

SPJ Board Meeting Minutes

Date: June 20, 2026

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Location: via Zoom

Present: Katja Ridderbusch (President), Genelle Williams (Vice President), Susanna Capelouto (Treasurer), Benjamin Grady (At-Large Member), Laura Downey (Immediate Past President), Mark Woolsey (At-Large Member), Lee Peters (Student Representative)

Also Present: Patty Rasmussen, Jennifer McKee

Absent: Rachel Spooner (Secretary), Mitch Leff (At-Large Member), Sabriya Rice (At-Large Member)

I. Approve June 2026 Agenda

- A. Vice President Williams shared the agenda prior to the meeting. President Ridderbusch asked if members had any changes. No changes were brought up, she asked if the Board would like to approve the agenda.
- B. Vice President Williams moved to approve. Treasurer Capelouto seconded. President Ridderbusch asked for a vote to approve the agenda. The motion passed.

II. Approve May 2026 minutes

- A. President Ridderbusch asked if members had any changes to the May 2026 minutes. No changes were brought up.
- B. Student Representative Peters moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Vice President Williams. President Ridderbusch asked for a vote to approve the minutes. The motion passed.

III. Treasury Report

- A. The starting balance on May 1st was \$11,416.92 plus \$200 in PayPal. The starting balance on June 1st was \$10,939.76 plus \$200 in PayPal.
- B. Expenses totaling \$564.21 included the Mailchimp fee of \$26.50; the Zoom fee of \$16.99; \$11.21 for a printer cartridge; \$22.58 for flyers for the Columbus event; \$241.98 for the Columbus event room rental; \$140 for food for the Augusta event, and \$104.95 for Secretary Spooner's graduation gift. Income totaling \$83.05 included \$83.05 from the Creator Journalism event. The full report is available upon request.
- C. President Ridderbusch asked if members had any changes to the treasury report. No changes were brought up. Vice President Williams moved to approve, seconded by Student Representative Peters. President Ridderbusch called for a

vote. The motion passed.

IV. New Business

A. Board Leadership elections July 6-12

President Ridderbusch and Vice President Williams will not run for reelection. Treasurer Capelouto and Patty Rasmussen will run as co-presidents, Joshua Wilson will run as vice president, and Jennifer McKee will run for At-Large Member.

B. Possible future amendment to bylaws

President Ridderbusch suggested amending the bylaws to include written allowance for a co-president leadership model.

C. SPJ Georgia Cohort for SPJ Leadership Institute, July 17-19

President Ridderbusch and members Joshua Wilson and Jennifer McKee will attend the three-day conference, SPJ Leadership Institute, in Indianapolis. President Ridderbusch had previously asked the Board to approve \$600 for Wilson and McKee's flights to the conference via email, and the vote was approved.

V. Old Business

A. Update: Sip & Share fundraiser on August 1 in Atlanta

Vice President Williams shared that the event will be hosted at Ohio River South. It will cost \$381.10 for security and cleaning. Atlanta Magazine Editor-In-Chief Allison Entrekin will emcee. President Ridderbusch asked the Board to approve the event cost. Treasurer Capelouto moved to approve, seconded by Immediate Past President Downey. The vote passed.

President Ridderbusch screen-shared the SPJ Georgia Code of Conduct, reminding Board members they have the financial responsibility for two fundraiser tickets per year.

President Ridderbusch also asked each Board member to contribute a raffle prize donation for the event. At-Large Member Woolsey volunteered to coordinate the efforts.

A. Recap: Virtual Conversation on "Creator Journalism" on May 21

Patty Rasmussen declared the event a success. Over 29 people attended overall. The video is uploaded on SPJ Georgia's YouTube.

B. Update: Next steps for "Georgia Knows Media" media literacy campaign

The Atlanta Press Club has invited SPJ Georgia to train some of their members in the Georgia Knows Media train-the-trainer session. The two sessions will be online and take place June 29th and June 30th. The campaign will next travel to Macon, Augusta, Savannah, and Albany. There will be a free online webinar to show the campaign to SPJ members on July 30th.

VI. Committee Reports

- A. Membership: There is no current Membership update at this time.
- B. Freelance: The next Freelance Friday will take place on June 26th.
- C. Advocacy: A new Advocacy Chair is needed.
- D. Student Affairs: There are no Student Affairs updates at this time.

VII. Events

A. Mental Health for Journalists with Next 18

Immediate Past President Downey shared information about Next 18, an organization that hosts golf camps for veterans and first responders. Matt McDonell, the founder and executive director of Next 18, wants to organize and speak at a future SPJ Georgia event about trauma and mental health. President Ridderbusch will meet with McDonell and brief the Board.

B. SPJ involvement in NABJ Conference in Atlanta, August 12-16

Immediate Past President Downey attempted to work with AABJ chapter president Condace Pressley to secure a spot for SPJ Georgia to sponsor the opening night reception of the NABJ national conference, but sponsorship cost was \$2,500. President Ridderbusch appealed to the incoming Board leadership to build upon the existing relations with AABJ and work toward joint events in the near future.

President Ridderbusch asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. At-Large Member Woosley moved to adjourn, seconded by Treasurer Capelouto. President Ridderbusch brought forth a vote. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Meeting minutes recorded by Rachel Spooner, secretary.