

Fulcrum Publishing Society
Board of Directors
MINUTES

Sunday, November 26th, 2017
Fulcrum Office, 10:30 a.m. - 1:07 p.m.
Meeting #7 2017-2018 Publishing Year

Present: Kate Murray, Eric Davidson (ex-officio), Raghad Sheikh-Khalil, Kim Wiens, Lucas Ghosn (ex-officio), Kaylum Bobal (ex-officio), Jonathan Rausseo, Fadi Azzi, Spencer Murdock

Partially Present:

Absent (with reason): Marguerite Gollish

Absent (without reason):

1. Opening of Meeting

As M. Gollish is not able to attend the meeting, J. Rausseo motioned for K. Wiens to act as chair for the meeting. K. Murray seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

K. Wiens opened the meeting at 11:04 a.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

- Add Undercurrents as a discussion in other business.

S. Murdock seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

3. Approval of October Minutes

R. Sheikh-Khalil motioned to approve the meeting minutes from October. J. Rausseo seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

4. Review of Standing Actions

K. Wiens presented the standing actions list and S. Murdock made the necessary changes.

5. General Manager

L. Ghosn started by giving the Board an update on the *Fulcrum's* RBC account, explaining that there's still \$10,000 left to be put in the mutual fund. He went on to announce that the *Fulcrum* has made \$2000 so far through the mutual funds. J. Rausseo wondered whether the \$2000 should go into savings or be moved into the *Fulcrum's* RBC account. L. Ghosn suggested that it could be moved to the *Fulcrum's* chequing account, and then once it reaches \$5000, the money could then be transferred to the RBC account.

L. Ghosn indicated that the audit is complete. He added that the CRA randomly selected the *Fulcrum* for review, which he said is happening now with the auditor.

L. Ghosn enthusiastically stated that the *Fulcrum* has submitted 38 articles for JHM awards.

L. Ghosn reviewed the computer equipment document that he compiled with the Board. J. Rausseo wondered if the *Fulcrum* needs Macs. L. Ghosn replied that Macs are only needed for the visual department. He mentioned that Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales will be happening this week that the *Fulcrum* could look into, or there's also Boxing Day sales. J. Rausseo asked L. Ghosn if he could put together a list of options for the Board to look over. L. Ghosn proposed that the *Fulcrum* could replace the computers highlighted in red on his list now as they are much older and slower models, and replace those highlighted in yellow over the summer. J. Rausseo wondered if E. Davidson could ask the editorial staff what they need in a computer. E. Davidson said that he would do that.

L. Ghosn mentioned that he was talking with J. McRae-Sadik, who suggested that the *Fulcrum* look into the possibility of purchasing an *Adobe Creative Cloud* license. Discussion then ensued about the possibility, and the Board added it as something to research on the standing actions list.

L. Ghosn explained that he also made a visual inventory list, and sent an email out to the team to see if anything on the list needs replacing.

J. Rausseo asked if L. Ghosn could send the pickup numbers to the Board.

6. Advertising Representative

K. Bobal began his report by comparing this year's weekly sales numbers to last year's weekly sales numbers. He continued by going over the online advertising sales, noting that they could be better. K. Bobal added that clients aren't as interested in online advertising. K. Bobal stated that total advertising sales are around \$30,000.

K. Bobal informed the Board that Happy Goat has agreed to pay the *Fulcrum* 20%. K. Bobal added that he is having a lot of luck getting past clients to re-sign.

K. Bobal then proceeded to go over his goals for the upcoming month, which include signing ten new clients for the upcoming month and having two of them be online. He asked Board members to email him if they have any suggestions for new clients, and mentioned that Lucas has already gave him a few suggestions.

K. Bobal concluded his report by suggesting that the *Fulcrum* organize a Secret Santa as a social event.

R. Sheikh-Khalil asked K. Bobal if he could compare the weekly advertising sales to DeeDee's year instead as her numbers more closely reflect the *Fulcrum's* targets.

7. Editor-in-Chief

E. Davidson began his report by informing the Board that the *Fulcrum* has hired a News Editor and she's been doing really well. He went on to explain that the *Fulcrum* offered Zach the position of Sports Editor, but said that he's decided that he would prefer to stay in the position of Associate Sports Editor. S. Murdock mentioned that he might have someone in mind for Sports Editor, and told E. Davidson that he would be in touch with him. E. Davidson stated that he hasn't heard from the *Fulcrum's* Videographer in a while, so he said that he'll probably have to start hiring for that as well.

E. Davidson noted that freelance has been going well. He explained that the *Fulcrum* now has some freelancers in the Arts section, and he'd like to start actively pushing for other sections as well.

