

Fulcrum Publishing Society
Board of Directors
MINUTES

Sunday, June 2nd, 2019
141 Louis Pasteur, 10:30 a.m. - 12:59 p.m.
Meeting #2 2019-2020 Publishing Year

Present: Kate Murray, Raghad Sheikh-Khalil, Savannah Awde, Anchal Sharma, Matt Gergyek (ex-officio), Jonathan Rausseo, David Campion-Smith (Board candidate), Kathryn LeBlanc (ex-officio)

Partially Present:

Absent (with reason): Justin Turcotte, Dorian Ghosn (ex-officio)

Absent (without reason):

1. Opening of Meeting

J. Rausseo opened the meeting at 10:48am.

2. Agenda

A. Sharma motioned to approve the agenda. S. Awde seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

3. May (A) and May (B) Meeting Minutes

A. Sharma motioned to approve the May (A) and May (B) meeting minutes. S. Awde seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

4. New Board Member Approval

D. Campion-Smith, a former editor at the *Fulcrum*, presented his candidacy to the Board, indicating his interest in being an Honourary Board member and confirmed that he is not employed by the University of Ottawa student union, is of sound mind, and hasn't declared bankruptcy. K. Murray motioned to approve D. Campion-Smith as an Honourary Board member. S. Awde seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

5. Standing Actions List

J. Rausseo went over the standing actions list and made the necessary changes.

K. Murray motioned to replace all mentions of "SFUO" in the policy manual to "undergrad student union." A. Sharma seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

Discussion began on the role of the ombudsperson and how that they are responsible for responding to any emails with regards to complaints about the content of the paper rather than human resources-related issues. A. Sharma wondered why the Board would be involved in a content-related issue. J. Rausseo answered by giving an example of student persecution. He said that it facilitates the discussion. J. Rausseo noted that in the past, the Board has been using the ombudsperson in human resources issues, but since that's not in their purview, we shouldn't be doing that anymore. A. Sharma motioned to approve emailing Denray to offer him the position again this year if he's interested in staying on Board. S. Awde seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

6. General Manager

D. Ghosn began his report by reviewing the *Fulcrum's* totals for the year. J. Rausseo noted that the *Fulcrum* should get its next levy injection in December. D. Ghosn informed the Board that he reached out to the *Fulcrum's* auditing firm to inquire about the price of a "review" rather than an "audit." He stated that Nayana gave him the price of \$3800 (HST included) as opposed to \$5000. D. Ghosn said that hopefully the Board will have this option this year.

D. Ghosn reported that he's continuing to follow-up with clients. He explained that three of the companies that the *Fulcrum* is dealing with have changed contacts on the *Fulcrum's* account and are trying to catch-up. D. Ghosn continued by stating that he received one payment from the last meeting, but that there is still a total of \$3314.06 remaining. D. Ghosn also announced that National Advertising is now at \$0!

D. Ghosn updated the Board that all successful candidates have now been hired and have accepted their respective positions. He indicated that K. LeBlanc has already begun and had a meeting with M. Gergyek to discuss the editorial side of her position. D. Ghosn mentioned that he also gave her a tour of the office and had an informal meeting with her to discuss goals and expectations for the summer.

D. Ghosn reported that all minutes from the 2018-2019 fiscal year have been updated on the website in addition to all staff positions. He continued that he also updated the *Fulcrum's* advertising page to reflect the changes of going paperless. D. Ghosn noted that he'll be working on a new image for the website as well. D. Ghosn also indicated the M. Gergyek brought a bug issue to his attention with regard to the author tag for certain articles, and said that he'll be forwarding it to FullView to look at and fix.

D. Ghosn noted that he attached a marketing analysis by Casandra with his report, adding that she apologizes for the delay. He indicated that he had already forwarded the report to K. LeBlanc, and asked that the Board review it and provide any constructive feedback for both K. LeBlanc and Safa to consider. D. Ghosn went on to say that Casandra has informed him that she is willing to do a small seminar/training for Safa and the editorial staff (~1 hour in August/early September).

K. LeBlanc stated that Casandra's report was useful, but not to her specifically. J. Rausseo agreed and said that he thinks it was written for a different audience and perhaps a little pointed to last year's situation at the *Fulcrum*. K. LeBlanc recommended that Safa reads the report, gets training from K. LeBlanc, and then spends an hour with Casandra.

7. Editor-in-Chief

M. Gergyek announced that he is all done hiring for this cycle. He mentioned that he's going to schedule Editorial Board training for sometime in August. M. Gergyek explained that he's using a lot of things from Anchal and added that he's putting a plan in place for the Opinions section, which has been really successful so far. He noted that people will be getting back to him about what they want to write about. M. Gergyek said that it's been really good about keeping up with content over the summer, which will be good for the opt-in vote later in the fall. He continued that the *Fulcrum* has been really responsible in covering the student racism issue, and added that there are also plans to cover Bluesfest, the Fringe Festival, Pride, etc.

