

# Gateway Student Journalism Society

Meeting Minutes

July 6 2022

## **Opening**

The regular meeting of the Gateway Student Journalism Society was called to order at 6:07 p.m. on July 6, 2022 via Google Meets by Mitchell PAWLUK.

## **Email Voting:**

The April 22 board minutes were voted on via email.

Votes for: KOSAK, TEELING, JEFFREY, WILLIAMS, BROOKS, AVILA

Abstaining votes: CRAIG, VILLOSO, PAWLUK

The April board minutes are approved.

The job posting for the alumni representative position on the Board was also voted on via email.

Votes for: KOSAK, TEELING, JEFFREY, WILLIAMS, BROOKS, AVILA

Abstaining votes: CRAIG, VILLOSO, PAWLUK

The job posting for the alumni representative position passes.

## **Present:**

PAWLUK, Mitchell

KERR, Lochlann

VILLOSO, Julia

WILLIAMS, Emily

HE, Jin

BROOKS, Sam

TEELING, Katie

## **Absent:**

JEFFREY, Taylor

KOSAK, Dan  
CRAIG, Lee  
AVILA, Rebeca

### **Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by BROOKS

Seconded by VILLOSO

### **Approval of Minutes**

Moved by BROOKS

Seconded by VILLOSO

There are no votes in opposition

### **Special Orders**

PAWLUK explains that JEFFREY was elected as Secretary last Board meeting, but because of personal circumstances she will be resigning from her role as Opinion Editor, and will no longer be able to be the Secretary and Staff Representative on the Board. Because of this, an interim Secretary is required. PAWLUK mentions that HE will be taking minutes for this meeting.

WILLIAMS nominates TEELING for the Board's Secretary position. Seconded by BROOKS. TEELING accepts the nomination.

WILLIAMS moves to acclaim TEELING as Secretary. VILLOSO seconds. There are no votes in opposition and TEELING is acclaimed as the Board's Secretary.

### **Reports to the Board**

WILLIAMS presents the Editor-in-Chief report.

WILLIAMS says that HE will be resigning before the Fall because of course load. She also says that all Deputy Editors and current staff have completed training. There are going to be a few job postings that will be going up later: Opinion Editor went up on July 5, and Production Editor and Staff Reporter will go up soon.

WILLIAMS says that the staff are reviewing section guides and compact volunteer guides in time for fall. The guest columns have been delayed because there has been little engagement from other parties, so she will return to this later on. WILLIAMS also says that she and KERR have been working on the budget and will meet with the Students' Union about advertising. They will also be meeting soon with Metro Cinema to discuss bringing back Gateway to Cinema.

With regards to Google Drive, WILLIAMS mentions that there is a much cheaper option in the non-profit option for the plan. WILLIAMS also explains that the site has had security issues, and with some trial and error, the website has more security plugins now. Lastly, she mentions that there was a credit card scam that looked quite legitimate, and a charge went through that was just over \$1000. The credit card is currently frozen and the fraud unit of the bank is now involved, so they are expecting to get the full amount back. WILLIAMS says that this is a big wake-up call that security is a large issue, especially because the staff now lacks a Webmaster. In lieu of a Webmaster, she is now seeking freelance work to fill that hole.

KERR presents the Executive Director report.

KERR mentions that a lot of his and WILLIAMS work overlaps. Budget 2023 is complete now and will be presented at this meeting. KERR also says that the website was very vulnerable to simple bot attacks, so things like two-factor authentication have been installed to avoid this. KERR has also applied to The Gateway's first grant — the Sustainability and Capital Fund. Unfortunately a lot of grants are around print work, which The Gateway no longer has and is now ineligible for.

KERR also says that \$730 has been raised for an office refresh from selling old office supplies. A lot of ad infrastructure was not touched with relations and market rates, so that is going to be refreshed next. The Readership Report is also complete and is in the Drive, but there is not enough time this Board meeting to present it, so it will be presented next time. There are some changes that The Gateway needs to go through to apply for the casino license, which will be brought up at a later Board meeting. KERR also says that the lease termination is on August 30, so renegotiation is on the table.

BROOKS asks if there is value to being in print because of in print grants and visibility on campus. He asks if there is any way to go about doing print sales to make back that money.

KERR says that the staff want to address that issue especially with the magazine stands around campus. There were two Government of Alberta grants that collapsed into one, and The Gateway doesn't qualify for those print grants as of right now, but he is keeping his eye out for more grants that aren't related to being in print, or the timeline for print allows The Gateway to apply.

BROOKS says that reinvesting in things like Gateway to Cinema is also important for visibility. He what The Gateway considers “an issue” because of the statute of the organization.

PAWLUK says that the mandate built around those terms was built around the DFU, so that changed when the organization went from newspaper to magazine and posts. Last year, when the funding was lost, the post count that was agreed upon last year by PAWLUK and VILLOSO was not clear besides conforming with the DFU.

BROOKS says that this might be under the Governance Committee purview, so this should be addressed eventually this year.

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 she will be resigning before the Fall semester starts because of her new program. The job posting for the position will go up soon, with the new Production Editor joining the role before the start of the Fall semester to accommodate for training.

PAWLUK presents the Finance Committee report.

