

Fulcrum Publishing Society
Board of Directors
MINUTES

Sunday, February 26, 2023
Zoom, 10:00am-1:00pm

Present: Kalki Nagaratnam, Brendan Keane, Sam Coulavin, Ludvica Boota (ex-officio), Hailey Otten (ex-officio), Amit Shanbhog, Emma Godmere, Claire Liu, Chaymaa Nadi, Erik Chin,

Partially Present: Keelan Buck

Absent (with reason): Mark Asfar, Jasmine McKnight (ex-officio)

1. Commencement of Meeting

S. Coulavin commenced the meeting at 10:01 a.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

K. Nagaratnam proposed a motion to approve the agenda. E. God seconded. The motion passed.

3. Approval of January Meeting Minutes

K. Nagaratnam motioned to approve the January meeting minutes. K. Buck seconded the motion. The motion passed.

4. Standing Actions List & Work Plan

The 80th anniversary newsstand and tracking hours were removed from the standing actions list. Before the meeting, Kalki added AGM preparations to the standing actions list.

The work plan is still on track, with the AGM date confirmed to be April 5, 2023.

5. EICs Report

H. Otten presented the EIC report.

NASH Conference

Five members of EdBoard—J. McKnight, H. Otten, B. Boomer, B. Coady, and G. Kim-Shin—attended the NASH Conference in Hamilton the week before the February board meeting. They were able to attend various workshops and roundtable discussions ranging from opinion writing to broadcast journalism, and meet fellow student-journalists from across Canada.

Content

In News, D. Nikfardjam covered UOSU's resignations and vacant positions, unionization of staff at Planned Parenthood Ottawa, and the Iranian Roundtable hosted at the University of Ottawa, while Y. Mutombo covered AEIPPSSA's Indigenization project.

In Arts, V. Drybrough previewed the Filipino-Canadian youth conference taking place this weekend and the release of Our Frozen Planet at the Canadian Museum of History. Students' outrage over Netflix's policy change and the student first-responder team at VCRT were also covered.

In Science, E. Williams covered the Kelpie Robotics club and Hack the Hill.

In Sports, J. McKnight and B. Adibe covered the Super Bowl, Capital Hoops, and various volleyball and hockey games.

In Opinions, M. McConkey, G. Kim-Shin, and volunteers wrote on a variety of topics, like AI content creation, sustainable practices, GRWM videos on social media, and the rise of online sports betting.

In Features/Distractions, B. Coady wrote a few themed Dear Di's and started a new column: the Fulcrum's Student Cookbook.

Other

The Fulcrum staff has spoken to L. Boota about prizes for the Fiction Issue and are working on opening submissions soon. The changes to the Editorial Constitution made early last year have been accepted, and the old document has been replaced online.

6. ED Report

L. Boota presented the ED report.

Finances

CEBA Loan Repayment

TD sent an email reminder that Fulcrum's CEBA loan is due by the end of the year.

Human Resources

EDBoard

Tracking Hours

The process of tracking hours was implemented starting the week of February 6th. Hours are reported weekly by Friday at 12 p.m. Reminders go out the Thursday before and the Business Intern collects the hours on Friday and records all information in a spreadsheet.

NASH

NASH took place in Hamilton on February 17th to 19th, 2023. The FPS was able to take advantage of early bird prices and purchased tickets for 5 individuals: J. McKnight, H. Otten, B. Boomer, B. Coady, and G. Kim-Shin. Staff used their credit cards to pay for travel and hotels and will be reimbursed through payroll with submission of receipts.

Operations

Newspaper Racks

L. Boota was been asked by the University of Ottawa's maintenance department to remove the FPS' newspaper racks if they are no longer using them. Since the FPS is not using them and have no plans to in the future, L. Boots suggests to make this a project in the Spring once the snow has cleared and classes are done.