M. Gergyek reported that K. LeBlanc has been doing a really great job, and that the new posting format with bullet points, emojis, etc has been particularly helpful. He indicated that he'd like to work on the *Fulcrum's* Twitter account by posting breaking news/coming soon tweets, and starting a thread. M. Gergyek explained that it can be a way to break the news before an article comes online. With the *Fulcrum's* Instagram, M. Gergyek thinks that every few pictures should have something from UOttawa and things from the community. He noted that he's still working on getting the accounts verified as well as finalizing the style guide.

M. Gergyek informed the Board that he's in discussion with the newspaper at UBC and hopefully soon other newspapers on partnering to raise awareness about climate change and the climate crisis. He stated that each newspaper will be posting an editorial about it, which will hopefully come out sometime within the next few weeks.

8. President

R. Sheikh-Khalil began her report by indicating that the Board updated the 2019-2020 budget at the last Board meeting and added more money to the training and freelance fund lines.

R. Sheikh-Khalil stated that D. Ghosn's contract is up soon, but there is a possibility for extension. She added that he hasn't started a full-time job yet.

R. Sheikh-Khalil advised that there should be a sub-committee within the marketing committee dedicated to 101 week. She reminded the Board to ensure that committees are meeting at least once per month. R. Sheikh-Khalil also noted that both she and J. Rausseo will speak with Digital Journalism in regards to the Student Choice Initiative.

R. Sheikh-Khalil reported that there is no update on NASH, although M. Gergyek noted that UBC has decided to host in January instead of in May.

J. Rausseo mentioned that he talked with the group that's in charge of 101 Week, and said that no one is sure of what UOSU's role is in 101 Week. R. Sheikh-Khalil agreed that she isn't sure either. K. LeBlanc suggested that the *Fulcrum* could host an introduction to journalism session during 101 Week. R. Sheikh-Khalil added that the *Fulcrum* should try to get into any event that it can, wearing *Fulcrum* apparel, etc.

9. Election of Officers

R. Sheikh-Khalil mentioned that she spoke with J. Turcotte about transitioning into the role of President in the near future, which he has agreed to. Until then, she said that she'd be happy to serve as the President. K. Murray motioned to elect R. Sheikh-Khalil as the President. A. Sharma seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

R. Sheikh-Khalil motioned to elect Justin Turcotte as the Vice-President. K. Murray seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

A. Sharma motioned to elect K. Murray as the Chief of Staff. S. Awde seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

No one expressed an interest in serving as the Chair for the Board. J. Rausseo offered to chair some meetings until a Chair has been elected.

10. Budget

J. Rausseo briefly reviewed the 2019-2020 budget, noting that this year is projected to end with about a \$150 surplus. He explained that the biggest concern that he has is how much money is allocated to human resources as he doesn't think that it's enough especially with the burnout issues that the *Fulcrum* has had in the past.

S. Awde asked about the breakdown for the online editor position. M. Gergyek went over the change in salaries for the editors. J. Rausseo mentioned that the Board will probably see a reduction in the amount of content that's produced, and that as a Board, we should make sure that we're there as much as possible for the editors.

K. Murray motioned to approve the 2019-2020 budget. R. Sheikh-Khalil seconded the motion. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

S. Awde wondered if there are any more capacity and funds available for wellness. J. Rausseo responded that there's the employee appreciation fund and the contingency fund.

11. Casandra's Report and Marketing Update

The Board briefly discussed the marketing report that Casandra, a marketing consultant for the *Fulcrum* this past year, submitted. J. Rausseo stated that he thinks that he envisions that the

online editor position would have targets to hit set by the marketing committee and by the online editor.

K. LeBlanc proceeded to give some updates on what's happening on the *Fulcrum's* socials:

- **Instagram:** lack of engagement and of an overall aesthetic, no UOttawa presence. K. LeBlanc noted that it's important to be asking things of followers to get engagement, and mentioned that she's planning some Insta-takeovers by *Fulcrum* alumni on what the *Fulcrum* means to them.
- **Twitter:** Engagement has been pretty low. K. LeBlanc is going to group together some stories, and said that she's been working really close with M. Gergyek with regards to content. More breaking news tweets, etc.
- **Facebook:** Not doing anything too different, mostly repackaging old content. Would like to use for profiling someone who works for the *Fulcrum*, sharing events, etc.

