Sardar, Mangaliman and Witsil are members.

Marta said the committee's criteria in looking at AAJA programming is to make sure the programs are innovative, relevant and contains a leadership component. They are also trying to eliminate redundancies, and trying to make sure national isn't taking on efforts that would be better done at the local level (such as scholarships that might be better marketed at the local level).

ACTION NEEDED: The committee may have a written proposal for the summer Board meeting.

Broadcast (Sardar):

Sardar said he is figuring out if there will continue to be a committee, and if so, who would be on it and what it would do.

Sardar said they're putting together a tribute video, of AAJA members who have died, to show at the convention.

ACTION NEEDED: Lee requested that all committee chairs send reports to her by the end of March.

Wang motioned to adjourn. Sung seconded. Motion passes.

GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 2007

PRESENT:

Officers: Jeanne Mariani-Belding, National President; Jam Sardar, National Vice President for Broadcast; Janet Cho, National Vice President for Print; Cynthia Wang, National Treasurer; Janet Tu, National Secretary

Board members: Maya Blackmun-Portland; Matt Dunn-San Francisco/Bay Area; Jessie Mangaliman-San Francisco/Bay Area; Ameet Sachdev-Chicago; Cheryl Tan-New York; Doris Truong-Washington, D.C.

ABSENT: None

1. **Call to Order** (Mariani-Belding)

Meeting called to order at 12:45 p.m..

2. **Roll call** (Tu)

Roll call conducted. Quorum was met.

3. **Approval of Previous Minutes** (Mariani-Belding)

(See document "Fall-Winter 2006 Governing Board Meeting - Draft Meeting Minutes," submitted by Tu)

The Board reviewed the minutes as recorded and submitted by Tu.

The Board noted the following revision: Clarify that the Washington, D.C., chapter sponsored a documentary screening at the Asian American Film Festival (pg. 6).

Truong moved to approve the minutes as revised. Cho seconded. Motion passes.

4. **Pending Business**

Bylaws Revision (Tu)

(See document “Proposed Bylaws Revision Pertaining to Formation of New Chapters,” which comes from the Bylaws Task Force, submitted by Tu)

The Board reviewed the proposed revision, which would raise from five to 10 the minimum number of full members needed to petition to become an AAJA chapter.

Some wondered whether 10 is too small a number. Others said the proposed revision is a starting point, and the number can be revised upward later if needed.

Sardar moved to approve the bylaws revision. Tan seconded. Motion passes with one abstention.

Proposed Guidelines for Groups Seeking Pre-Certification Status (Tu)

(See document “Proposed AAJA Guidelines for Groups Petitioning for Chapter Pre-Certification Status,” submitted by Tu)

The Board reviewed the proposed guidelines that set out steps the National Board and groups seeking chapter pre-certification status should follow.

Some wondered whether the guidelines should require the Board liaison to do a site visit and for national AAJA to pay for that. Consensus was no. Some wondered whether to require petitioning groups to send their leaders to Camp AAJA. Consensus was no. Some wondered whether to clarify, under the Procedure section, that “days” means “business days.” Consensus was yes.

Sardar moved to approve the guidelines as amended to change “days” to “business days.” Tan seconded. Motion passes.

5. **New Business**

Appointment of At-Large Representative to Advisory Board (Tu)

Tu said Cho resigned her position as the At-Large members’ representative to the Advisory Board so she could take on the position of National Vice President for Print. A replacement needs to be found for Cho’s vacant position, which runs through the end of the year. The person would be appointed at the pleasure of the National President, with the approval of the Governing Board.

Cho said she’s sending a message out to all the At-Large members to see who is interested in the position.

The following rough timeline was established for the process: Cho will get a list of final candidates to Mariani-Belding and Salas by the end of March. Mariani-Belding will make the appointment on April 3. The Governing Board will vote online to approve the appointment by April 9.

ACTION NEEDED: See timeline above.

Approval of Board Committee Proposals

No Board committee proposals were submitted.

6. **Announcements** (Mariani-Belding)

The fall Governing Board meeting will take place Friday, Nov. 9 and Saturday, Nov. 10 in San Francisco. Start time will be 1 p.m. Friday. Lunch will be provided.

Brief discussion was held on whether to continue to hold fall meetings in San Francisco or in other cities. No consensus reached for now.

Truong moved to adjourn. Sardar seconded. Motion passes.