

Gateway Student Journalism Society

Meeting Minutes

Thursday October 15, 2020

Opening

The regular meeting of the Gateway Student Journalism Society was called to order at 7:04pm on October 15, 2020 remotely over Google Meet by Lee Craig (interim chair until vote).

Present

- Damian Lachacz
- Adam Lachacz
- Lee Craig
- Jonn Kmech
- Alana Krahn
- Kate Turner
- Mitchell Pawluk
- Sezvo-ndinemwi M'pfunya
- Shayla Breen

Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved as distributed.

Reports

1. Editor in Chief

Adam Lachacz summarized his report contained in the email sent prior to the meeting. A claim will be filed and fixtures of the building due to fire and water damage will be covered by U of A and SU. It will be up to The Gateway to cover furniture replacements.

After feedback from last board meeting about Equity Taskforce, will be changing some objectives (involving the \$59,000 grant received from Ministry of Heritage and Culture).

Jonn Kmech asked about damage due to fire and sprinklers. Adam Lachacz responded, specifying floor tiles over work pods, carpet in couch area and conference room, ceiling tiles, conference room table, 10 swivel chairs, and 4 couches within couch room.

Jon Kmech asked whether the claim would increase the insurance premiums. Adam Lachacz responded, saying yes. A file should be claimed in case Edmonton Police files charges so that The Gateway receives restitution.

Damian Lachacz asked about insurance premiums for different plans and whether it would affect the organization's business insurance. A premium increase would not affect The Gateway's business insurance (which increased due to lawsuit).

2. Online

Adam Lachacz reported in lieu of Pia Co, Online Editor. Online viewership numbers continue to be increasing. The most popular articles for the month had a combination of news, opinion, older articles. The reason for website lag/shutdown due to IP addresses accessing the site thousands of times in a single day. These IP addresses were banned by The Gateway's Webmaster. Later on, the board will have to consider upgrading the website's RAM in the future (due to more content, video content, image resolution, etc.).

Jon Kmech asked about the online speaker series for the Gateway 110 anniversary. Adam Lachacz responded that there will be 2 panels: 1.) showcasing the history of The Gateway and 2.) mix of current volunteers, recent staff and current staff (what's the next 110 years of The Gateway?)

3. Executive Director

Shayla Breen, Executive Director offered the report as read in the email sent by Adam Lachacz prior to the meeting. One special announcement was made about Monday.com, a customer relationship software. They offered their pro program for free (save \$500) and would like to partner with The Gateway.

4. Magazine Editor

Adam Lachacz reported in lieu of Tina Tai, Magazine Editor. There was a very low pickup rate, 46% of 1,700 magazines, due to COVID-19. Under normal circumstances, the regular standard is 60-75% for 3,500. A request is made for more board guidance on the matter.

New Business

1. Standard time and date for board meetings—third Thursday of each month at 7:00pm

No concerns were raised. The opportunity for Sezvo-ndinemwi M'pfunya and Robyn Paches to vote over email was left open for them.

2. Vacant board positions
 - a. Vote on Chair

Candidates: Alana Krahn and Mitchell Pawluk

Lee Craig asked both candidates why they want to be Chair. In a follow-up question, Jonn Kmech asks about both candidates' board experience.

Jonn Kmech motioned for an in-camera vote and asked candidates to step out. Seconded by Adam Lachacz.

Jonn Kmech requested discussion period due to some in-familiarity with candidates. Adam Lachacz offered remarks about both candidates.

Kate Turner asked for review of the Chair position, answered by Lee Craig and Adam Lachacz.

Lee Craig mediated the vote.

Vote result: Mitchell Pawluk

- b. Vote on Secretary (rotating?)

After voted in as chair, Mitchell Pawluk wanted to confirm rotating Secretary.

Motion to have Damian Lachacz and Sezvo-ndinemwi M'pfunya as rotating secretaries by Lee Craig. Mitchell Pawluk seconded. Vote passed.

Action Item: Completed minutes are to be sent to Adam Lachacz to be uploaded to the Gateway website

Action Item: Update Gateway website with Board positions

3. HR Committee (Any board members interested?)

Board members interested: Damian Lachacz and Lee Craig

Mitchell Pawluk opens nominations for HR Committee

Kate Turner nominates herself

Jonn Kmech nominates Alana Krahn

Decided members for the HR Committee are Damian Lachacz, Lee Craig, Kate Turner, and Alana Krahn. As per bylaws, the HR Committee requires 5 members. For the time being, there will be one vacancy.

Damian Lachacz nominates Alana Krahn as interim chair of the HR Committee.

