



## Minnesota Newspaper Association Board of Directors

Minutes of Wednesday, Jan. 29, 2025, proceedings  
Lake Superior Room, Minneapolis Marriott Northwest, Brooklyn Park

**Present:** President Crystal Miller, Albert Lea; First Vice President Justin Lessman, Jackson; Second Vice President Tara Brandl, Tracy; Third Vice President Kelly Boldan, Willmar; Directors Steve Jameson, Mankato and Bill Gaier, Minneapolis; Treasurer Tim Douglass, Glenwood; MNA Executive Director Lisa Hills; MNA Director of Development & Communications Lisa Schwarz; Wendy Harden, CPA, SDK.

**Welcome and call to order:** President Miller called the meeting to order at 10:49 a.m.

**Audit report:** Wendy Harden, CPA, of Schecter Dokken Kanter, summarized the MNA annual audit, which found no issues of concern in the operation of the association.

**Executive Director's Report:** Hills encouraged members to attend the Legislative Committee meeting.

**Member dues:** Hills told the board that MNA is instituting monthly billing statements for member dues and focused messaging on deductions of dues from advertising payments in 2025. This is an effort to reduce critically overdue membership payments. Additionally, any member with unpaid dues at mid-year will be asked for payment.

Hills also suggested that the MNA sustaining membership be either eliminated or made significantly more expensive to justify the costs of collecting dues.

The board advised MNA to include a due date on all member dues billings and request full payment at midyear for unpaid or partially paid dues. They also brainstormed the possibility of an intern to help with member contacts for dues collection.

**Network rebates:** After board approval in December, 227 newspapers were set to share \$61,749 for their participation in the MNA advertising networks, with an average rebate of \$271.48. Anyone with outstanding MNA or Legal Hotline dues will have their rebate applied to those bills. All members will be asked if they prefer to donate the rebate to the Minnesota News Media Institute. Jameson and Gaier instructed that their rebates for the Mankato Free Press and Finance & Commerce be donated to MNI.

**Convention:** MNA staff distributed convention scripts to board members. Hills reported attrition costs of \$1,296 and \$1,365 for room nights and food/beverage contracts, respectively. She also reported that MNA will have no speaker expenses for the 2025 convention, a significant savings over 2024; and significantly increased sponsorship and trade show revenue, double the 2024 income.

College BNC Contest: The board unanimously approved increasing the entry fees for the College BNC Contest from \$3 to \$7. **MOTION** by Boldan, second by Douglass.

**Adjournment:** The board adjourned at 11:46 a.m. on a **MOTION** by Jameson, second by Brandl.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Lisa Schwarz**

**MNA Director of Development & Communications**