K. Buck said what the FPS does with the racks is ultimately up to L. Boota and the Fulcrum Editorial Board. S. Coulavin mentioned that there is a large newsstand near 90U that could provide a good opportunity for placing advertisements as it is in a good location. E. Godmere said that she is happy to create an emergency marketing committee meeting to discuss this. H. Otten mentioned that there are a few that have slowly disappeared because the University has already began removing them.

March Panel Presentation

L. Boota mentioned the Marketing Committee is looking at putting together another panel presentation similar to the November Town Hall. This would include 3-4 panel members for an approximately two hour discussion and networking opportunity. It would be open to staff and maybe freelancers.

Website

The Webmaster has completed an assessment on the FPS' site. They are working on increasing the speed of the site by deleting plugins that are not being used and then he will start compressing the photos to reduce the file size. Once this is complete, the Webmaster will focus on how to get the banner advertisements up.

L. Boota has been trying to get in touch with Fullview Design about upgrading, but she has yet to hear back.

7. Treasurer Report

C. Liu presented the Treasurer Report

The spreadsheet has been updated based on what is currently in Quickbooks.

While GSAED's Fall levy has been received, a levy from GSEAD is still outstanding. K. Buck mentioned that there is often vacancies in student organizations and he is concerned that the outstanding amount may be difficult to get. Perhaps the FPS can find a new point of contact to receive the levy. The FPS will try to contact their current contact again; if no response is received then a Board member will be contacted.

There was no NASH sponsorship because the FPS was too late to receive it.

8. President Report

Kalki presented the President Report.

Board Matters

Board Seats

There are two vacant seats remaining on the 2022-23 Board: Student Representative and University Representative.

Directors are encouraged to let the Governance Committee know if they intend to return to the Board for another one-year term. Board members are encouraged to assist in recruitment for new members so the Board can try to have most of the 12 seats filled at the AGM.

Policies

K. Nagaratnam will have officially wrapped up work on policies after presenting the new Bonus Policy today. Over the term, her focus was on revising and enhancing the FPS' HR policies.

New policies that have been developed include: Mandatory Training for Employees, Time Reporting, Additional Hours & Overtime, Fitness for Work, Workplace Accommodation, and Termination.

Policies that have been updated include: Disciplinary Action, and Hiring.

As a note for next year's Board, the Code of Conduct policy and Health & Safety policies and program need to be reviewed and updated. As a medium-term goal, K. Nagaratnam suggests the Board considers updating sections of the Policy Manual and then having it reviewed by a professional consultant.

AGM

The AGM date is Wednesday, April 5, from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Calendar invites were sent to the Board and Editorial Board. Members will attend via Zoom and staff, directors, volunteers, and freelancers will have the option to attend in-person on campus. The quorum for the meeting is 25 members.

K. Nagaratnam urges committee chairs to add their committee highlights to the Board of Directors report by Tuesday, March 28. Presenters should have their presentations and documents complete by this date also to allow members a week to review.

In-Person Board Meeting and Lunch

April's Board meeting will be held in a hybrid format, via Zoom and on campus. Following the Board meeting, the Board will head to Father and Son's for lunch!

HR Committee

Executive Director Hiring

The Executive Director job posting has been advertised on a few platforms since late January, with a closing date of Wednesday, March 1. The HR Committee will review applications and interview candidates in March. The proposed contract and successful candidate will be presented at the March Board meeting. The anticipated start date is Monday, April 3, and training with L. Boota can be completed throughout that month.

9. Committee Updates

A. Shanboug presented the Governance Committee report, and E. Godmere presented the Marketing & Community Relations Committee report.

Governance

A version of the ByLaw is ready to be presented for approval at the AGM.

Only five responses have been received for the Board survey. Only six responses have been received for the recruitment of current Board members. Only two officer positions have been filled, Chair and Secretary.

