

MNA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

September 26, 2019 MNA office – Minneapolis, MN

Present: Karin Ramige – Glencoe; Chris Knight-APG-Virginia; Justin Lessman-Jackson; Chad Koenen-Henning; Crystal Miller- Albert Lea; Diann Drew-Alexandria; Mark Weber – APG -Eden Prairie; Tara Brandl-Tracy; Mike Dalton- Cannon Falls; Lisa Hills & Debbie Evans-MNA

Welcome and Call to Order by President Karin Ramige at 9:10 A.M. on Thursday, September 26, 2019.

Approval of Minutes from the June 27, 2019, summer board meeting were unanimously approved on a **MOTION** by Knight, seconded by Koenen.

Executive Director's Report – *Hills* update included: Details of MNA's ad service's largest account hiring a new ad agency, the new ad agency is working with a different service for its media placement effective October 1; July was MNA's largest 2x2 sales month since November 2009; Discussions and developments regarding the Minnesota Media Publishers Association (MMPA). MMPA is the name of the former MN Magazine Publishers Association; Submission of the application for another 3-year Blandin Grant for the E & P is complete, notification if accepted will be received in December; Recent stories about the demise of community newspapers; MNA's phone system needs to be replaced, Dan Lind is seeking proposals for a replacement; details of lease negotiations with the new owners of the Lumber Exchange Building; MNA staff is busy preparing for BNC and convention planning.

The Executive Director's report was approved on a **MOTION** by Koenen, Seconded by Miller, passing unanimously.

Finance Reports – Knight reviewed disbursements, staff expenses, financial statements and balance sheets for June - August. Disbursements were unanimously approved on a **MOTION** by Dalton, seconded by Ramige. Financial statements were approved on a **MOTION** by Drew, seconded by Miller, passing unanimously.

MOTION by Miller, seconded by Lessman, passing unanimously, pending Mark Anfinson's review, to approve signing a 5-year lease beginning in 2020 with the new owners of the Lumber Exchange Building for office space.

MOTION by Dalton, seconded by Knight, passing unanimously, to enter into a management agreement with the Minnesota Media Publishers Association. Mark Anfinson will be asked to review the agreement language.

Mark Weber made a **MOTION** to present MNA's Distinguished Service to Journalism award to Tom West at the 2020 convention. The Motion was seconded by Chris Knight, passing unanimously.

On a **MOTION** by Brandl the MNA Friend of Minnesota Newspapers award will be given to Gannett for its unrelenting legal defense of the fair report privilege through the Larson v. Gannett litigation. The Minnesota Supreme Court will be issuing its decision soon.

The MNA Friend of Minnesota Newspapers award will also be presented to Louis Hogle, editor of the Pelican Rapids Press, for his leadership responding to a bigoted comment posted on a photo of the newspaper's social media account.

Crystal Miller shared an idea which would allow MNA to offer access/membership to those who would like to subscribe to all MNA member newspapers. Mark Weber will talk to TownNews about what would be required if it is possible.

MNA board and committee meeting days will change in 2020 with committee meetings held separately from the MNA board meetings, if committee chairs choose. MNA and MNI board meetings will begin later on Thursday and end by noon on Friday.

MOTION to extend the BNC contest entry deadline until Friday, October 4, was made by Mike Dalton, seconded by Tara Brandl, passing unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Advertising Committee- Justin Lessman

MNI training session on beginning advertising sales will be presented by Bill Albrecht on October 11. Convention speaker and session ideas were solicited. A webinar promoting BENN is scheduled.

MOTION by Dalton, seconded by Koenen, to have network sales contest which will be a double bonus for new ads sold in the networks between November 17 and February 1. The Motion Passed unanimously.

MOTION by Dalton, Seconded by Knight, to approve \$400 in prize money for the Ideas on Tap convention session. The Motion Passed unanimously.

MOTION by Brandl, seconded by Knight, to award \$500 to the ad design winners. The Motion Passed unanimously.

Daily Meeting -Crystal Miller

The Daily Meeting had another successful meeting September 13 & 14 hosted by Brainerd Daily Dispatch at Grandview Lodge. The Roundtable discussion included revenue producing ideas, emphasis on reporters taking responsibility for their own stories, commission structures for salespeople, digital marketing and increasing community engagement.

Journalism Education Committee: Chan Koenen and LuAnn Yattaw

The success of the MNA internship program were discussed along with plans for the 2020 internship program. A session and reception are planned during the 2020 MNA convention to attract and network with college students. Newspapers will be notified on March 15th if they are the recipient of the internship funding. The committee continues its advisory role for the College BNC. Login to the college BNC will be changed to May 1.

Finding creative ways to engage students is a topic of interest to everyone. Shadowing a community newspaper which would allow a whole class to work at a newspaper for a week.

Member Services Committee meeting was postponed.

MOTION to approve all committee reports was made by Dalton, seconded by Lessman, passing unanimously.

Other Business:

MNA board members and staff members toured the Marriott Northwest, the new convention hotel.

The meeting was adjourned on a **MOTION** by Dalton, seconded by Brandl.

Future meeting dates:

Next MNA board meeting date will be at the MNA office in Minneapolis on December 5 & 6.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hills