**Membership Committee**

**What we do as a Committee:**

Shay:

* Recruitment of New Members: good variety of outlets and interests
* Review Application Materials:
* Dues Structure
* Remind Folks to Pay Dues
* Ways in which Members Want to be connected—feed info to coordinating committees
* We are the first stop for what the Consortium looks like and how people get involved; helps give members a pulse on who is in the Consortium and who is doing what;
* how to make sure our members get what they need from any work together with AAN;

Paul: What is membership criteria?

Shay:

1. Original content
2. Journalism
3. Concerned if outlet is too small or too niche—how can we help you and how can you particpate with us?
4. How they fit with other members

Paul: Is there a political criteria? How do we judge the quality?

Shay: We do look at content, attribution, sourcing.

Paul: It’s a standard of professionalism

Jo Ellen: We have a couple of rules

1. Full members must have 2 full-time staffers and a minimum budget of $200K
2. They have to be doing journalism—which for us means fact-based and accurate.
3. They need to be comfortable fitting in with our current members.
4. We need to feel like they will participate with other members.

Andrew:

Applicants come through Jo Ellen so there’s been some conversation, some vetting, so that makes our job easier. Some of the reasons we reject people:

* They are really small—won’t survive, won’t be able to participate
* The discussion is generally from a why not rather than a why. Media is changing. Jo Ellen tries to reach out to different media sectors.
* I don’t want to feel like a rubber stamp for big organizations that won’t contribute in any way.

Jo Ellen

Explains Dues Structure

Reminds everyone that we are now charging for conferences.

Now I want to reach out again to members—what are they thinking? Now that we are bigger, are people still feeling connected?

Shay:

One of the last times we did a survey was because we wanted to grow. We felt we needed to work with existing members but we also felt we needed to recruit. Jo Ellen has done a lot of that, and it’s led to some exciting collaborative work, and that’s opened up the opportunity to foundation support.

Also, what kinds of connections we can forge with AAN?

Jo Ellen:

Gives overview of what’s going on with AAN

Andrew:

There is a tension within AAN between the chains and independents. Maybe they have to figure their own s-t out first.

Shay:

Yeah, they have a lot to work out on their own. Very excited to have new members on the committee.

Jo Ellen: What should we ask TMC members about?

Paul, Aarti: We are still learning a lot about TMC.

JGK: Should I do a Q and A?

Aarti: Yes, to make sure that people know the benefits, and how they can take advantage of all that and how they can contribute?

Paul: Having a stronger initiation plan.

Jo Ellen: Yep, I contact the Executive Director and/or Editor for a long conversation, but then don’t do much with them.

Paul: If you can kick those duties to this committee.

Jo Ellen: Maybe when we bring on a new member, we could assign a membership committee person to be their TMC mentor.

Andrew: Maybe if you gave us a short check-in list for us to touch base with them.

Jo Ellen: Ok, I will draw up that check list and also do a Q/A for new staffers from existing organizations. Let’s meet again in early Sept.