



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Conference Call August 26, 2019

Yvette calls for meeting. Rafael Olmeda calls for a formal meeting, but not an executive session. The board approves.

Members present: Nick Valencia, Rodrigo Cervantes, Yvette Cabrera, Rafael Olmeda, Mirta Ojito, Rosalba Ruiz, Blanca Ríos, Dianna Nañez, Brian de los Santos, Steve Solis, Alberto Mendoza (non voting), Gerdine Cols (joins later)

Guests: None

1. Elections concerns

Ivette calls Brian for concerns on the elections. Brian suggests NAHJ to revise elections bylaws, particularly regarding freelancers and professionals, while updating the bylaws. He recommends to revise processes for voting, vetting, who can vote and who can participate.

Olmeda asks to hold the conversation for our face to face meeting, Brian and the board agrees.

Olmeda asks if there are candidates affecting the current elections, Brian explains the changes would have effect until next year, but asks to tackle the issue.

Dianna suggests to include the topic for our agenda in San Antonio. The board agrees.

Rodrigo includes the issue on the agenda for San Antonio and suggests Brian and the election team to work on a document beforehand with recommendations.

2. Fox News Decision

Blanca calls for a discussion about the decision and says the goal is to clarify it, as well as the way the decision was made.

Olmeda opposed to having the president accountable for all of the decisions, asks Alberto to clarify and explain how the decision was made, what were the time limitations and why.

Alberto explains Hugo held several meetings with Fox regarding issues that needed attention. Hugo went in Spring with BA to continue conversations. Alberto says the recent issue came on the radar on Tuesday, Hugo said we as an organization would not work with Fox this time, as he considered Fox anchor's comments an offense.

Olmeda clarifies that he supports and endorses the decision, but questions timing and board participation.

Alberto says there was a meeting held in August 14th between the president of NAHJ with representatives of RTDNA and SPJ, they wanted more conversations and set a meeting with Fox August 21st, but by the time, Hugo had already decided to give Fox the money back. Nañez clarifies the 15th was an email to the board notifying that there was the idea of disinviting Fox, and clarifies there was no official notification from Hugo on the decision that was made.

Alberto explains the conversation move forward after the 21st meeting, “what happened on the meeting set things on fire”, where RTDNA president was against canceling the invitation to Fox and said it was a learning opportunity. Hugo and BA thanked everyone and stepped out.

Dianna says the 19th he clarified the decision has been made.

The board agrees that it was a good moment to hold Fox accountable, but that there are different opinions on how it had been done and in general terms disagrees on how the decision was made.

Nick proposes to put a spotlight on Fox correspondents to clarify the decision is about executives, but not NAHJ members working there. Hugo not being in the call is bad as he needs to hear that some members are frustrated with NAHJ, Valencia said. Nick wants to support the people indirectly affected that are Latinos working in Fox.

Olmeda says he respects Nick’s point, but thinks that Fox is using us and taking advantage of our integrity; it is time to say that’s wrong and improper.

Rodrigo brings his previous email suggesting to offer support to Fox NAHJ members and clarifying that we are not standing against freedom of speech, but against abuses from those anchors and the corporation.

Dianna makes a motion to have a follow up statement to support our NAHJ Fox members, and reach out to them to ask if there’s additional support.

Olmeda recommends that we work together on a resolution. Rodrigo seconds Dianna and suggests Nick to take a lead on the statement working with BA to work on a statement based on our feedback. Nick seconds and Olmeda agrees to help on developing the resolution. The statement would be released by the end of this week; Nick will coordinate with NAHJ Fox members to try to contact the members and offer our support.

-- Geraldine joins the call. She will contact Fox members she knows, since she heard they got a heads-up. She’ll get more information from them. Dianna also offered her help on reaching out with other members.

Olmeda suggests to look for a way to talk to Lou Dobbs addressing that he should resign as lifetime member of NAHJ. Dianna suggests to discuss that during our next meeting. Everyone agrees.

3. President’s decision-making style

Rodrigo suggests to have the conversation about this issue with Hugo present in San Antonio. Nañez seconds and expressed her concerns about moving forward since the

bylaws say we have been overseen by the president; we have had that in the past from emergency conversations, but this should not have happened and it was a violation of our bylaws.

Olmeda asks if we need to call a violation of the bylaws; Dianna says that in reading the statement it wasn't a board's statement, but a president's statement and ergo considering this a violation to our bylaws.

Alberto says he's seen different leadership styles, so there hasn't been consistency on styles.

Olmeda says as former president that this is an unusual circumstance; he thinks Hugo was allowed on making that decision, but this particular situation was a policy situation and ergo we need a policy discussion.

Nick quotes the bylaws: the president should supervise as the board of directors and make sign on behalf of the association as of of the rise of the board of directors.

Nick and Dianna express that Hugo can be a good leader, but these situation brings concerns.

Rodrigo suggests to present as a board at the conference, making board members more visible, and work on the issue during our next meeting in San Antonio before the conference to avoid the image of being a "presidentialist" organization. Dianna seconds to discuss this issue at our meeting.

Blanca seconds Nick's point on having more clarity on what's going on behind the scenes.

Dianna suggests to put the confidentiality agreement on next meeting's agenda to have more clarity. Nick seconds. Geraldine says we need a better revision on statements like in the past.

Dianna and Olmeda suggest to create a rapid response team. Rodrigo seconds and suggests to be held as a procedure; he adds it to the next meeting's agenda.

Rodrigo proposes to add the MundoHispánico reporter Mario Guevara issue to our discussions during the next meeting in San Antonio, as the issue was left in limbo. The board seconds, Olmeda asks Rodrigo to resend the email documenting the problem.

4. For the upcoming meeting's agenda

- Election bylaws revision
- Lou Dobbs participation as NAHJ lifetime member
- President's decision-making and possible bylaws violations
- Confidentiality issue
- Creation of a rapid response team or procedure
- MundoHispánico Mario Guevara case