E. Davidson proceeded to give the Board a brief update on the *Fulcrum's* social media numbers. He stated that because most traffic comes from Facebook, there has been more of a focus on the *Fulcrum's* Facebook account. E. Davidson noted that the social media coordinator is still trying to maximize Instagram, especially since it's not possible to put links on pages. He continued by explaining that the top content across the *Fulcrum's* social media has been anything on the SFUO, breaking news stories, and generally stories that people can relate to. E. Davidson admitted that the Art and Sports related posts don't usually get as much traffic. He said that he'd like more in depth posts with Sports related posts. E. Davidson offered that a lot of the hits to the stories that do really well come from search engines rather than from social media. E. Davidson then reviewed the current social media numbers compared to this time last year.

J. Rausseo said that for the social media report next month, he'd like to see the numbers rather than information about the top stories. J. Rausseo asked if a lot of these numbers come from Google Analytics. E. Davidson replied that they do, and that if you have a *Fulcrum* email, you should have access to view them. J. Rausseo suggested that maybe Board members could be given read only access and a tutorial on how to use it. K. Murray offered that it would be helpful to have the numbers presented in a graph for the next report.

8. President

R. Sheikh-Khalil started her report by giving an update on the committee meetings over the past month:

- HR committee met twice this month, (1) to conduct performance reviews, and (2) to go over general issues, such as employee morale, *Undercurrents*, etc
- Readership committee met and J. Rausseo will give an update on that later in the meeting
- Inter-Board Relations committee didn't meet this month, but they will have a focus group soon to go over the results from the most recent survey
- Policy committee didn't meet, but the minutes were sent to L. Ghosn

R. Sheikh-Khalil noted that there are several open Board seats. She went on to add that the Board is looking to add a treasurer position. F. Azzi offered to serve as treasurer. He stated that with regards to the mutual fund, the markets are very high right now, and he suggested that the *Fulcrum* take the \$2000 out now. J.Rausseo proposed that the *Fulcrum* could let the rest of the balance to keep riding.

9. Readership Committee

J. Rausseo informed the Board that he had a specialist come in to the last Readership committee meeting and talk about her thoughts on the *Fulcrum* going paperless. He noted that the next meeting will be focused on the topic of partnerships and advertising. J. Rausseo added that the questions that guide each meeting are already on the drive if anyone is interested in looking at them ahead of time. He mentioned that he would like editorial to be a part of the next committee meeting.

10. Referendum Committee

R. Sheikh-Khalil motioned to disband the referendum committee. J. Rausseo seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

11. Other Business

J. Rausseo motioned to go in camera with L. Ghosn, K. Bobal, and E. Davidson.

F. Azzi motioned to go through with the small claims if the SFUO and their lawyer doesn't respond to the letter from the *Fulcrum's* lawyer by December 11th.

J. Rausseo motioned to go out of camera. F. Azzi seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

J. Rausseo motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:07 p.m. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

Appendices

GM Report Nov, 2017

1. Financials

TOTAL	\$175,519.85
Checking	89,113.77
Savings	4,178.39

RBC	82,307.69
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2. Audit

Our last HST submission has been selected for review by the CRA. Our auditors and I will be dealing with the CRA on this matter and will notify me immediately if they require any more information from us.

3. CUP

JHM submissions have been sent and our cheque is in the mail.

4. Computer Inventory

I have attached a list of our current computer inventory, items are highlighted in red if urgently in need of replacement, yellow for moderate need, and green for not in need. I suggest we purchase 2 or three PCs now, and another 2 or 3 in the summer.

There should be some great deals on PCs following Black Friday and if not, Boxing Day. December is always a quiet month at the Fulcrum so it would be a great time to set up some new computers. If not, the summer months are also suitable.

6. Visual Inventory

I have attached a list of our current visual inventory. I am not very familiar with visual equipment so any suggestions are more than welcome on anything that may need replacing. I suggest we wait until the summer for visual equipment purchases.

7. Extra News Stands

The OCSB is interested in our stands, and will reach out to me once they figure out if they have a way to pick up the stands. Would the Fulcrum consider paying to rent a uHaul and deliver them as a last resort? Price would be approx \$50-60 with gas and rental fees.

8. SFUO Legal

Jenna has sent a letter to the SFUO lawyer (attached on drive) and will update us as soon as she has an answer.

