

Fulcrum Publishing Society Board of Directors

AGENDA

Sunday, April 20th, 2014
207 University Center, 10:30 a.m.

Board Members Present: John-Rhys Evenchick,, Keeton Wilcock (President), Ben Miller, Brent Holloway, Johnathan Rausseo
Ex-officio members present: Andrew Hawley (GM), Sabrina Nemis (incoming EIC), Mackenzie Gray (NASH 77 associate coordinator), Deidre Butters (Ad Rep)
Note taker: Stephanie Piamonte

- At 10:37 the meeting was opened with quorum.
- The agenda was approved, including the addition of the item regarding liability.
- The March 30th, 2014 minutes were approved. Ben was thanked for typing them.
- The President's Report given by Keeton.

-April was a busy, productive month.

-The AGM was discussed. The AGM is scheduled for Wednesday April 23rd at 5:30. Andrew was thanked for arranging drink tickets at The Draft for those who attend the AGM. Drink tickets should help with achieving quorum, and also express volunteer appreciation. It was clarified that anyone who wants to be on the Board will have to put up their names at the AGM; Andrew clarified how the process will work. The Presidents' Report will be presented at the AGM. By-law amendments will be ratified at the AGM; the major change is that the President will be eligible for a bonus.

-John-Rhys Evenchick was recently ratified as a board member.

-Stephanie Piamonte was hired as notetaker.

-Regarding staffing, the Board is working to fill the positions of Ad Rep and GM. Talks with Andrew and Deidre will continue.

-March 7th Sabrina Nemis was elected editor-in-chief. She begins her duties May 1st, pending ratification.

-April 3rd the constitution was amended by a majority vote of the Fulcrum staff. It is now possible to hire editorial staff without having a production manager right away. Andrew was thanked for helping to turn around the email votes so quickly and for coordinating the hiring process.

-NASH 77 contracts have been submitted by Jessie Willms, Mackenzie Gray, and Andrew Hawley. It will be good to get them ratified and approve the budget in order for them to move forward officially.

-At the March 30th strategic planning session, Board Member compensation was discussed; they are still working on the issue. There was a good turnout. Keeton learned about Editorial Board concerns.

- The General Manager's Report was given by Andrew.

-Andrew reported on year-to-date finances as of the past Friday. He noted it is the lowest point of year in terms of cash flow and expects winter levies of approximately \$90-95 000 will be coming in soon. There will not be many more expenses because staff salaries and printing costs are finished for the year.

-GIC investments were described and clarified.

-Ad collections were discussed. Outstanding amounts will go toward last year's budget even though they are received in the new fiscal year. Ben wanted to know how much time/money was spent collecting delinquent accounts and whether a penalty should apply. Deedee said that most local collections are paid promptly, but there is little control over the national collection. Deedee said that while the Fulcrum does not want to lose advertisers, client assessments and the possibility of penalties for late payment can be considered. Andrew was confident the national ad revenue would be received.

-Local collections have gone well, with only two outstanding from 2013: WBK Boxing and Connoisseur Hair Salon. Andrew is confident that WBK Boxing will pay; the same thing happened last year. Other outstanding collections stem from recent issues in March and April.

-Given the constitutional amendments, the Board is moving forward with hiring for nine positions. The majority of tests are scheduled for this week. Candidates who pass their tests will be called in for interviews. Most of the hiring is expected to be completed by April 30th.

-Andrew is still waiting for staff to hand in their keys and pick up their last cheques.

-Circulation is 31.6% this year, down from 35% last year. Keeton was concerned that pickup would go down since someone was hired to hand out copies and asked whether it is worthwhile to continue the pilot position. Andrew suggested it would be a good idea for September, in order to introduce new students to the paper. Keeton was concerned that 7000 papers were thrown out each week. John noted that most weeks circulation is even lower than 31%. Deedee suggested running 8-10 000 papers depending on the popularity and longevity of the issue and suggested that anything less than 8000 would risk a loss of revenue from advertisers. Ben wanted to know what the numbers would look like if 6000 papers were printed instead of 8000 or 10 000. Deedee said print ads generate three times more revenue than online ads, that print distribution decline is a general trend, and she will take a look at what is happening across the board to get an idea of numbers. Keeton suggested improving distribution should be the main focus. Sabrina suggested partnering with a class to create a marketing plan before money is spent on improving distribution; she is working on that now. Sabrina suggested we could charge more for targeted online advertising. Mackenzie suggested a survey in order to better understand who reads the paper and in what format so that the value of online/print advertising can be demonstrated. The Board wanted to make it clear the decline in circulation is not a criticism of the quality of the Fulcrum paper or the work of the editorial staff. John recommended a special meeting in May with Keeton and Sabrina to work through these options and issues.

-Printing was \$2600 under budget.

-The co-op student finished this week. It was a great experience, there was a lot of work for him to do, and he made good contributions to the paper. Based on this experience it was recommended that the Fulcrum approach the OCDSB to develop a relationship. Mackenzie offered to help with this.

-Regarding the AGM, the bylaw amendments are now available on the website.

-45-50 bound editions were requested this year, which is good. They will arrive in May.

-Credit cards went over budget this year. The budget line needs to be adjusted to take into account the number of clients paying by credit card rather than cheque.

-Andrew will double-check the EI and CPP amounts, which are also slightly over-budget.

-The NASH budget line was questioned. \$7500 was budgeted when expenses are expected to be \$22 000. The difference between these amounts is expected to be covered by fundraising. John suggested breaking this into two lines, and a line of revenue from expected delegates' fees could be added. Keeton suggested an asterisk with an explanation for the current budget and the change for next year's budget.

