

AAJA Board Conference Call Minutes

January 11, 2010, 8:30 pm

Agenda:

1. 2010 priorities
2. Finances (including discussion about scholarship and stipends)
3. web site update
4. Houston Lunar New Year Festival booth
5. Newsletter topics
6. new president

In attendance: Angie, Iris, Tom, Aman, Caroling

1. 2010 Priorities

Aman said the priority for the year should be getting the new web site up. Angie and Tom said membership and fundraising also needed to be key goals.

2. Finances

Tom said that AAJA National lost \$177,000 last year, mostly because of low convention attendance problems and a drop in membership dues.

He said AAJA National may consider taking some money from chapters with large reserves. The next national meeting is in San Francisco in February.

Caroling said the chapter has about \$46,000 in a money market fund and about \$2,000 in a checking account

Caroling said she'd like to move the chapter's money from Compass Bank to another bank. She said she had been having difficulty using the bank's online services and believes the chapter could get a better interest rate elsewhere. She also asked if the board would be comfortable investing a small portion of the chapter's reserves in one or two short-term CDs. The board agreed to both proposals. Caroling promised to update the board when appropriate.

Aman suggested awarding two scholarships and two stipends this year instead of one. Caroling seconded the idea, noting the difficult job climate in the journalism industry. The board all agreed.

Aman said he would check if Scott Nishimura was willing to continue as scholarship chair.

The board agreed to set the next stipend deadline for Feb. 15 and the deadline for both scholarships for May 31.

Tom said the chapter should renew fundraising this year.

Caroling notified the board that she had paid Julie Tam to continue updating the web site until the new web site is ready.

3. Web site update

The board reviewed a second draft of the redesigned home page from Caroling.

Aman said the word "Texas" should be visible in bigger letters somewhere on the page. Angie asked about changing the orange background. Caroling said she would work with the designer on both requests.

Caroling said she would have the designer code the site's subpages for the board to save time. The board could edit/approve the subpages afterward.

Caroling said she wanted to train the board on the new site's content management system in the near future.

Caroling said she expected the new site to go live by mid-March.

4. Houston Lunar New Year Festival booth

Angie said that ABC13-KTRK has generously donated a booth at the Houston's 2010 Lunar New Year Festival to the chapter. The event is on Feb. 13 at the Chinese Community Center in Houston. Angie said the chapter will promote the media access/media watch panels and student scholarships.

Angie said she wasn't sure if she would be in town for the event. Iris agreed to reach out to Houston-area members about helping man the booth.

5. Newsletter topics

The board agreed to include the following topics in a newsletter to be sent by next week:

- Scholarships and stipends
- Letter from Angie about her trip to Asia and how AAJA helped
- Out in the community
- New AAJA Texas web site on the way
- Update from AAJA National
- Reminder for members to pay their AAJA dues

6. New president

Angie said she would be moving to Oklahoma soon and did not feel she could continue running the chapter. She asked if any board member could take over the position temporarily until a permanent president is found.

Iris said she would think about it. Angie told her she would have the board's full support if she accepted the position.