Total Sales of each issue 2017/2018 - 2016/2017

2017-2018		2016-2017	
Week	Amount (\$)	Week	Amount(\$)
August 14	\$621.50	August 25	\$0.00
September 4	\$3467.67	September 1	\$256
September 11	\$2702.96	September 8	\$785
September 25	\$2431.22	September 15	\$1940
October 2	\$1802.79	September 22	\$204.80

October 9	\$1602.36	September 29	\$1084.80
October 16	\$1055.95	October 6	\$1073.04
October 30	\$984.84	October 13	\$204.80
November 6	\$3430.82	October 20	\$1415
November 13	\$2944.12	November 17	\$2241.44
November 20	\$1160.75	November 24	\$400.00
Total Sales Amount	\$22,204.98	Total Sales Amount	\$9604.88

Online Ad Sales

Client	Amount (\$)
Adult Fun superstore	\$150
CBC	\$60
Communications Directorate	\$120
Total	\$330

Contra

Client	Amount
Pizza Pizza	\$300
Perfection Satisfaction Promise	TBD
Sports Services	

Contracts.

32 Contracts have been signed to date and total sales are roughly at 30k.

Happy goat Coffee.

Happy goat was given a copy of their previous contract and has agreed to pay the 20%. They should be sending us a cheque.

Contra

I had asked pizza pizza to send us the gift cards prior to their publication date. This worked well as we are now able to give away the gift cards in a fulcrum give away contest ☺

Old Clients.

I have been having great luck with having old clients resign.

New Clients.

I have had a few new clients this month who were very satisfied with their ads. Still would like to have had more.

Goals for Next Month.

With there only being 1 issue this month(December) This leaves a lot of free time to reach out to new clients.

I have set the bar high for myself and hope to sign **10 NEW** clients for the next Month. Anything short of that will still be great.

Also to have 2 of them be Online.

If any board members have any suggestions to new places. Please Email me them and I will give them a shot. Lucas has already gave me several places to contact.

November

November was a great Month I had some great sales especially with the first two issues. I also signed a few new contracts this Month that are for the second semester.

Fulcrum Secret Santa ? Yes ? No?

HR

Our new news editor, Anchal, has been working out really well. She has the experience of being arts editor last year, and she's really taken to the role - attending crazy BOA meetings, covering breaking news, etc.

We offered Zack the position of sports editor. He took some time to think it over, but ultimately decided that he preferred to stay in the associate sports editor role. So we're in the process of looking for an external sports editor. We're contacting the other person who had shown interest in sports over the summer, and talking to the journalism program to see if they have anyone that fits the bill. We can also get different faculties to share our social posts about hiring.

We also just haven't really heard back from our videographer for a long time, so we'll probably have to start hiring for that as well, using similar tactics as for sports. Since we seem to have big problems every year with this position, I want to talk to people on editorial, especially on the visual side, to see if we can find a good way to restructure the position, so we can have strong video content going forward.

Freelance

It's been good, we have freelancers in the arts section, and it's been helpful to have when we have a specific need like an extra photographer for sports. I want to start pushing it more for illustrators, news, and sports. I already have a couple people in mind for illustration and sports, so I'm pushing the freelance program for them, and hopefully we can get them started soon.

Social media

Ran a bit long, so it's in a separate document.

I thought I could give a broader overview this time, and we can get into more structured and shorter report in following weeks.

Social media plan blueprint

Where we're at

Since the majority of our traffic comes from Facebook, we focus there mainly. Of the last 582 sessions, 459 were from facebook, 119 were from twitter, and only one is from instagram.

This year, we started posting our stories as photos instead of text on Facebook, which has raised the reach of an average post from low to mid hundreds. It doesn't affect the outliers that get huge views because they get a lot of shares either way.

Note on Instagram. While it is the growing platform, and something we need to grow more, the fact is you can't put links on pages, we can't expect it to lead people to our site directly. Since it's not going to lead to direct clicks, we're trying to think of a way to measure the impact of Instagram posts, I'll keep you posted on that.

It's still valuable to develop though, as it builds our brand awareness and gives people a glimpse of what we're up to.

What does best on Facebook? The SFUO for sure, a story about a crazy SFUO board meeting gets 1.1K views (avg around 400) and 100+ clicks, whereas other stories can get less, say 40-80. Breaking news does well, like the fire in sandy hill.

What does worst? Sports and Arts, see below for plan to address that.

Note: One thing we're trying to figure out is that even if a story gets a few hundred clicks on Facebook, it'll get over a thousand on the website. The difference doesn't come from other social media. One tab on the web analytics actually shows that a lot of our views come from browser searches.

This suggests that people see the news and then search it later for some bigger stories, which leads them to our site where we read it. The high rate of people viewing from the browser also means we've been good with our SEO, something we'll try and build on even more in the future.

This week

Before exams is typically slow. Last year on Facebook the median clicks on a page was around 10, with a median of mid 200s. There were as usual outliers, where one SFUO story got over 1K views and a couple hundred clicks. This year, the average reach is around 500-600, and average clicks a lot more variant. The median wouldn't give a good picture here, but it there were some in single digits, some in mid tens, and a few over a hundred.

