Text

Description automatically generated

**MINUTES**

**FSPAC Board of Directors Spring Meeting**

**Washington, DC**

***April 11, 2024***

**Call to Order**

President Mike Greenberg called the meeting to order at 8:01am. He offered welcoming remarks, and everyone present introduced themselves. 39 Board members, as well and Michelle Geiger and Dani Weatherford (representing NPC) were present, constituting a quorum.

**Approval of the Minutes**

Upon motion made and seconded, the minutes from (July and October) were approved unanimously.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Thomas Maxwell provided details of account balances, as well as revenue and expenses, for both the federal account and the independent expenditure account.

He next explained how to obtain in-kind donation credit for unreimbursed travel on behalf of the FSPAC. Specifically, to obtain credit, a donation form must be returned to Thomas no later than the last day of the month in which the travel occurs and be supported by receipts. Kevin reminded the board that in-kind donations do not count towards minimum fundraising requirements.

Thomas responded to questions from the board.

**Reception and Dinner Report**

Betty Quick thanked everyone for the efforts towards a successful reception and dinner. She also thanked everyone for their assistance. Kathi Heatherly reported on a few challenges with the hotel and discussed logistics.

Mike Greenberg requested feedback on the women’s breakfast. Carole Jones provided a recap of the breakfast and others provided feedback. There was a discussion around the invitation list. The general consensus was that the event was successful and should be repeated.

**President’s Report**

The FSPAC Fall meeting will be October 8 & 9. With the exception of Atlanta, Las Vegas will be the third lowest cost in the past six years. We are seeking underwriting for a portion of the expenses. We will also ask for early commitments on attendance and hope that many will plan to stay an additional night for team fellowship. There will be a fundraising reception - begin to let Las Vegas alumni know.

Wants to extend offer that any groups not in tent – sponsor them at 50% expenses to give them an opportunity to learn more about what we do and encourage them to join. Also have education about building government relations function within their organizations. Attend our meeting and provide NPC and NIC opportunity to discuss their issues.

Wants to get to 2-year contract with hotels for better rates. Need to explore better venues for both lodging and dinner. Suggest that we get bus transportation from hotel to the Hill.

Last 6 months – don’t stop momentum. We have $200K to get to $1M for the cycle. Challenge – everyone find one new person per month starting in May. Beef up Student Advisory Group. Empower students to talk to their peers and help us better connect with them.

**Fundraising Report**

Kitty deKieffer began by thanking everyone for their efforts this year. Dallas event on June 18 – opportunity to invite potential donors. Las Vegas event likely on October 8 – more details to follow. Indianapolis event in August – date TBD. San Diego event – date TBD. Will be similar to last year’s event by Jeff Witous.

Alicia Lee reported on the Week of Giving in September.

Kitty reported that we have not done a good job bringing back former donors. She asked for volunteers to reach back out to those people to try to bring them back into the fold. Kitty also encouraged people to ask donors to increase their giving amount. She concluded by discussing giving levels and the giving pyramid.

**Legal Review**

Megan Newton of Jones Day joined the meeting. She reviewed ways in which organizations can help raise money. In-kind donations must be from individuals – be careful using corporate emails or meeting rooms. There is an absolute ban on fundraising from 501(c)(3) organizations. The PAC cannot accept contributions from foreign nationals – including Canadian members – do not solicit them. She also recommended that the FSAF not solicit foreign nationals if it engages in political activity. IEA has always been able to make independent expenditures to create ads, mailings, Facebook advertising for a candidate – that is clearly advocacy activity – as long as it is not coordinated with a candidate. Those expenditures must be reported to the FEC, but there is nomonetary limit. Canvassing and paid ads also can’t be coordinated. Ms. Newton responded to questions and left the meeting.

**Lobbying Day Report**

Amy Davenport joined the meeting and reported on Lobbying Day. In over 400 meetings, lobbyists gained the following: Freedom of Association – 3 new co-sponsors; CHIA – 2 new co-sponsors. Anti-Hazing requires D for R in the Senate, so while 3 new senators agreed to co-sponsor it, they are not formally signed on yet. Amy responded to questions and discussed follow-up steps re: thank yous and student feedback forms. David Ashinoff will be sending out template language to use with donors reporting on Lobbying Day.

**Communications Report**

David Ashinoff presented a tour of the news FSPAC website. There was discussion about credit card payments online for certain types of corporate contributions. Although that is not possible now, Kevin and David advised they will work on it and report back to the group. David stated that he welcomes other input for website content. There was also discussion whether we could post information on the website about who FSPAC has contributed to, with several board members stating that is a frequent question from prospective donors. David mentioned that we need board members to follow our social media accounts. He also reported that the fall newsletter is expected drop later this month with a summary of the Charlotte event tonight. Pennington is working on the newsletter, and per our agreement with them they create two newsletters a year.

