

Fulcrum Publishing Society  
Board of Directors  
MINUTES

Wednesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
FSS4004, 5:00 p.m. - 7:16 p.m.  
Meeting #6 2016-2017 Publishing Year

*Minutes amended after approval without change from November's Meeting.*

**Present:** Lucas Ghosn (ex-officio), Carolyn Mutis, Kate Murray, Savannah Awde (ex-officio), Shanèl Dear (ex-officio), Raghad Sheikh-Khalil, Niharika Namulla, Jonathan Rausseo, Nadia El-Bouzaidi

**Partially Present:** Maggie Gollish, Thivya Naganathan

**Absent (with reason):** William Hume, Mackenzie Gray

**Absent (without reason):** Julia Miraflores

1. Opening of Meeting

M. Gollish and J. Rausseo called the meeting to order at 5:15pm.

J. Rausseo motioned to elect M. Gollish as the Chair for the meeting. K. Murray seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed. J. Rausseo motioned to elect M. Gollish as the Chair of the Fulcrum Society Board of Directors. C. Mutis seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

2. Approval of Agenda

J. Rausseo motioned to approve the agenda with the following amendments:

-Add ten extra minutes to the Editor in Chief's report;

-Add a discussion on vacant Board seats after item 7.

K. Murray seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

3. Approval of October Minutes

C. Mutis motioned to approve the October meeting minutes. J. Rausseo seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

4. Review of Standing Actions

S. Awde presented the standing actions list and made the necessary changes.

5. General Manager's Report

L. Ghosn began by going over the Fulcrum's financials. He noted that the \$21,000 GIC did auto-renew. L. Ghosn went on to state that he had a meeting at the bank and went over several low and high risk options. L. Ghosn informed the Board that the Fulcrum's year to date is still behind in sales, but that the gap in wages from D. Butter's pay is helping to cope with the decrease. He also mentioned that the business department added new budget lines for online ad sales and expenses in order to help distinguish between the Fulcrum's sales types. L. Ghosn explained that he thinks the Fulcrum's accounting and legal budgets should be increased because the Fulcrum's year-end audit is usually close to \$5,000 and the Fulcrum is using a lot of this budget for legal fees. J. Rausseo mentioned that the finance committee should sit down and discuss the different implications.

L. Ghosn announced that the November totals for the ads were a huge increase from October's totals.

L. Ghosn mentioned that he is continuing to drop off copies of the Fulcrum to both Cafe Nostalgica and FNS, which has been going great. L. Ghosn went on to mention that the Fulcrum's current distribution courier made a few mistakes with his trainee, but L. Ghosn spoke with his boss and things appear to be okay now.

L. Ghosn advised the Board that the November 24th issue appears to have some serious printing mistakes that the Fulcrum isn't liable for. He noted that he is awaiting a reply back from the Fulcrum's supplier to see if they can financially help the Fulcrum make up for these mistakes.

L. Ghosn stated that the Fulcrum's entire collections list is cleared, apart from the largest amount from Phoenix Boxing, formerly WBK Boxing, who hasn't been very cooperative. L. Ghosn explained that he spoke on the phone with the owner who said that he claimed personal bankruptcy and closed the entity completely. L. Ghosn mentioned that he will research into whether the Fulcrum will be able to collect from his old company. L. Ghosn also indicated that he informed the owner that he is open to making contracts for this publishing year as long as the owner agrees to pay via e-transfer the day before the Fulcrum actually submits his ad for print.

L. Ghosn announced that the new sports editor and associate editor are doing well with transition. He also noted that the updated job descriptions were successfully drafted. L. Ghosn informed the Board that the features section has been sub-par and that management has been exploring different options to improve it ahead of next semester. He also mentioned that the features editor has been given a written formal warning about her quality of work. He said that he and S. Awde are hopeful that there will be improvements in the quality of the work following their suggestions.

L. Ghosn went on to state that a [tips@thefulcrum.ca](mailto:tips@thefulcrum.ca) account has been created to help promote story suggestion from readers, which will be filtered through the EIC email account. He also mentioned that the Faculty of Communications and Digital Journalism are interested in starting

an internship program with the Fulcrum. L. Ghosn added that the Vice President of Communications donated \$3000 to the Fulcrum for NASH. J. Rausseo suggested that the Board should discuss what we could give the VP of Communications as thanks.