C. Liu will not be staying on because she has accepted a Ph.D. position in Illinois. One Community Rep seat is vacant. C. Nadi will not be returning. E. Chin left the meeting at this point so the Board is unsure if he is returning for the 2023-24 Board year. K. Buck is unsure if he qualifies for Staff Rep because he has not contributed to the Fulcrum for a while, but he intends on returning if a position is available.

Perhaps former staff members can be sought after to fill the President role, as it may be difficult because returning members of the Board have time restraints. Social media posts can advertise that we are looking for the President.

For the HR Committee chair, the Board seeks someone with HR expertise but not a student, as a student may not be equipped to deal with HR matters in the coming year.

Marketing

The Marketing Committee has decided to step away from the 80th Anniversary Newsstand Project.

A panel will take place featuring former staff members of the Fulcrum, but the exact date is to be determined. It will likely take place on March 19, however.

The Board is unsure if any audience research has been done on the potential audience and reading habits of current readers of the Fulcrum. Valuable insights can come from this audience survey, so the next year's Board should consider pursuing this.

10. Approval of Bonus Policy

Kalki proposed a short addition at the end of section 5 regarding end-of-term Bonuses for ED and/or EIC for exemplary performance.

E. Godmere asked about precedence for bonuses in other organizations. Kalki said this bonus policy is standard.

A. Shanboug says that bonuses should be in the contract of whoever might receive a bonus. This is more of a policy of what we can or can't negotiate in a contract. C. Liu agreed, stating that bonuses are baked into employment contracts and it is important to have a cap on bonuses.

The policy now reads:

*5.20 **Bonuses.** A term-end bonus may be awarded at the discretion of the Board to an outgoing Executive Director or Editor(s)-in-Chief for exemplary performance, which includes, but is not limited to, exceeding financial or nonfinancial goals, performing additional duties than expected,*

or serving as a good example of professional behaviour in the workplace. The bonus amount must be no more than \$1,000.00 and paid no later than the end of the employee's contract.

K. Nagaratnam presented a motion to approve the new Bonuses Policy to be added to section 5 of the policy manual. C. Liu seconded the motion. The motion passed.

11. Discussion of 1 vs. 2 Editor-in-Chief Models

K. Nagaratnam presented this section regarding the ongoing discussions of the co-EIC or single EIC model.

In an email, the co-EICs shared their initial thoughts on the co-EIC model:

“In regards to the one vs. two EIC model, we think it depends on who you have as EIC. Jasmine and I's case is a little different from Charley's, mostly because we were both still in classes this year. I honestly think this would be a difficult role for anyone to do alone if they are still in school, considering the workload and time commitment. There are weeks where things pop up that must be addressed immediately or in a timely manner, and you can't always do that when you have a big outside commitment like university work. This became especially clear during midterms and heavy assignment weeks. We both feel it should definitely be available for those who want to become EIC but will still be in university during their term.

Outside of just that, it proved to be really helpful when it came to managing and working with the staff. We had a pretty big number of new recruits this year, and it was much easier to tackle this with the two of us, especially when it came to working with editors and writers on articles and providing support when needed.”

It should be noted that the budget will be the same regardless of whether there is one or two EIC(s).

K. Nagaratnam asked about the EIC workload, and how it changed from one to two EICs. H. Otten said there is a 50/50 split between editing and management. The EICs work primarily with EdBoard, while the Managing Editor works with mainly freelancers. The EICs also attend the University Board of Governance Meetings and UOSU meetings.

A. Shanboug asked whether it is easier to recruit staff, with regard to hiring EdBoard and EIC(s), if there is a clearly defined structure. H. Otten said it depends on who is being hired; in H. Otten and J. McKnight's case, they figured out how to refine how the co-EIC model ran for them as they worked. It generally depends on who is being hired.

A. Shanboug also asked, in terms of compensation, whether other employees feel satisfied with their compensation within the co-EIC model, and whether the pay disparity is too much. If there is only one EIC, they may need to be paid more because they have more responsibilities in their role, and many students graduating may be hesitant to take on this role.