-Andrew is confident they will break even on the budget.

- Discussion of the Editor-in-Chief's Report was postponed due to the fact that Keeton had not received one. It is believed that Adam wrote one, but it needs to be found. It was decided to approve the report via email when it is found.

- Advertising Representative's Report was given by Deedee

-It was a good year, although there was a slow start. New contracts were received.

-Contra was used well this year; attempts to raise readership through initiatives such as contests were well done. Deedee will include more details about these initiatives in her report.

-Deedee is going through the unsigned contracts to ensure that all outstanding payments are contractually bound to do so. Only Connoisseur Hair Salon's contract has not yet been located to date. Ben suggested all contracts should be scanned and digitized in case of fire or accident.

-Deedee is going to start the client database to ensure institutional memory. She is preapproved for software and will keep the Board informed. John recommended talking to the UOttawa Development Office. Ben offered to help with data entry.

- Mercedes Mueller was ratified as Chief Returning Officer for the AGM.

-The vote was unanimous.

- Sabrina Nemis was ratified as Editor-in-Chief.

-The vote was unanimous.

- The ratification of Andrew Hawley and Jessie Willms as NASH Coordinators and Mackenzie Gray as Associate Coordinator was discussed.

-Because he didn't know Mackenzie, John Rausseo asked why he wanted to be on the NASH team. Mackenzie said it was an exciting opportunity to help put on a conference on our own terms and showcase the Fulcrum and the university. John followed-up his question by asking if Mackenzie understood that he would likely be putting in more hours than he would be compensated for. Mackenzie understood.

-Andrew clarified that the associate coordinator will be responsible to the two coordinators, who are in turn responsible to the Board.

-The issue of coordinators' commission was discussed. Given that it is a team effort, instead of a 25/25 split of the profits from the conference going to the coordinators, an amendment was proposed that it should be 20/20 for the coordinators and 10 for the associate coordinator.

-The issue of good conduct/firing was raised. The conduct and firing of the coordinators is governed by Fulcrum policies.

-Given that Andrew is also the GM, accountability was discussed. Coordinators will keep the Board, President, and GM informed. As well, signing authority will need to be clarified given that Andrew is a coordinator and returning as the GM.

-Two weeks' notice by the coordinators was discussed, since such short notice could be potentially damaging to the conference. Ben recommended that a very clear succession policy should be in place. An amendment was proposed that should a coordinator resign, the associate coordinator will automatically become coordinator, and there will be an emergency hiring for the position of associate coordinator should they resign. As well, efforts will be made to spread knowledge among volunteers.

-There was a motion to vote on the amendments proposed, the contracts and the positions. The vote was confirmed unanimously.

- The NASH budget was discussed

-Delegate fees are the main source of income. It is expected that delegate fees will be approximately \$400 per delegate. Organizers are aiming for 300 delegates. Turnout is expected to be good given the central location of Ottawa.

-Early bird rates will apply to both members and non-members. After that, discounted rates will apply only to CUP members.

-It was clarified that the numbers in the budget are based on the early bird rate. The revenue numbers are conservative.

-Sponsorship opportunities are being pursued with banks, local media, the printer, breweries, etc. Andrew is confident the budgeted amount will be exceeded.

-Mackenzie wanted to know if there would be a different delegate rate for local residents who do not need to pay for a hotel. Details will be worked out later.

-Deedee suggested volunteers could receive a reduced fee as incentive. Details will be worked out later.

-The hotel and food budget lines were questioned. The food budget is less than half the amount from the previous year; fewer meals and no liquor will be provided. John was concerned that the hotel budget seemed low given that the rooms for the conference need to be included in that figure; the figure was based on the previous conference budget.

-Other budget lines were slightly lower or similar to previous years.

-The possibility of a bilingual conference was raised. No decision was made.

-\$2000 for accessibility was proposed to be added to the budget. John wanted a committee formed in order to ensure that accessibility is done well.

-With the knowledge that the budget is open to further amendments, the budget was approved, including the \$2000 accessibility amendment. The vote was unanimous.

- Liability was discussed.

-It was decided to postpone Ben's concerns about liability insurance and risk management to another meeting. Keeton intends to do a general policy review; liability issues and the sickness policy will receive special attention.

- Final business items were discussed.

-The publishing schedule for the coming year will decrease by one to 26 issues. Cutting the August 28th issue was suggested by Sabrina. The August 28th issue does not receive good circulation, but the visibility of the Fulcrum during Frosh Week is important. Deedee is concerned that cutting the August 28th issue will significantly affect ad revenue. A two-week issue running from August 28 – September 11 was suggested as an alternative that resolves the Frosh Week concerns, incentivizes advertisers, and ensures the issue receives good circulation. Deedee suggested a run of 13 000 papers and charging a little bit more for the ads in that issue. Another option was to run an online exclusive week in which staff would be paid but there would be no printing costs. It was agreed that August 7th issue was fine regarding the summer publishing schedule; but the issue scheduled to be cut will be decided later.

-Sabrina suggested some sort of handout during Frosh Week, possibly with a coupon, would help increase the Fulcrum's presence. Deedee and Sabrina will meet to discuss further.

-As a matter of disclosure, Andrew signed a MOU with CUP about NASH 77. The Fulcrum will be running that conference.

- Items forwarded to a future meeting include:

-Approval of the Editor-in-Chief Report.

-Approval of the publishing schedule.

- The meeting was adjourned at 1:44.