#### 6. Advertising Representative's Report

S. Dear began by going over the Fulcrum's total sales, which were really great for the month of November. She noted that the Fulcrum had a client back out of a contract for the rest of the year because they wanted the Fulcrum to provide them with their click-through rate, which isn't something that the Fulcrum does.

S. Dear informed the Board that the Fulcrum has a total of 32 contracts for the year with a few more awaiting finalization. She admitted that she is having some trouble getting in contact with some old clients and she said that the Fulcrum doesn't have as high of a return rate compared to previous years. S. Dear explained that some old clients said it just wasn't in their budget this year. So far, S. Dear has contacted 40 new clients this month and seven have signed. She enthusiastically announced that she is going through quotes with Cineplex for the new year.

S. Dear researched cookie-enabled ads (Google AdSense) and went through a list of several of the benefits of them with the Board. S. Dear explained that AdSense is a free program where ads are reviewed to ensure that they are of high quality and relevant to the Fulcrum's content and audience. S. Dear went on to state that the program would allow the Fulcrum to block ads that the Fulcrum deem inappropriate, and customize where ads appear. She said that the ads also automatically adjust to the user's mobile screen. S. Dear noted that in terms of different ad spots on the website, the Fulcrum would have to either get it recoded or add codes to the places where the Fulcrum would like to display ads.

M. Gollish wondered if the Board needs to decide on whether to go ahead with the cookie-enabled ads or not. J. Rausseo suggested that the Finance Committee should take a look at this opportunity at their next meeting. J. Rausseo also suggested that the Policy Committee could look into creating a statement somewhere on the Fulcrum's website that states that the Fulcrum uses cookies.

S. Dear finished by outlining her goals for the upcoming month, which included: filling the January issues and the special sex issue and going on as many visits as she can while the weather is not as cold.

#### 7. Editor in Chief's Report

S. Awde began by declaring that the Editorial Board welcomed the new sports editor and associated sports editor this month and that they're doing really well. She informed the Board that the features editor failed to produce content for her section, and was written up for her quality of work. S. Awde said that all of the performance reviews have been completed except

for the new sports editor and associate sports editor, which will be done in the next couple of weeks.

S. Awde noted that A. Morgado's full social media reports are attached to S. Awde's report. She went on to explain that November has been an average month for social media. S. Awde said that most recently, there has been a significant decrease in Twitter impressions and increases on Facebook and in website page views. S. Awde clarified that these differences in numbers were not content-related, but rather based on impressions. She also indicated that the numbers fluctuate when the Fulcrum has breaking news stories.

S. Awde noted that the Fulcrum had a decrease in volunteers this month. She did explain that some volunteers, mostly with the visual department, have been individually meeting with section editors at different times instead. S. Awde said that attendance amongst volunteers has been around ten, while contributor numbers have averaged around ten for this month and 15 for the holiday issue. S. Awde stated that she plans to send out a poll to volunteers in early January to ask their availabilities for the second semester.

S. Awde informed the Board that the Fulcrum has two freelancers who have been consistently writing for the Fulcrum. She added that there are three more volunteers who have applied and are in the critique process, so she hopes that there will be some more freelancers in the new year. S. Awde mentioned that news hasn't received any interest from freelancers, just arts and culture. J. Rausseo suggested that the Fulcrum could do some more advertising in Political Science classes to try and recruit more volunteers.

S. Awde announced that eight people will be attending NASH this year, with seven from the Fulcrum's editorial board and one freelancer.

S. Awde stated that she and L. Ghosn met with the director of the Digital Journalism program at the University of Ottawa, who is hoping to work with the Fulcrum to set up a summer student internship, that would fulfill their 120 hour work placement that the students need in order to graduate. S. Awde argued that this could be a mutually beneficial partnership as it would allow the students to complete their placement near campus and the Fulcrum would gain a journalist to assist the Editor in Chief and the Social Media Coordinator with content over the summer. She did note that the Board would like to hire an intern soon as students tend to apply to placements by February.

L. Ghosn said that the Fulcrum would have to figure out a budget, tasks for the intern, and a look into the Fulcrum bylaws. J. Rausseo proposed that the Board could delegate the discussion of this possibility to the human resources committee. S. Awde mentioned that this internship position would be similar to that of the staff contributor. Discussion then ensued over compensation for the position. M. Gollish stated that the Fulcrum might be able to apply for some grants since the internship position will be over the summer. J. Rausseo also suggested that the Fulcrum could consider giving the intern an honorarium.