E. Godmere asked about whether there may be challenges with onboarding, whether the EICs feel other staff and EdBoard members would be willing to take on the co-EIC role. H. Otten said there is generally difficulty convincing staff members to take on the EIC role, let alone the co-EIC role. However, the co-EIC role seems a bit more feasible because the workload is split among two people.

There should be confirmation in policy, or a guideline, on how each EIC/EICs model should operate as it would be helpful for future EIC/co-EIC models.

K. Buck mentioned that it is important to leave it open to the election to determine whether there are one or two EICs, and if there is a specific process for designing the rest of EdBoard in either a co-EIC or single EIC model. There will forever be confusion on the employee structure of the Corporation if the responsibilities of the co-EICs/EIC are not set out.

K. Nagaratnam said the next steps should include the Editorial Constitution including something that states two EICs is the maximum; a clearer structure of what should be done in a co-EIC model should be defined; a statement that the budget spent on salaries shall not be increased in a co-EIC model, but be reallocated among members of the Editorial staff. The Election processes of either EIC or co-EIC model should likely be put in the Editorial Constitution.

The Board suggested that the EICs place these changes to the Editorial Constitution with assistance from the HR Committee,

K. Nagaratnam motioned to approve the writing of the procedure for the election of co-EICs, leaving the door open for the co-EIC model. E. Godmere seconded the motion. The motion passed.

12. Review of Board Mid-Term Survey Results

Only five responses were received for the Board Mid-Term Survey.

Generally, the Board believes their roles make sense and they receive content in time. However, many responses were mixed, such as whether they feel confident to express their opinions and whether they feel valued as a Board member. Many do not have a clear understanding of how the Board is executing its strategic plan. There is a diversity of perspectives and a sense of community, with a range of people on Board coming from many professional backgrounds.

Potential improvements include improving communication and participation, and only a small group of people generally speak up at meetings. The Board should also address people who do not have their cameras on.

Potential questions for future surveys include whether members feel comfortable that there is someone to talk to if there are concerns about the conduct of a fellow Board member and how engaged members feel in Board meetings,

E. Godmera said it would be nice to discuss the survey at a future Board meeting, perhaps in March where there is a lighter agenda and more people may be in attendance. Survey results should also be shown to the incoming board to see their suggestions.

13. Approval of Proposed By-law Amendments

There was a significant overhaul of the ByLaws that the Governance Committee has been working on for their past few meetings. At the AGM all comments will be resolved with notes to major changes.

A few major changes include: the definition of Staff Status was added; Books and Records and Office Location sections were added; provisional ByLaw amendments were changed from two weeks to 21 days for keeping a notice of the amendment on the Fulcrum's website; Governing Documents of the Corporation section was added; the Wording of Staff Rep definition was changed to "have achieved staff status in the last five years" from "three publications within the publishing year."

14. Revisit Standing Actions List

Audience Research Survey was added to the Forward Agenda.

15. In-Camera Session

K. Nagaratnam motioned to move in-camera. E. Godmere seconded the motion. The motion passed and the Board moved in-camera.

16. Adjournment of Meeting

The meeting ended because the Board lost quorum.

17. Appendix

Fulcrum Publishing Society – Board of Directors

Editor-in-Chief Report

Sunday, Feb. 26th, 2023 10:00 a.m.

Zoom



By: Hailey Otten and Jasmine McKnight

1. NASH Conference

Five of us (Jasmine, Hailey, Bardia, Bridget and Grace) went to the NASH Conference In Hamilton last weekend.

It was a great trip; we were able to attend a number of workshops and roundtable discussions in everything from opinions writing to broadcast journalism, as well as meet a number of fellow student-journalists from all over Canada.

2. Content

Here are a few highlights from the last month:

In News, Desiree covered UOSU's resignations and vacant positions, unionization of staff at Planned Parenthood Ottawa, and the Iranian Roundtable hosted at the U of O, while Yannick covered AEIPSSA's Indigenization project.

