

Gateway Student Journalism Society

Meeting Minutes

July 27 2022

Opening

The regular meeting of the Gateway Student Journalism Society was called to order at 6:11 p.m. on July 27, 2022 via Google Meets by Mitchell PAWLUK.

Present:

PAWLUK, Mitchell

KERR, Lochlann

VILLOSO, Julia

WILLIAMS, Emily

HE, Jin

BROOKS, Sam

TEELING, Katie

TYAGI, Aishwarya

CRAIG, Lee

Absent:

KOSAK, Dan

AVILA, Rebeca

Approval of the Agenda

Moved by VILLOSO

Seconded by WILLIAMS

There are no votes in opposition.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by WILLIAMS

Seconded by VILLOSO

Agenda passed, CRAIG abstained due to absence.

Reports to the Board

WILLIAMS presents the Editor-in-Chief report.

WILLIAMS says that they have hired TEELING as Opinion Editor. The applications for staff reporter and editing manager close on Friday. WILLIAMS says they're looking to set up training for the end of August for all new hires. She also says that they have set up a partnership with CSL and have taken on 10 students. She says she has received some responses on guest columns. She says that WILLIAMS and KERR have restructured donations. They have received \$51 so far. She also said they hired a freelancer.

KERR presents the Executive Director report.

KERR says they made a donor link for donations on the Gateway website. He says they'll be doing a push for donations in February, right before UASU elections. He says they will continue on building advertiser relationships. Currently, they're working on a partnership with METRO Cinema, including a free movie for students. He says they had a meeting with UASU about adshares. He says the UASU will post ads on The Gateway website for a 30 per cent cut. He says the lease needs to be done by August 31. He says they're separating lease and adshares, when before they were combined. Now, he says it will be easier to talk about adshares. He says that the Gateway cannot get a casino license with the current bylaws The Gateway has.

HE presents the Production Editor report.

The Top 10 pages of the month are:

1. Homepage, 2841
2. Top 5 Taylor Swift songs to cry to, 2009
3. Swoop airlines: A cautionary tale, 1001
4. 100 indie band names we made up, 730
5. Why are millennials so obsessed with tattoos, 640
6. Sex Column: Pearls, 609
7. Online databases have legal implications, 579
8. Sexual preferences based on race still racist, 499
9. Reduction to U of A libraries due to financial limitations, 372
10. U of A shares intentions to get rid of Humanities Centre, 321

HE explains that because they're hiring for Production Manager next week, she is preparing everything in case they want to start earlier. Depending on when they want to start, HE is prepared to step down the second or third week of August.

CRAIG presents the Finance Committee Report.

CRAIG says that there isn't any major revenue to report yet, since its the beginning of the year. She says they did begin talking about the financial audit for this year. She says that KERR and WILLIAMS want to do the audit in the third week of AUGUST, earlier than previous years. CRAIG agrees and says it is a great idea.

CRAIG asks WILLIAMS if a company is performing the audit.

WILLIAMS says the company is Dorwood and Co. This is the company used in previous years.

CRAIG said the committee discussed that the 2022-23 Budget should be summarized monthly.

KERR presents the Gov Committee report.

KERR says he would like the Governance Committee review bylaws, in hopes of getting a casino license. He says the Governance Committee will review this at the next meeting.

WILLIAMS presents the Sexual Violence Task Force Report.

WILLIAMS says they've picked a first meeting date.

WILLIAMS says that because JEFFREY and HE are leaving the Gateway, the task force is low on members. WILLIAMS says that depending on how many board members would like to join the Task Force, they can ask non-board members to join.

PAWLUK says that they haven't done this before, so they will have to go over the logistics.

BROOKS says that the Task Force would greatly benefit from community members and experts joining.

PAWLUK says that they got clarification that they could have non-board members on the Task Force, but there aren't guidelines on how to do it.

For Approval:

PAWLUK said that they posted an opening for the alumni on the board. He says that they received one applicant. However, he says that another person applied, but rescinded their application after telling PAWLUK they thought a more seasoned alumni would be better.

BROOKS raised questions about moving in camera for voting on the applicant.

PAWLUK puts forward the motion of voting in camera.