**Political Affairs Report**

Carole Jones reviewed an updated giving plan proposal, highlighting changes from the last approved plan. She shared percentages of donations by political party. The Board approved the revisions to the giving plan for incumbents as presented. The Board also approved three donations to first-time candidates.

Carole thanked everyone for their attendance at various events this week and gave a report on upcoming events.

**NIC/NPC Update**

Dani Weatherford reviewed a few activities the NPC has been engaged in since the last Board meeting.

KKG transgender lawsuit – an amicus brief was filed in January; oral argument is scheduled for May 14.

University of Maryland lawsuit – NPC helping to guide litigation filed by one chapter and six Jane Does. Women very concerned re: retaliation. 11 of 16 groups are in a landlord-tenant relationship with the University.

Indiana Anti-Hazing Legislation – successful in passing (included in larger education bill)

Antitrust legal analysis – uptick in antitrust lawsuits within higher education community. Tuition discounts at Ivies, as well as NCAA and trade associations are included. NPC continues to believe their situation is defensible and will be providing information to member organizations.

DOJ partnership – Case Western had a Title IX investigation. Signed a settlement agreement. Dealt with sexual assault within fraternity and sorority community. Not good for our community. Have been providing education about community. Partnering with FEA to continue.

Campus Concerns – discussed ongoing efforts, focusing on uptick in restrictions on COB.

Jud Horras and Dominic Frattura reported on initiative to create grassroots support of our issues through student government.

DEI bill in Florida – concerned re: DEI programming, culturally based orgs, and ability to operated unrecognized if first two weren’t achieved. Achieved first two objectives.

Florida – tried to get Freedom of Association bill passed. Got to 2-inch line, but lobbyist alerted us to conversation re: including ban on transgender membership in single-gender organizations. Pulled back at last minute.

Fraternity Forward Coalition moved forward with Maryland – NIC is helping support. Discussing independent NIC.

Deferred recruitment – SMU and Wittenberg reversed. 5 additional campuses discussing reversing it.

Systemwide suspensions down

Directory service – every member of Congress and their staffers; going through process of matching to alumni and student lists.

**College Debates and Discourse Alliance**

Doug Fry of American Council of Trustees and Alumni joined the meeting and presented an overview of the alliance. Civil discourse and respectful disagreement. Alliance formed 6 years ago. ACTA, Braver Angels, and BridgeUSA are among clients. Proven debate methodology, depolarizing. Flagship is debates – not spectator or competitive – parliamentary format – group debate. Partnering with National Governors Association. Also have curricular debates. Fraternities and sororities can be more homogeneous, so want to do more solutions-focused discussions. Topics self-selected by students. Proposal that we sponsor a few debates in fraternity/sorority community. Discussion with an eye toward email vote in near future.

**Membership & Recruitment Report**

Mike and Donna reported that the goal of this position is to bring in new groups/members and keep members engaged. SAE will be joining soon. Omega Psi Phi has also joined. New members have mentors. Trying to make everyone feel welcome. Also young board members. Some bridge-building with women’s groups. So many orgs send students but aren’t part of FSPAC. Asked every CEO sending students to contribute to their dinner. All declined. 36 people sponsored at dinner so no one would be left out. Mike & Donna to talk to organizations whose alumni attended but didn’t pay at dinner.

**Student Advisory Group Update**

Scott Turk provided an update – how better educate students. 5 students – 2 men and 3 women – some were here to lobby and 3 were at part of our meeting today.

**Student Board Members**

Kevin O’Neill announced that student board members will be elected in May, with a communication going out next week to solicit interest. Mike Greenberg reminded the group that we established a reduced rate for young alumni members of the board.

**Communications Update**

David Ashinoff demonstrated new functionality on the website. He also requested that we share photos from the Hill visits yesterday. David next shared a new format for communications to better highlight our issues in email blasts. He also shared the design of a new trifold folder for fundraising purposes, as well as flyers to be provided to assist us with fundraising. David concluded by asking David responded to questions from the Board.

**Executive Director Report**

Kevin shared a giving pyramid, encouraging everyone to solicit more money. Part of the Las Vegas meeting will include a training session on fundraising presented by Pennington.

**Final Comments/Adjourn**

Mike concluded by reminding the board that next year is the 20th anniversary of the FSPAC. He encouraged everyone to begin working on auction items.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:58am.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Doerre, Secretary