NHPA Executive Committee February Meeting

The February meeting of the New Hampshire Press Association Executive Committee was held, with several members present including Deb Paul, Brendan McQuade, Kristen Nevious, Rose Kundanis, and Mark Guerringue. The meeting began with a discussion about the previous meeting's minutes, which were approved without objection. The treasury report was then addressed, with Melanie unable to attend but having sent along information.

Bank Balance and Contest Updates

Brendan and Judi discussed the current bank balance of $1,396.86 and reviewed the status of an upcoming contest, which Judi is preparing to launch. They decided to move the deadline for professionals from March 10th to March 28th to accommodate judges' schedules and avoid conflicts with other events. Brendan mentioned ongoing legislative activities, including bills concerning right to know and legal notices, as well as a tax credit for advertising and local journalism proposed by Deb Paul, which he is still working on summarizing for a subcommittee.

Newspaper Funding and Tax Credits

Deb shared updates from a meeting with Chuck Krohn from Lion Publishing about potential state funding initiatives for newspapers, including a set-aside bill and fellowship program, which would be implemented next year. Brendan discussed a local advertising tax credit bill introduced to support smaller, locally owned media outlets, noting that the subcommittee was favorable to the idea but had some concerns about the qualification criteria. The group discussed who might qualify for the tax credit, with Tony suggesting that the Portsmouth Herald and Manchester Ink Link would not benefit, while Deb's company Nutfield would qualify. The Department of Revenue raised questions about how to qualify media outlets for the tax credit, with options including Press Association certification or self-certification.

Newspaper Advertising and Public Notices

Brendan discussed two main legislative issues affecting newspapers: a bill about local advertising credits for small businesses and attempts to move public notices from newspapers to websites or bulletin boards. Deb mentioned potential funding mechanisms through the Press Association and Knight Foundation to help small newspapers with these challenges. Brendan also mentioned exploring options for a statewide public notice mechanism and invited Deb to join this effort, to which she agreed.

Committee Expansion and Journalism Support

The group discussed the need to expand the committee membership, with Judi suggesting new appointments due to attendance issues. Brendan agreed and mentioned he would send a list to Judi for follow-up. They also discussed legislative affairs, including right-to-know requests and the importance of supporting local journalism. Deb emphasized the value of newspapers to the community, citing examples from businesses and non-profits. Finally, Kristen reported on the Education Committee's progress, mentioning a meeting scheduled for the next day and plans to update a list.

PBS Event Location Change

The group discussed moving the event from Keene State to New Hampshire PBS, where they received tentative approval to hold it on either April 10th or 17th. They noted that PBS has a big event on the 16th, but the production staff would be available for a tour. Rose mentioned that Keene State was a great host but they were unable to secure the Mabel Brown Room for this particular event. The group agreed that the new location would be beneficial for the high school students, as they would get to see a television studio space.

PR Awards and Training Initiatives
Michael and Chance proposed two awards for PR firms to participate in with minimal effort: a "Best Campaign or Pitch" award and a "Public Service Award." They also suggested adding PR training to their existing journalist training programs and considered creating a unified email system for NHPA members to improve communication with PR professionals. The team discussed potential judges for the awards and the need to name the public service award after a notable figure in communications.

PR-Media Collaboration Planning Meeting
The group discussed creating a central document or email system for journalists and PR professionals to improve communication. Susan offered to connect the team with the Yankee chapter of the Public Relations Society for potential collaboration on workshops and classes. Michael suggested that PR firms would benefit from understanding how news media works, and Susan agreed to help facilitate this education. The team decided to vet any proposed changes with Judi before making decisions, with Michael planning to send an email to coordinate further.

Marketing Firm Engagement Strategy
The group discussed concerns about marketing firms, with Business expressing frustration about delayed payments and potential conflicts of interest. Judi and Brendan suggested using awards as a way to engage marketing professionals and potentially generate more revenue for the organization. The conversation ended with a brief discussion about scheduling a follow-up meeting regarding public meeting notices, with Judi agreeing to set up another meeting in the coming month.