Moved by BROOKS.

Seconded by CRAIG.

The meeting moved in camera at 6:40 p.m..

WILLIAMS motions to move exit camera.

Seconded by BROOKS.

Moving to exit camera passed unanimously.

Exited camera at 6:47 p.m..

VILLOSO motions to approve EVAN DAUM for candidacy.

Seconded by WILLIAMS.

The candidacy for Alumni Representative passed unanimously.

Presentation

KERR presents the Readership Survey.

KERR notes that the survey was run online, even though the U of A was back in person at this time. KERR says this is because the first two weeks school was back in person, the UASU elections were running. KERR says that there were fewer respondents because they were caught between in-person and online.

KERR notes that the 69.3 per cent of respondents were women, which makes sense considering most of the demographic they reach is female. KERR says these results mirror those of previous years.

KERR notes that the results are similar to those of the wider campus community.

KERR says that most readers are undergrads. KERR says that most readers are full-time. He says they under-reached with engineering students and law students. Boradly, he says, they hit a lot of Arts and Science students.

KERR says the metric was usually only a 10 per cent change from last year.

KERR says that, overall, 39.7 per cent have a somewhat positive opinion of the Gateway. He says that a running theme in the survey is that people feel neutrally about the Gateway. KERR points out that this is a good sign, because these people can be swayed to think positively about the Gateway, instead of those who are ardently opposed to the Gateway.

KERR says that The Gateway is seeing a lot of people who know nothing about the organization. KERR says that it is vital to do outreach, especially during Clubs Fair, which is in-person this year.

KERR says that there is a decline in perception of The Gateway from previous years. He says this is concerning, but the methodology of asking questions in previous surveys may have influenced results.

KERR says that The Gateway suffers from people not knowing what we do. KERR notes that the website should be edited to make it easier for students to access information, like finances. KERR says a huge amount of people are unclear on how The Gateway handles its finances. KERR acknowledges that there will always be people who don't understand or know how the finances work, but its still important to allow them to look.

KERR says that the awareness of readers is tied to The Gateway's messaging. KERR says it's concerning that students don't know that The Gateway is independent from the UASU and that anyone can be a volunteer. KERR says that The Gateway will be pushing these key messages in the fall during outreach.

KERR says most people are infrequent readers of The Gateway content, most reading at most once a week. KERR says that a lot of the Gateway's readership comes from key articles that come a few times a year. He says that this highlights the importance of the Gateway to students, and shows what The Gateway needs to publish more.

KERR says that many readers want more content published on Reddit. KERR says there has been minimal posting on Reddit because of hostile responses. KERR says they will continue

posting content on TikTok, which started during graduation. KERR points out that most TikToks are editorials, so that is up to Editorial Staff.

KERR says that many respondents asked for a newsletter, which does exist. He points out since so many people asked for a newsletter, its important to push.

KERR notes that in future years, he will cut the question on how well-balanced the news is at the Gateway. Because it's so similar to the questions on bias at The Gateway, KERR says there's no reason to have two.

KERR says that readers found that satirical content was the least valuable at the Gateway. KERR says they are looking to cut it fully in future, especially leading to the readership survey in 2023 and the DFU campaign.

KERR says that many people felt that the quality of content has not dropped since the student fee ended. KERR says that he was surprised, but that people reacted positively to the notion of adding an optional student fee.

BROOKS points out that the survey is very long, which might contribute to the low number of respondents. BROOKS is concerned that it might not be fully representative, since its such a small portion of the student body. BROOKS wonders what the abandonment rate of the survey was.

KERR says that this survey is almost ten questions shorter than last year's survey. He notes that this coming readership survey will be shorter.

PAWLUK points out that student engagement at this time was really low.

WILLIAMS asked what platform was used for the survey.

KERR says that they used google forms.

CRAIG asks if there is any way to compare the student body and the respondents of the survey.

KERR says that the survey overrepresented women on campus. For ethnicity, the largest demographic groups on campus are caucasians and asians, which correlates in the survey.

