



**Gateway Student Journalism Society (GSJS) Board of Directors Meeting  
September 2019**

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chair, Continuity Rep	Oumar Salifou
Editor-in-Chief	Andrew McWhinney
Alumni Rep	Jonh Kmech
Community Representative	Robyn Paches
Students' Council Representative	Mohamad Jamaledine
Students' Union Representative, Treasurer	Luke Statt
Director of Marketing & Outreach	Pia Co
Editors' Representative, Secretary	Adam Lachacz
Managing Editor	Christine McManus

**MEETING MINUTES:**

**Meeting called to order by Chair Oumar Salifou at 6:04 pm on September 26, 2019.**

**1.0 Approval of the minutes**

**1.1** *Motioned by Andrew McWhinney*

**1.2** *Seconded by*

**1.2** *7/0/0*

**2.0 Approval of the agenda**

**2.1** *Motioned by Andrew McWhinney*

**2.2** *Seconded by*

**2.3** *7/0/0*

### 3.0 Reports

#### 3.1 *Editorial*

**McWhinney:** Solid month of production so far. Good content being produced and people transitioning into their roles.

There's been a bit of reddit controversy that has emerged. Someone took a picture of last year's April horoscope and took one part of it out of context. They are calling to defund us. My kind of stance on this is we just weather the storm. We have a letter to the editor actually defending us. If we get a letter to the editor against us we will publish it as well to get that counterfoil. We just need to be careful moving forward how we publish things and looking at everything from multiple angles.

The deputy editor project is underway. We put out a Google Form from past staff, volunteers, and current board members and staff. Now we will use this to develop ideas of what to go off of for the position.

#### 3.2 *Magazine*

**McManus:** Pickup numbers for September are looking really good so far. October is proceeding along schedule. November design work is already underway.

No updates about our membership with the Alberta Magazine Publishers Association yet. Their membership committee is meeting in October and we will get word back from them in time for our next board meeting.

#### 3.3 *Outreach*

**Co:** Week of Welcome went really well. Had over 500 people visit us. The Open House at the office was packed, to the point it was probably a fire hazard. Great social media campaign got us new followers and likes.

Put out a streeters video and we filmed a coffee ranking video as well. Hope to have more video content like this.

*The Gateway* video we produced is now being used for class talks and for Gateway to Cinema as well. Looks great on the big screen.

Will have a Gateway to Oscars event in December. Speaking with UASU VP SL Jared Larsen about that. Hope to get some good outreach through that.

I will talk to Lee and Oumar as well to get some alumni ideas and updates.

#### 3.4 *Business and Ads Report*

**McWhinney:** Piero was unable to make it today. Biggest expense made in August was our errors and omissions insurance policy — which increased this year because of the

lawsuit from last year. The policy has gone up by \$3,000 and is non-negotiable. So in essence it doubled from our previous rate. We also covered our property insurance and other professional fees.

We spoke with our auditors to try and see if we could lower the rate they charge us. Part of the reason our audit costs are so high is that our books haven't been maintained properly and we haven't been filing out GST returns correctly for a long time. As of June we have \$6,250 sitting in our accounting — about 10-12 years worth of GST returns. We should ensure we file this correctly and get that money, and then moving forward to get the GST returns properly as well. So our auditors said hopefully moving forward once we clean some of this up we will get lower audit prices.

Our current balance with the Students' Union is \$55,000.

According to accounts receivable we are sitting around \$17,600 in ads — some clients are one-time and others are a few months. We are almost at 50% of our budgeted goal. Our monthly goal is \$4,600. In August we reached just over \$7,000.

### 3.5 *Online Report*

**McWhinney:** For August we were just under 27,000 unique page views. Most top viewed articles were news-focused. Increased our page views from last year, but not an increase over page views for 2018 in August. August 2018 had 2,000 more than us. There was a large bump in viewers then because of the breaking news of the science dean resigning.

We are exploring something called Wise Analytics. It only works for two months worth of data. Other free programs only do 30 days as well for social media analytics.

### 3.6 *Discussion*

**Kmech:** With reference to deputy line editorships, have you looked at previous job descriptions we had for deputy editorships? We used to have one for news which operated slightly differently but you can get a good jist of an idea from it.

**McWhinney:** No, we haven't but that is a great idea. Will definitely do that.

**Kmech:** For ad sales, did we get a lot of return clients from the F-Media list provided to us?

**Co:** We reached out to most of them and did not get many responses back. We've had better luck reaching out to new clientele. It's harder to get smaller businesses so far from what we've seen. Piero and I need to sit down and find a way to make student group ads more attractive.

**Salifou:** With regards to ad sales, how do we foresee future months going? Will it be as easy as August?

**Co:** I think that it will be okay. So far Piero and I have been doing well. I think the key is asking for ads closer to themes that work for specific businesses. Like for October, reaching out now to Halloween stores or for February reaching out to adult stores or stuff like that in December-ish. It's hard to say whether there will be a slow down. For now we just gotta keep spending the time reaching out to ads. It looks like if we maintain this consistency we should be on-track for our ads goal for the year.

#### 4.0 **For Discussion: DFU referendum**

##### 4.1 *Discussion*

McWhinney highlighted how *The Gateway* has a renewal campaign required to happen next year in 2020-21. There is also a worry about voluntary student unionism (VSU) being passed by the UCP government where our mandatory fee would become threatened. We've seen in Ontario how their government initiative for something like VSU implemented and how its threatened many mastheads. McWhinney said running the normal renewal campaign next year will happen. There is also a case to be made for running a campaign either this year or after next year where we add an opt-out option and increase the fee to be prepared prior to VSUs happening.

Statt supported McWhinney's idea to have a campaign introduce an opt-out and fee increase, especially since an opt-out may be required. Cautioned *The Gateway* to be ready to face a no campaign or increased resistance toward it, as evidenced by the reddit post and other anti-Gateway sentiments. Having an opt-out is great because it then takes away the steam from defunding *The Gateway* rhetoric.

Salifou mentioned how it is easy for Gateway staff, board members, and volunteers to see the value provided by having it as part of the campus community. The challenge will be to communicate that out to students at large.

Salifou asked if a DFU plebiscite renewal campaign could include an option for opt-out.

Statt said a renewal campaign could only be the renewal of what is already approved. Patches agreed and said in a renewal the question is simply if students continue to support a fee.

Paches suggested that *The Gateway* consider running a DFU campaign this year for an increase to the fee and adding the opt-out option. That way it could get what it needs, be ready for VSUs, and have an opportunity to pass a referendum before its required plebiscite. If it passes, great it is done and over with and students have the ability to opt-out. If it fails, then there is a second chance to run a better campaign next year. There is no consequence to running this year.

Salifou said he sees no reason not to run a campaign this year. The 2016 campaign ran with very low staff support and little effort done and it passed with 60%. Imagine what could be done with more targeted work and better concerted staff support. Salifou said he wanted to run the campaign with an opt-out and fee increase last year while he was Editor-in-Chief.

Lachacz asked why the campaign didn't run last year as Salifou intended. He responded that the lawsuit was the reason.

Co said it might be difficult to run the campaign alongside all the changes to in-house ads and cleaning up our image/practices.

Paches said this is where having a really organized set of campaign volunteers and managers would come into play. That way campaign work can be balanced and the day-to-day operations can occur.

**Meeting ended by Chair Oumar Salifou at 7:37 p.m. on September 26, 2019.**