Action Item: Interim chair Alana Krahn will arrange correspondence with the committee to begin meeting

4. For discussion: Magazine circulation

Adam Lachacz opened the discussion, wants to be proactive in case this becomes a larger trend (refer to Magazine Editor report). More magazines will be added on outdoor racks.

Brainstorm discussion:

Two proposals were put forward by Adam Lachacz, create a subscriber list and deliver magazine to alumni and students inside/outside of Edmonton for monthly subscription fee just to cover shipping.

Other option is partnering with U of A library system with curbside pickup

General questions asked by Damian Lachacz. Jonn Kmech offered advice with experience from 2010-2011 (location of racks, racks with low pickup transfer magazines between racks). Kate Turner asked about off campus rack locations. Could be another future direction to look in to.

Action Items: Optimizing rack placement

5. For approval: Ministry of Heritage and Culture Emergency COVID-19 Grant spending plan

Presented by Adam Lachacz. The Gateway was awarded \$59,360 (one-time grant non-negotiable, must be spent in fiscal year by June 30, 2021). The full sum must be spent, can't go into savings. Any funds not spent have to be returned to the government, but there are broad parameters.

The Board then began to examine the proposed expenditures for the grant.

Damian Lachacz asked some general questions. Jonn Kmech confirmed that with all purchases approved, there would be approx. \$7,000 remaining.

- Payroll

Jonn Kmech asked for rationale of \$25,000. Adam Lachacz responded, it allows the opportunity for other useful expenditures for the future. Alana Krahn asked about the Gateway's savings in reserve. Alana Krahn and Damian Lachacz exchanged views on how much money should be diverted to DFU campaign resources.

Adam Lachacz motions to vote on payroll. Seconded by Jonn Kmech.

Verdict: Approved

- Desk

Desk and chair required for the 13th Gateway employee, Business Administrator. Lee Craig asked if similar organizations received this same grant. The Gateway received significantly more than similar organizations.

Verdict: Approved (through the motion to approve all items under \$1,000, with the exception of the envelopes and labels).

- Magazine Stands

9 new racks for 9 new businesses. Outdoor rack situation limited.

Jonn Kmech asked why couldn't purchase more racks and feasibility of outdoor racks (would have to consider permit application process). Shayla Breen added difficult to reach off-campus businesses for advertising, let alone getting magazine racks and GreenLine magazine contract (would cost thousands of dollars). Adam Lachacz added that a GreenLine magazine contract would require an annual membership fee. Kate Turner asked whether or not the Gateway could put racks beside GreenLine racks. Shayla Breen says it would not be advisable, as they are willing to work with The Gateway.

Verdict: Approved (through the motion to approve all items under \$1,000, with the exception of the envelopes and labels).

- Label Maker

Would be important if going forward with subscriber list idea.

Verdict: Approved (through the motion to approve all items under \$1,000, with the exception of the envelopes and labels).

- ID Card Printer/Plastic Card Printer

Gateway reporters have to be identifiable as press with official ID. Would require press cards to get to protests, government events, etc. Staff are recognized in Alberta Press Pool with business card and government ID. However, this prevents volunteers from being able to participate in press gallery. Price includes cards, ribbons, supplies, software, etc.

Jon Kmech if SUBPrint does this. Alana Krahn believes that is where SU ID cards are printed. Kate Turner encouraged the board to look elsewhere to do this, in order to ensure a large expenditure isn't for nothing. Shayla Breen asked about some specifics about ONECard. Alana Krahn says they are printed on site.

Action Item: explore alternatives for buying our own card printer

Verdict: struck off the list by Adam Lachacz

- Mini Portable Recorder

Would be high use item.

Verdict: Approved (through the motion to approve all items under \$1,000, with the exception of the envelopes and labels).

- Shelf Unit

In response to outgrowth of photo locker.

Verdict: Approved (through the motion to approve all items under \$1,000, with the exception of the envelopes and labels).

- Plastic Storage Bins

Interrelated with shelf unit.

Verdict: Approved (through the motion to approve all items under \$1,000, with the exception of the envelopes and labels).

- Microphone Unit

To be used with camera. In consideration of physical distancing, one microphone for interviews is not feasible. Damian Lachacz asked about purchasing extendable arms for interviewee microphone. Would be too expensive and not useful outside of a COVID year

Verdict: Approved (through the motion to approve all items under \$1,000, with the exception of the envelopes and labels).

- Female cord for mentioned Microphone Unit

If using above microphone wired.

Verdict: Approved (through the motion to approve all items under \$1,000, with the exception of the envelopes and labels).

- Microphone Receiver Unit

Fancier version of Mini Portable Recorder.

Verdict: Approved (through the motion to approve all items under \$1,000, with the exception of the envelopes and labels).