For discussion:

WILLIAMS begins discussing the creation of a pamphlet for the Gateway. She says that there are many newspaper stands on campus, which sit empty. She says that her and KERR were thinking on how they would fill the stands. She points out that there will be three rounds of students who the fall semester will be their first time on campus. WILLIAMS says their target demographic is not just current or potential volunteers, but also readers.

WILLIAMS says that the pamphlet would be expensive, but they are looking to cut costs. She says this is also a chance to do a soft rebranding of The Gateway. WILLIAMS says they were brainstorming slogans that would influence people to pick up the pamphlet.

KERR goes next, saying that the overwhelming problem is the cost, especially if they want it to look good and be in colour. KERR says that they want two sheets of paper stapled together. KERR says they were hoping to do a partnership with SubPrint, offering them an advertisement on the back page to lower the price. KERR says they were not receptive to this idea. Roughly, KERR says that it would turn out to be a dollar per booklet.

KERR then goes into detail about what will be featured on the pamphlet.

WILLIAMS mentions that they were thinking of placing an advertisement on the back to help fund this project. Again, she mentions that her and KERR pitched an advertisement to SubPrint, who did not give a firm answer but was not enthusiastic.

WILLIAMS shows her idea for a pamphlet, which features a theme of getting to know the local newspaper. She says there was some concern about it resembling the UASU too much.

CRAIG comments that this sounds like a good idea, because having a physical copy will bring it to mind more.

PAWLUK notes that the Gateway is looking to have a physical part on campus, which will be helped by having a physical pamphlet.

TYAGI points out that the Lister newsstand often has more involvement than any other on campus.

WILLIAMS then discusses the Long Term Strategic Plan. She says that originally her plan was starting a new committee that will just work on this plan. WILLIAMS worries that the future EIC, if they choose to start a DFU campaign that fails, they'll have nothing to fall back on.

WILLIAMS says that the Finance Committee has very little work right now, and most of the issues surrounding a DFU campaign concern finances, including a Finance Contingency Plan.

CRAIG thinks that if the Finance Committee takes on the Long Term Strategic Plan, they'll need to extend the meeting time. She says they think they can do it, but they might have to bring more members into the Finance Committee. CRAIG says that the new members can either just be a part of the long term strategic plan, or the Finance Committee the whole time.

BROOKS points out that finances are a very small part of the Long Term Strategic Plan. For the most part, BROOKS points out that engagement has been a major topic in past board meetings. BROOKS asks if the role of the board is to help plan the strategy, or to provide feedback. He asks if the board is the right people to be planning the Long Term Strategy Plan.

PAWLUK says that if WILLIAMS is more worried about finances, they can give that portion to the Finance Committee and leave the rest up to managing staff. However, PAWLUK points out that there is significantly less staff than previous years, so if they need more substantive help, it can be provided.

WILLIAMS says she is worried about the year they do the DFU, when they will have one third of staff while simultaneously covering elections. WILLIAMS says capacity is a concern, but she is also concerned about starting another committee because there can't be too many. She thinks that the Long Term Strategy Plan can just be slotted with the Finance Committee. In terms of marketing, engagement, and outreach, WILLIAMS says she believes her and KERR are handling it. She says she values the feedback and opinion of the board, but they don't necessarily need to write the Long Term Strategic Plan itself.

CRAIG points out that at the next meeting, they can discuss whether or not they want to extend the Finance Committee's role in the Long-Term Strategic Plan. CRAIG says that as September approaches, they need to decide if managing staff has the time to write the plan. CRAIG points out that this is a decision that needs to be made right away, and can't be put off. CRAIG urges the board to make a decision at the next board meeting about how they want to continue. She says she is hesitant about making a new committee to handle the Long-Term Strategic Plan.

HE echoes CRAIG's sentiments. HE thinks that the board needs to discuss future steps before the fall semester begins and everyone gets busy. HE thinks that the staff, especially those who are staying on next year, need to discuss what they envision for the Long-Term Strategic Plan since they meet more frequently than the board.

PAWLUK says that all those on staff can decide if they want to attend the August board meeting. PAWLUK also points out that it will be a good opportunity for new and current staff to familiarize them with The Gateway and its future.

Adjournment:

BROOKS motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by WILLIAMS.

Meeting was adjourned unanimously at 7:55 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Katie Teeling