L. Ghosn announced to the Board that he would like to add S. Awde as a signing authority for the Fulcrum. J. Rausseo raised concerns, stating that it could lead to a conflict of interest. L. Ghosn said that all the transactions would appear on the monthly reconciliations. The Board did not make a decision with regards to L. Ghosn's request.

J. Rausseo asked S. Awde if she and L. Ghosn were able to work out a plan with the feature editor's write-up. S. Awde replied that they did. J. Rausseo then wondered if any mediation was necessary. S. Awde said responded that there could have been some.

K. Murray motioned to go in camera and to pass the chair duties from M. Gollish to J. Rausseo. R. Sheikh-Khalil seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed. C. Mutis voted to go out of camera. R. Sheikh-Khalil seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

#### 8. President's Report

M. Gray was not present to give his president's report, but it is attached in appendices below.

#### 9. Vacant Board Seats

N. El-Bouzaidi presented her candidacy to the Board. K. Murray motioned to approve N. El-Bouzaidi for the professional seat on the Fulcrum's Board of Directors. C. Mutis seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed. \*Please refer to online votes.

#### 10. Finance Committee

M. Gray was not present to give a finance committee update, but it was agreed that the members should meet soon.

#### 11. Human Resources Committee

M. Gray was not present to give a human resources committee update, but it was agreed that the members should meet soon.

#### 12. Policy Committee

R. Sheikh-Khalil noted that the policy committee did not meet this month, but that she plans to arrange a meeting for sometime this week. She went on to say that she would like to write an in-camera policy, discuss signing authority, and write a cookie use disclaimer.

#### 13. Readership Committee

J. Rausseo stated that the committee had a quick meeting where members discussed ideas relating to marketing and advertising. He continued by saying that he will write up the minutes

from the meeting and share them with the rest of the Board soon. J. Rausseo mentioned that the biggest thing that the committee needs to focus on is the readership survey.

#### 14. Referendum Committee

L. Ghosn informed the Board that he attached the exact dollar amount that the Fulcrum gets from its levy. He advised that the levy per student has increased \$0.06 per year. L. Ghosn contacted the SFUO to get more information and inquired about the marketing rules, but he said that he's still waiting to hear back from them. L. Ghosn said that the referendum committee updated the referendum question a little bit and attached the most recent version in his report.

#### 15. SFUO Contract Issue

J. Rausseo suggested that it would be a good idea to meet with the Fulcrum's lawyer before the meeting with the SFUO to discuss what the Fulcrum should and should not say. R. Sheikh-Khalil motioned to add \$420 to the lawyer budget. K. Murray seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

#### 16. Diamond Edition

The Board agreed that this item would be postponed until next meeting as M. Gray was not present to provide an update on it.

#### 17. Ombudsperson Projects

M. Gollish, J. Rausseo, and K. Murray will meet with the ombudsperson this week to discuss the next steps for the anti-oppression document.

#### 18. Other Business

K. Murray motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 pm. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

### **Online Votes**

On December 1st, following an email forwarded on by L. Ghosn from a former UOttawa Alumnus who is interested in joining the Board, W. Hume motioned to approve Chadi Azzi's submission onto the board as a professional seat and to add him to the legal and policy committee (to be ratified at the next board meeting). K. Murray seconded the motion. After further investigation, the K. Murray informed the Board that there isn't actually a professional seat on the Board. The Board then discussed the option of ratifying C. Azzi as an honorary Board member. K. Murray added this as an item to be discussed further at December's Board meeting.

On December 8th, following the discovery that professional seats do not form part of the Board, the board decided to hold a revote at December's meeting to vote N. El-Bouzaidi in another seat. Since her professional seat wasn't valid and therefore so were any motions that were passed during that time, K. Murray initiated a revote and motioned to add \$420 to the lawyer budget. W. Hume seconded the motion and the motion passed.

On December 13th, C. Mutis motioned to elect W. Hume as a temporary signing authority as C. Mutis is stepping down as a signing authority. K. Murray seconded the motion and the motion passed.

On December 13th, following a discussion on the need for extra money this year, C. Mutis motioned that the Fulcrum use cookies on its website, so long as the layout is okay with S. Awde. W. Hume seconded the motion and the motion passed.

On January 10<sup>th</sup>, following an email sent by a member of the Editorial Board asking the Board to consider changing the date of the sex issue, K. Murray motioned to change the placement of the sex issue from February 16<sup>th</sup> to February 9<sup>th</sup>. J. Miraflores seconded the motion and the motion passed.