J. Rausseo expressed his concern that there's a small presence considering followers. He wondered if there's something that the Board can do to help, whether it be putting more funding towards something. K. LeBlanc suggested that M. Gergyek and Safa should meet with Sarah in addition to inviting people to "like" the *Fulcrum's* Facebook page. She noted that she hasn't spent any money from the advertising budget line yet. K. LeBlanc added that she thinks spending money to boost stories would be helpful as well. She stated that she'd love to know how much money to spend on boosting posts.

J. Rausseo mentioned that Casandra suggested that it would be good to have two different kinds of posts: content posts and attention grabbing, but still relevant content. He asked if Kathryn has a goal for the *Fulcrum's* audience size in terms of growth. K. LeBlanc answered that since she has an eight month contract, she is focusing on growing as much as possible rather than a specific number. She added that she still suggests the mixed post approach to continue during the year. K. LeBlanc said that the one thing that she would flag for Safa from the report is that you want to be wary of posting multiple times on Instagram per day as you don't want to be too spammy. J. Rausseo wondered if it's common practice and okay to repost other people's content. K. LeBlanc replied that as long as you give attribution it's okay.

12. Training

K. Murray said that she'd send a doodle to schedule the training for next month.

13. Other Business

The Board briefly discussed advertising the General Manager job posting. S. Awde suggested posting it on Telfer's job board, and K. Murray said that she can email the JDC email list. All agreed that it'd be a good idea for the Vice-President to start shadowing the General Manager, especially for payroll.

A. Sharma motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:59pm. All voted in favour and the motion passed.

Appendices

GM Report June2019

1. Financials

	Previous Month	This Month	Difference
TOTAL	\$299,336.26	\$296,412.45	-\$2,923.81
Chequing	\$214,098.55	\$209,485.13	-\$4,613.42
RBC	\$85,237.71	\$86,927.32	-\$1,689.61

2. Auditor

Reached out to our auditing firm for a quote for a “Review” instead of an “Audit”. Nayana gave me the price of \$3800(HST included) instead of the \$5000.

3. Accounts Receivable

Continuing following up with clients. 3 of the companies we were dealing with have changed contacts on our account and are trying to catch up. I have received one payment from our last meeting but total amount still due = \$3,314.06.

National Advertising is now at \$0(yay!).

4. Hiring 2019-2020

I am pleased to say that all of our successful candidates have accepted their respectful positions. Kathryn has already begun and had a meeting with Matt to discuss the editorial side of the job. I also gave her a tour of the office and had an informal meeting to discuss our expectations and goals for the summer. Welcome Kathryn!

5. Website

- All minutes(from fiscal year 2018-2019), AGM, and staff positions are up to date on the website.
- I have also updated the advertising page to reflect the changes of going paperless. I will be working on a new image for the website.
- Matt has recently brought to my attention a bug with the author tag for certain articles. Will be forwarding to FullView look at and fix.

6. Marketing

Please see the attached analysis from Casandra. She apologizes for the delay due to her computer issues from last month. I have already forwarded this to Kathryn, but please review it and provide any constructive feedback for her and Safa to consider. Casandra has also let me know that she is willing to do a small(maybe 1 hour in August/early September) seminar/training for not only Safa, but also our other editorial staff.

Editor-in-Chief Board Report (June 23)

HIRING/2019-20 ED BOARD

- All positions hired for the 2019-20 publishing cycle
 - Training being scheduled for late August, with first production week also set to launch then
 - Training packages, both digital and physical, being prepared for training
 - Also building individual and specially catered training packages for each editor
- Putting plan for opinions section into action over the next few weeks
- Finishing up production doc and social media doc we'll use for organizing content
- Dorian's reset emails and working on resetting Slack and WordPress log ins
- Starting to build training package for all of ed board and finalizing date for training in late August; also building individual training modules for each member of ed board

CONTENT

- Been keeping up with content, publishing up to five stories a week — important part of strategy to maintain and grow readership next year
 - Continuing to follow the carding and handcuffing of a Black U of O student by campus security
 - Other stories: Fringe Festival coverage, BOG and senate meetings, Obama talk in Ottawa, U of O researchers

- In the process of a number of other longer investigative features to put out soon
- Bluesfest passes are almost finalized, along with Fringe Festival content
- Stories on the horizon: Bluesfest, Pride Parade in August

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Kathryn, our online editor, has been doing amazing work on social media
 - We've seen a huge jump in the number of likes and clicks we're receiving on social media thanks to her work
 - Incorporating emojis, new post formats has really helped
 - Also moving away from simply promoting articles on social media; also directing readers to events in the city or highlighting major news in just a tweet alone
 - Instagram has seen photos from around the U of O community, which have done amazingly well too (doggo)
Still looking to verify Twitter when that system is back up
- Updating Fulcrum Style Guide to reflect new union and updates to CP Style Guide
 - Also including new information on confidential sources, data journalism
 - Also adding style for editor's notes and corrections