In Arts, Victoria previewed the Filipino-Canadian youth conference taking place this weekend and the release of Our Frozen Planet at the Canadian Museum of History. The two of them also covered students' outrage over Netflix's policy change and the student first-responder team at VCRT.

In Science, Emma wrote on the Kelpie Robotics club and Hack the Hill.

In Sports, Jasmine and Brandon have covered the Super Bowl and Capital Hoops, as well as a few volleyball and hockey games.

In Opinions, Matthew, Grace and volunteers have written on topics such as AI content creation, sustainable practices, GRWM videos on social media, and the rise of online sports betting.

In Features/Distractions, Bridget wrote a few themed Dear Di's, and started a new column (The Fulcrum's Student Cookbook).

3. Other

We've spoken to Ludvica about prizes for the Fiction Issue and are working on opening for submissions in the next week or so.

We've also accepted the changes to the Editorial Constitution from early last year, and have since replaced the old document online.

Fulcrum Publishing Society – Board of Directors

Executive Director's Report

Sunday, February 26th, 2023

Ludvica Boota



1. Finances

Snapshot of Accounts

The below financial information is accurate as of 6:30 PM on February 25, 2023.

	January 2023	February 2023	Difference
TOTAL	\$546,833.89	\$519,858.55	(\$26,975.34)

Chequing (TD)	\$448,719.35	\$422,953.29	(\$25,766.06)
Investments (RBC)	\$96,554.64	\$95,345.36	(\$1,209.28)
PayPal Balance	\$1,559.90	\$1,559.90	-
Canada Business Loan (COVID-19)	\$60,000	\$60,000	-

CEBA Loan Repayment

TD sent an email reminder that Fulcrum's CEBA loan is due by the end of the year.

2. Human Resources

EDBoard

Tracking Hours

The process of tracking hours was implemented starting the week of Feb 6th. Hours are reported weekly by Friday at 12 PM. reminders go out the Thursday before and our Business Intern collects and records all the information.

We are working with staff to address any issues with the process.

Nash

Date: February 17-19

Location: Hamilton

We were able to take advantage of early bird prices and purchased tickets for 5 individuals:

Jasmine (Editor in Chief)

Hailey (Editor in Chief)

Bardia (Photographer)

Bridget (Features Editor)

Grace (Staff Writer)

The staff used their credit cards to pay for travel and hotels. They will be reimbursed through payroll with submission of receipts.

3. Operations

Newspaper Racks

I have been asked by the University's maintenance department to remove our newspaper rack if we are no longer using them. Since we are not using them and have no plans to in the future, I would suggest we make this a project in the Spring once the snow has cleared and classes are done.

We can collect them and leave them at the office and decide later what we would like to do with them i.e. sell, donate, etc.

March Panel Presentation

The Marketing Committee is looking at putting together another panel presentation similar to the November town hall. This would include 3-4 panel members for an approx 2 hour discussion and networking opportunity. It would be open to staff and maybe freelancers.

Office Internet:

Bell is the office internet provider and everything is working.

Website

Our Webmaster has completed an assessment on our site. He is working on increasing the speed of the site by deleting plugins that we are not using and then he will start compressing the photos to reduce the file size all which should help with the laid speed.

Once that is complete, he will focus on how to get the banner ad's up.

I have been trying to get intouch with Fullview Design about upgrading, but have not heard back yet.

Sunday, February 26th, 2023



Kalki Nagaratnam

1. Board Matters

Board Seats

There are two vacant seats remaining on the 2022-23 Board:

- Student Representative
- University Representative

Directors are encouraged to let the Governance Committee know if they want to return to the Board for another one-year term. Also, help us recruit new members for next year so we can have most of the 12 seats filled at the AGM!

Policies

I will have officially wrapped up work on policies after presenting the new Bonus Policy today. Over the course of this term, my focus was on revising and enhancing our HR policies.

