NOTE: *Hinkle moved via email to approve these minutes on August 31, 2026. Galli seconded the motion, which received approval 4-0 on September 2, 2026. Fleischer abstained.*

IRE Board of Directors

Executive Committee Meeting | August 27, 2026 via Zoom

Committee Members Present: President Josh Hinkle, Vice President Cindy Galli, Treasurer Alejandra Cancino, At-Large Member Caresse Jackman

Committee Members Absent: Secretary Jodie Fleischer

Other Board Members Present: Kate Howard, Andy Lehren

Staff Present: Financial Officer Heather Feldmann-Henry, Director of Development Lynnie McIlvain

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Call to Order

President Josh Hinkle called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. CST and called roll.

FY2027 Budget Proposal Discussion

Hinkle introduced the FY2027 budget proposal, noting key differences from the preliminary budget approved in June and providing context from Executive Director Jonathan Kealing, who was unable to attend due to a previously scheduled trip. He said the discussion would inform the Finance Committee's review next month and the board's planned vote at next month's retreat. Discussion included:

- **Marketing:** At-Large Member Caresse Jackman asked about the proposed part-time marketing position, which is budgeted at $39,000 without benefits and has been slightly reconfigured following a recent vacancy. Director Andy Lehren asked whether a staff trainer could temporarily assume some duties to delay the hire and save money. Feldmann-Henry and Hinkle noted similar efforts following a 2025 marketing departure had created workload and efficiency challenges.
- **Endowment Spending:** Treasurer Alejandra Cancino asked about the proposed investment spending formula. Feldmann-Henry said it was modeled on the Knight formula and aligns with both the current policy and the policy approved in June that takes effect in 2027. Hinkle said he would ask Kealing to provide the board with a formula explainer.
- **Conference Rates/Luncheon:** Vice President Cindy Galli asked about higher proposed IRE27 registration rates and again combining the awards luncheon cost with registration, after separating the costs at IRE26 to improve affordability. Feldmann-Henry cited

potential missed revenue and early post-conference survey feedback, while Hinkle noted the survey remained open. Jackman and Director Kate Howard cautioned against overreacting to early feedback; Howard supported higher rates, and Jackman noted comparable organizations charge more for awards events. The group agreed that conference pricing and luncheon decisions should be communicated more clearly to the membership. Feldmann-Henry also urged considering NICAR separately in rate discussions, as it currently operates largely at break-even and has no luncheon component. Cancino and Galli suggested a joint discussion between the Conference Committee and Finance Committee's Affordability Subcommittee. Galli noted that IRE27's Phoenix location may create additional keynote-related considerations. Hinkle said he would ask Kealing for a more detailed explanation of the proposed rate and luncheon changes.

- **University of Missouri:** Lehren asked about use of student fellows under IRE's University of Missouri agreement and whether the opportunity is underutilized, including the potential to revive student data work benefiting IRE. Hinkle said he, Galli and Kealing would meet with university officials before next month's retreat to discuss the agreement and ways to strengthen the partnership.
- **Fundraising:** Members supported increased fundraising-related travel and offered to assist. Director of Development Lynnie McIlvain said she plans a significant increase in grant applications. Howard and others praised McIlvain's handwritten donor notes as a fundraising best practice.

Adjournment

Hinkle made closing remarks about next steps before the board retreat, then offered a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 a.m. CST. Galli seconded, and the motion was approved by committee members present 4-0 by voice vote.