- Tripod Unit

Verdict: Approved (through the motion to approve all items under \$1,000, with the exception of the envelopes and labels).

- Digital Media Specialist*

Jonn Kmech asked if person would be a student or professional? Adam Lachacz said it would be a student.

Verdict: Approved (in combination with Social Media Campaign Outreach).

- Social Media Campaign Outreach

Money for advertising and outreach, not solely for the DFU Campaign.

Verdict: Approved (in combination with Digital Media Specialist).

- EDI Consultant/Diversity Audit*

Jonn Kmech asked about where the pricing came from. Was an estimate from online research. He would like to see a quote, and possibly a person in mind, testimonials. Adam Lachacz added that this would be a valuable asset to the DFU Campaign.

Lee Craig mentioned that she would also like more specifics. Shayla Breen suggests this should be a board based initiative and working down.

Lee Craig motioned to table the EDI Consultant/Diversity Audit. Adam Lachacz seconded

Action Items: Perform more research for EDI Consultant/Diversity Audit

Verdict: Tabled

***For all jobs, have to first approve salary, then job description will be presented at the next board meeting**

- Premium Slack Subscription

Damian Lachacz asked if this would be an annual payment facing the future of the Gateway? Maybe not outside of a COVID year.

Lee Craig asked for how long the Gateway used Slack. Would be a useful application for transparency as well. Also asked Alana Krahn about whether or not they use Slack. Used for communications channels with marketing team but mostly WhatsApp for encryption. Adam Lachacz reminded the Board of the privacy features of Slack. Adam Lachacz and Mitchell Pawluk added that many media organizations use Slack as well. Kate Turner added the value of Slack for volunteers.

Verdict: Approved (through the motion to approve all items under \$1,000, with the exception of the envelopes and labels).

- Mailing Envelopes

Materials in anticipation of the subscriber list.

Verdict: Tabled

- Labels for Label Maker

Materials in anticipation of the subscriber list.

Verdict: Tabled

- Canada Post Postage

For international shipping, in anticipation of the subscriber list. Jonn Kmech asked for more information on this large cost. Kate Turner asked if the cost would account for the number of interested international students. Adam Lachacz said the number is an estimate.

Damian Lachacz encouraged the board for further discussion on the matter of magazine circulation.

Verdict: Tabled, requires more information.

- Podcast Microphones

Useful for podcasting, recording interviews. Damian Lachacz emphasized the value of these microphones.

Verdict: (through the motion to approve all items under \$1,000, with the exception of the envelopes and labels).

General Discussion on expenditures

Adam Lachacz summarized general thoughts from the discussion and asked if the Board is interested in going forward with voting the highest priority items. Jonn Kmech and Mitchell Pawluk offered ideas for how to approve the items for purchase.

Kate Turner ensured that all equipment proposed would be used by volunteers.

Jonn Kmech suggested that one motion to pass all items under a thousand dollars would be a good idea. Mitchell Pawluk listed the items under a thousand dollars.

Adam Lachacz motioned to vote to approve all items under a thousand dollars. Adam Lachacz removed envelopes and labels from that motion. Jonn Kmech seconded. Vote passed.

Kate Turner asked if the position of Digital Manager would consolidate some roles of outreach, online, etc. Adam Lachacz confirmed this and said it would also relieve the Art Director as well. Shayla Breen confirmed that she spoke with those staff positions about their roles extended past their job description.

Adam Lachacz motioned to vote to approve the position of Digital Media Specialist, Social Media Campaign Outreach. Jonn Kmech seconded.

Shayla Breen provided more ideas on how the campaign would unfold. Social Media Campaign Outreach would include general advertising.

Lee Craig motioned to table indefinitely items not already voted for. Jonn Kmech seconded.

6. Additional business

Adam Lachacz added that an updated budget will be brought to the board as soon as the first DFU check is received.

Jonn Kmech and Lee Craig brought up the idea of a proposed mini board retreat. Reading Week would be an ideal time.

Action Item: Finance Committee will be called now that there is a Chair.

Agenda for Next Meeting

- Meetings will remain third Thursday of each month
- Optimizing magazine rack placement and updates on magazine circulation
- Job descriptions for new positions proposed
- EDI Consultant/Diversity Audit Discussion
- Finance Committee Report

Adjournment

Motion for Meeting to adjourn by Adam Lachacz. Seconded by Jonn Kmech. Meeting was adjourned at 9:45pm by Mitchell Pawluk (newly elected chair). The next general meeting will be at 7:00pm on Thursday, November 19 remotely over Google Meet.

Minutes submitted by: Damian Lachacz

Approved by: *The Gateway Student Journalism Society Board of Directors*