## Appendices

GM Report #005

Nov 27, 2016

### 1. Financials

TOTAL	\$ 196,191,69
Chequeings	105,470.92
Savings	4,177.77
GIC 1	21,113.19
GIC 2	66,502.41

### 2. YTD

Our YTD is still behind in sales, and the gap in wages from DeeDee's pay is helping to cope with the decrease. Shanel is doing a great job to help close the gap between this year and last year's ad sales. We have added new budget lines for online ad sales and expenses to help distinguish between our sales types. =

### 3. Budget

Accounting and legal budget needs to be increased, because the year-end audit is always close to \$5,000 and we are using a lot of this budget for legal fees. The lawyer is awaiting a reply from me to take the next step in planning our agreement.

The finance committee should meet in December to discuss the budget to this date.

#### 4. Ad Department

Shanel is getting comfortable speaking to prospects and is doing great. November totals were roughly \$8000, a huge increase from October. December is always a quiet month for the Fulcrum and I am confident Shanel can continue to contact prospects and line up ad deals for the remainder of the publishing year.

#### 5. Distribution

Dropping off a handful of papers at Cafe Nostalgica and FnS each is going great, and will hopefully lead to a friendlier relationship with the respective owners.

Our current distro courier made a few mistakes with his trainee, but I spoke to his boss and things appear to be OK now.

The Nov 24 issue appears to have serious printing mistakes for which we are not liable for. I am awaiting a reply back from our supplier to see if they can financially help make up for these mistakes.

#### 6. Collections

The entire collections list is cleared, except our largest amount of \$8,000 from Phoenix Boxing – formerly WBK Boxing– who has been less than cooperative. Over 20 emails between him and Dayne are in the GM inbox, filled with excuses and delays. The owner was ignoring all emails and calls from the Fulcrum and is putting up posters around campus as if he doesn't owe the campus newspaper a large sum of money.

At 5:30pm Friday evening, he finally answered my last attempt to reach out. We spoke on the phone about his financial situation. He claimed personal bankruptcy and closed the entity completely. I will have to do further research on this subject to see if we are 100% unable to collect from his old company.

For now, I do not think burning bridges will help and I told him I am open to making contracts for this publishing year and he agrees to pay via e-transfer the day before we actually submit his ad for print.

#### 7. HR

Official farewell was held for our outgoing sports editor and the new sports editor and associate editor are doing well with transition. Updated job descriptions were successfully drafted.

The features section has been sub-par and management is exploring options to help improve the section in time for the second semester. The features editor has been given a written formal warning about her quality of work. We are hoping she will improve upon her quality of work following our suggested and expected improvements. We hope to see improvements in communication, availability, and quality of work as we move onto the second semester.

## 8. Other

- tips@thefulcrum.ca has been created and will be advertised in house and filtered directly to the EIC email account. This will help promote story suggestion engagement from readers.
- The faculty of communications and digital journalism are interested in starting an internship program with the Fulcrum. Further details to be presented at the following board meeting.

## **Ad Report November 27<sup>th</sup> 2016**

### **Sales**

Our sales tally is \$21,698.50. We are up \$7 535.34 since my last report. November sales were really great. We did have a client back out of a contract with us because they were not satisfied with our service.

### **Contracts**

We have a total of 32 contracts with a few waiting for a signature.

### **Old Clients**

I am still having trouble getting in contact with old clients, it does not seem like we have a high return rate compare to previous years. I have asked a few of them why and they said it just was not in their budget this year.

### **New Clients**

I have contacted 40 new clients this month. 7 have signed contracts and I am waiting to hear back from a few. Cineplex finally got back to me so I am going through quotes with them for the new year.

### **Cookie enabled ads ( Google AdSense)**

## Benefits:

- Ads are reviewed to ensure they're high quality and relevant to your content or audience, even when viewed on smartphones and tablets.
- Block ads you don't like, customize where ads appear and choose which types fit the site
- Only the highest paying ads go live
- Tons of different ad formats to choose from
- When advertisers compete for space we can get more money
- You can control the ads that appear
- The ads automatically adjust to your mobile screen
- AdSense is Free

In terms of different ad spots on the website we would just have to get it recoded or add codes to places we would like to display ads.