On WordPress, the top 10 stories had readerships ranging from 70 to 386. Last year at this time, it varied from 97 to 257. Again, there is variance week to week depending on breaking news stories. The week of Nov. 4 this year, for example, an article on the Algonquin Times being forced to shut down got almost 2K reads.

Again, we see wide variance due to news.

Going Forward

We really need to work on Arts and Sports, every year they're the lowest views.

Plan for sports: a quick preview of games on our social beforehand, more updates during - some tweets, and experiment with using Facebook Live at home games, followed by a quick story on what happened as soon as the game is over, with the big story coming out the next day.

Plan for arts: video of people doing artistic things, eg a U of O band playing a song.

Plan for both: more in-depth stories, like Ryan did about the state of humanities education in the arts section. It was one of our best articles all year. We can do this with both Arts and Sports.

Note: Views vs. conversions. There are a lot of things we can do to boost viewership that we are doing - eg) Dmitri working with Jordan to get more followers, or us using photos on Facebook to

get a few hundred more views on the average post. However, in many cases the increase in viewers does not lead to a commensurate rise in people actually reading on the site. This is why we're also taking the editorial approach to make sure our content is relevant. We already have success with breaking news and news in general, but we're working on arts and sports, as said above.

Video

We had the same problem as last year where the videographer kind of drifted away, so we're working on hiring a new one. We're also, in the process of going over the editorial constitution, looking at how to rejig the role in general to make it more productive. For example, it might be better if we could have them work under a video/multimedia equivalent of the visual editor, and they would be treated more like the photographer.

Podcast

I've struggled to get this off the ground, in part because having this as part of my weekly portfolio can get demanding. But I want to start getting some momentum on this, so I've decided to mass email profs, grad students, etc. asking to interview them about their research. I've got a few interested now, and I'm going to interview a bunch of them one day when I'm more free, and we can release one of those episodes a week over the following weeks.

It's not the full extent of my podcast plans, but by doing it this way it will be easier to get started.

Conclusion

I know we all want to see huge growth in the social media as soon as we can, but one thing I'm running up against is that there may actually need to be structural and editorial changes that will be needed to make that happen, not just bombarding more people with the same content produced in the same way. We're still going to bombard people, but we're also looking at how we can reframe the whole thing so we're making the best and most relevant content in the current environment.

President's Report

November 2017-11-25

This will likely be a short summary! This month was not incredibly eventful in terms of committee meetings.

1. HR Committee

The HR committee met twice this month. Once to conduct performance evaluations, and an additional time to go over general editorial questions- i.e employee morale, social media numbers and questions about the new blog started by editorial employees.

Employee evaluations went well. Lucas, Kaylum, and Eric met with Jon and I to go over their grading rubrics. All evaluations were signed and scanned.

The HR committee did talk about potential conflict of interest concerns related to the new editorial blog. These concerns were mostly put to bed after a discussion with Eric. However going forward, the board may want to implement a conflict of interest policy or disclosure form to sign when contracts are signed. (This was done for business employees, but maybe should also be done for editorial employees.)

2. Readership Committee

Jon met with the readership committee this month. They discussed a plan for the transition to online. See the minutes for more detail.

3. Inter-board Relations

This committee did not meet this month, however following Eric's completion of editorial performance evaluations, they will be meeting to have a roundtable with ed board employees to brainstorm suggestions for increasing social media engagement for their respective sections. (This committee should be brainstorming over the winter holidays about trainings they would like to implement in the new year)

4. Policy Committee

This committee did not meet this month, however meeting minutes were sent to Lucas. If anyone has a master copy of the policy manual that Lucas can edit, that would be helpful. If not, Lucas will have to copy paste from the PDF version.

5. Board Office space

After the performance evaluations, Lucas and Eric showed us a cabinet in the basement where the board will be able to store any confidential documents. This will be very helpful in the future!

6. Open Board Positions

We will need to advertise for our open Board positions in the paper, on the website, and on social media. Eric, you can also announce the opening during your volunteer meetings. Margeurite, you also have the opportunity to become a full board member if you would like. Something to consider.

We will be adding a treasurer position to the board. They will be responsible for double checking the books each month and reporting on it at board meetings.

7. Social Event

You all selected Brunch. So I will send a doodle for brunch soon.

I know it is now the busy time of year with exams. Make sure to take care of your health! Let me know if you are feeling overwhelmed with your work portfolio, and we can make an arrangement to fix that. If you are unable to meet with your committee in person next month, try a google hangouts meeting! If not, please start to plan what your meetings will look like for next year. We are now more than halfway through our mandates on the board. I would like all of us to look back and feel proud of what we've accomplished! Let's get some work done.