New policies:

- Mandatory Training for Employees, Time Reporting, Additional Hours & Overtime, Fitness for Work, Workplace Accommodation, and Termination.

Updated policies:

- Disciplinary Action, and Hiring.

As a note for the next year's Board, the Code of Conduct policy and Health & Safety policies and program remain to be reviewed and updated. As a medium-term goal, I would suggest that the Board considers updating other sections of the Policy Manual, e.g., Finance, Governance, etc., and then having the Policy Manual, as a whole, reviewed by a professional consultant.

AGM

The AGM date has been fixed - Wednesday, April 5, from 6:00pm to 8:30pm - and calendar invites sent to the Board and EdBoard. Members will attend via Zoom and staff/directors/volunteers/freelancers will have the option to attend in person on campus - room TBD. The quorum for the meeting is 25 members!

Agenda: [2023 AGM Agenda](#) . AGM page: <https://thefulcrum.ca/annual-general-meeting/>.

Committee chairs, please add your committee highlights to the Board of Directors report by Tuesday, March 28. Presenters, please have your presentations/documents uploaded to [AGM 2023](#) by this date as well to allow members a week to review.

In-Person Board Meeting and Lunch

April's Board meeting will be held in a hybrid format, via Zoom and on campus, room TBD. Following the Board meeting, we will head to FnS for lunch!

In-Camera Matter

We will go in-camera at the end of the Board meeting to discuss updates on the office and HR.

2. HR Committee

Executive Director Hiring

The ED job posting has been advertised on a few platforms since late January, with a closing date of Wednesday, March 1. The HR Committee will review applications and interview candidates in March. We will present the proposed contract and successful candidate (hopefully) at the next Board meeting. The anticipated start date is Monday, April 3, and training with Ludvica can be completed throughout that month.

3. Calendar Items

Next Board Meeting

Sunday, March 26, at 10:00am

AGM

Wednesday, April 5, at 6:00pm

Fulcrum Publishing Society – Board of Directors

Bonus Policy

Sunday, February 22nd, 2023



The Board has given out bonuses to employees in past years. However, I could not find a policy on this in our Policy Manual to provide some guidelines.

I propose we approve the following bonus policy to add to Section 5 Financial Governance.

5.20 Bonuses. A term-end bonus may be awarded at the discretion of the Board to an outgoing Executive Director or Editor(s)-in-Chief for exemplary performance, which includes, but is not limited to, exceeding financial or nonfinancial goals, performing additional duties than expected, or serving as a good example of professional behaviour in the workplace. The bonus amount must be no more than \$1,000.00 and paid no later than the end of the employee's contract.

Fulcrum Publishing Society – Board of Directors

One vs. Two EIC Models

Sunday, February 26th, 2023



To continue the discussion started in-camera at the November Board meeting on the future of the one vs. two EIC models at the Fulcrum, this time with the Editor(s)-in-Chief and Executive Director to gain their input and address questions regarding EdBoard operations to inform Board decision-making.

Ultimately, the Board will need to decide what option is available moving forward:

- one EIC only
- two EICs only
- one EIC or two EICs, dependent on EdBoard interest (with additional conditions?)
- another outcome

EICs were asked to provide a summary of their thoughts.

“In regards to the one vs. two EIC model, we think it depends on who you have as EIC. Jasmine and I's case is a little different from Charley's, mostly because we were both still in classes this year. I honestly think this would be a difficult role for anyone to do alone if they are still in school, considering the workload and time commitment. There are weeks where things pop up that must be addressed immediately or in a timely manner, and you can't always do that when you have a big outside commitment like university work. This became especially clear during midterms and heavy assignment weeks. We both feel it should definitely be available for those who want to become EIC but will still be in university during their term.

Outside of just that, it proved to be really helpful when it came to managing and working with the staff. We had a pretty big number of new recruits this year, and it was much easier to tackle this with the two of us, especially when it came to working with editors and writers on articles and providing support when needed.”