## Goals for the new year:

- use my month to fill the January Issues and sex issue
- Do visits while it's still above zero

## EIC Report — November 2016

### Staff

This month we welcomed the new sports editor and associate sports editor on board, and our previous sports editor concluded his part-time training duties. After two issues on their own, I'm

happy to report that both Nico and Zack have shown great initiative with their tasks, an understanding of how to go above and beyond in their section (They've done a great job with diversifying the section with more competitive clubs coverage), and they both mesh extremely well with the rest of the team. I'm really happy with their transition into the Fulcrum. Our features editor failed to produce the content for her section, and was written up for quality of work. Finally, all staff have completed their performance reviews this month, with the exception of Nico and Zack who have been working for only 3 weeks. They will have their sessions in the upcoming weeks.

### Online

Allegra's full reports are attached. November has been an average month for social media, with the most recent period seeing a significant decrease in Tweet impressions, while seeing increases on all fronts on Facebook, as well as an increase in website page views.

### Volunteers

We saw a decrease in volunteers this month, but that's unsurprising given that November tends to be a busy month with school/the lead up to finals. Attendance has hovered around 10, which isn't bad. I will be sending a poll to volunteers in early January to determine a good meeting

time for second semester so we can maximize turnout. Some volunteers who can't make the meeting have been meeting individually with section editors at alternate times, which is great to see. Our contributor numbers have averaged at ten per issue this month, with contributions for our holiday issue increasing to over 15 people. We have two freelancers who have been writing for us consistently and producing awesome work. We also have three more volunteers who have applied and are in the critique process, so I expect there to be a greater number coming into the new year. News has not seen any interest for freelance, only arts and culture. I'd love to know the board's feedback on ways we could entice people to freelance for news rather than arts. Other than paying more for a news piece, I'm not sure how we should do that.

#### NASH conference

I'm excited to say that eight people will be attending NASH in Fredericton, New Brunswick this year, with seven people from our editorial board and one freelancer.

#### Digital journalism program meeting

This month I met with the director of the digital journalism program at the U of O, and she brought forward an idea that I think would provide a great way for the Fulcrum become even further embedded within the university community. She hopes to work with the Fulcrum to have her students intern for us during the summer for their 120 hour requirement placement that they must complete in order to graduate. This would be mutually beneficial, as students could fulfill their placements close to campus while we would gain a journalist to put out content alongside the EIC and social media coordinator during the summer when we lack a full team. From experience I know the extra hand for putting out summer content would be extremely valuable and maintain our online following in the offseason. We should discuss this option soon because the students usually apply to placements by February.

## **President Report – Nov 27<sup>th</sup> 2016**

Sorry I can't be here today. I've been called into work to deal with Castro's death.

#### **Board of Directors:**

This has been by far the most stable year when it comes to the board of directors since our autonomy. Rarely do we have a full board and I have had multiple qualified people approach me to join the board who we've had to turn away.

#### **Business Department:**

Shanel had to take a few days off to attend her grandmother funeral. I'd like to once again pass on my condolences from the whole board to Shanel.

#### **Committees:**

##### *Finance Committee:*

- We did not meet this month but we will need to in the coming month to discuss Allegra's proposal for more money.

##### *HR Committee:*

- The HR committee also did not meet this month.

#### Referendum Committee

- I didn't have the opportunity to attend this meeting but I hope it was a productive one. I am not sure if this was discussed at the meeting, but if the SFUO hasn't approved our question yet, we should be cautious about doing anything that could get us in trouble with their election rules. There are numerous rules that we could end up breaking and we know that we need to be as careful when dealing with this group.
- We should also be careful not to commit ourselves to a specific plan this early in the process and allow ourselves to be flexible. Despite these concerns, it's fantastic that we have taken such a proactive approach to dealing with this important issue and hopefully our thorough planning will lead to a successful result!

#### **Editorial Board:**

I had the opportunity to meet all of ed board at the strategic planning session. Nice to put faces to names for some of the people I hadn't had the chance to meet before. As for the strategic planning session, it was a very informative session. It was good to see that we have achieved or are on our way to achieve many of the goals we set last year. There were many other solid ideas from both ed board and this board to continue to help further our organization. I hope to have the report on the meeting done for next months board meeting but have yet to receive all the notes that have been taken. If you took notes at the meeting and haven't sent them to me, please pass them along!

#### **Other Business**

I have yet to revive any response from the two people I emailed that were the contacts from NASH for funding for the Diamond edition. I will follow up with them ASAP.

Cheers,  
Mackenzie Gray