He says that the Finance Committee usually meets 30 minutes before the Board meeting, and he caught KERR and WILLIAMS up on what Finance Committee usually does, but because CRAIG had something unexpected come up, they haven't met. The reports from the past month will be provided to CRAIG so that the next Finance Committee meeting can run smoothly.

BROOKS asks if Finance Committee is effective because of the lack of deadlines that have been met and reports presented.

PAWLUK says that historically, the committee has been effective, and the budget being late was the result of special circumstances around the meeting of Finance Committee and the Board. He says that this committee has usually been the most consistent at meeting, with other committees being more inconsistent.

KERR presents the Governance Committee report.

KERR says that Governance Committee met Monday to discuss the purpose of the committee and action items throughout the year. The committee also focused on operating policy changes that the Board can vote to change, so that the budget can be passed according to operating policy. The committee will meet once a month.

PAWLUK presents the Human Resources Committee report.

PAWLUK says that the only action item for the committee is selecting a chair because the committee meets at an ad hoc basis. The committee will also meet up and discuss any issues that may arise.

WILLIAMS asks if the HR Committee will be doing performance reviews at the end of the summer as they have done in the past.

PAWLUK says that he will mention this to HR Committee to consider.

PAWLUK presents the Sexual Violence Reporting Task Force report

PAWLUK says that he has sent out a poll about meeting times, but some committee members have not responded, so he will follow up with another poll as this committee's work is time-sensitive.

**For Approval:**

PAWLUK said that of three applicants to the student-at-large representative position, only one has filled out an information form. However, another applicant has been in contact but has not filled out the form. He asks if the Board wants to table the item until next Board meeting because only one person filled out the form.

WILLIAMS says that it's only fair to take the applicant who filled out the form in time. She says she's unsure about leaving the vacancy until next time because there is another vacancy and the Board is struggling to meet quorum.

BROOKS raises questions about whether or not students had the opportunity to be engaged with the vacancy posting.

WILLIAMS says that she and KERR are thinking this could be an annual general meeting item in the future, and that the posting went to the student digest.

KERR also says that the posting went up on Facebook and Twitter and staff have individually reached out to student groups to get executives to push the posting to their constituents.

PAWLUK says that there can be an option for the Board to delay the posting until September. One of the applicants reached out via email with a student ID but did not fill out the form. One other applicant is a fourth-year economic student with a double minor in English language and statistics. This applicant also has some board experience with multiple groups on campus and she is currently working as a finance analyst. She previously worked at the UASU as well as being a part of a research and content writing team. She is also an international student who emphasized transparency in her application.

KERR says he knows one of the applicants but isn't sure if it's anecdotal information that shouldn't be shared.

PAWLUK says that this standard hasn't been held consistently on the Board in the past, and if the conflict of interest is not too severe, then it should be okay.

KERR says that he knew the applicant who filled in the form via debate, but pre-COVID, he had positive interactions with the applicant and she would reliably show up to meetings.

BROOKS says that KERR and this applicant were once colleagues, which isn't the biggest conflict of interest. He asks if the Board is satisfied with the circulation of the application, and then if the applicant is the one they want. PAWLUK says that last year, the number of applicants for the position was around seven or eight, but the timing was different.

BROOKS moves a motion that the GSJS Board is satisfied with the outreach of the student-at-large representative job posting and the Board shall move forward to select an applicant.

WILLIAMS seconds.

There are no votes in opposition.

BROOKS says that the first applicant did not finish the application, so they must be disqualified.

PAWLUK says that the applicant who did fill out the application is very qualified.

WILLIAMS motions to vote on the student-at-large representative applicants.

TEELING seconds

Aishwarya Tyagi is the candidate who filled out the application and Amaan Sayyad did not fill out the form.

The Board votes unanimously in favour of Aishwarya Tyagi as the student-at-large representative for the GSJS Board.

The next items for approval are job postings. WILLIAMS says that the Production Editor job posting has undergone some changes, mostly changing items around social media work and managing the Arts & Culture section. WILLIAMS set the start date for September 1, but an opportunity to start earlier if desired because folks have full-time summer jobs and would be missing out on candidates if the job started in mid-August, but an applicant who could start at that time would be amazing.

BROOKS asks if the job posting is specific to HE, or what the Production Editor does.

WILLIAMS says that the original idea was to have two Deputy Editors managing the Arts & Culture section with the Production Editor overseeing the job, but HE has some issues with that idea.

PAWLUK adds that the vision for the Production Editor role hasn't always been that way, but due to necessity, the Arts & Culture section did not make the cut to get its own editor.

BROOKS says that this job is for a managing editor. Historically, this editor has just done layout for the print section. He says that "Managing Editor" may be a better title for the job.

PAWLUK says that he's fine with that title change and this might be done via an email vote for the sake of time.

VILLOSO motions to table the job postings, with a deadline of no later than July 13 to approve the Production Editor posting.

BROOKS seconds.

KERR presents the Operating Policy changes that are proposed. These policies don't necessarily abide by the current operations of the organization, and there are five changes that must be changed immediately to pass the budget.

The first change is signing authority: Executive Directors have signed with signing authority despite not being listed as signing authorities. The amendment is to strike Managing Editor and add the Executive Director.

The next change is the budget surplus clause, which states that the budget must plan for \$5,000 annually as a surplus. Due to the loss of the DFU, this will not be possible and the budget will be in the red this year. The change that is suggested allows for flexibility with the budget surplus so that this can be followed when able, but not a requirement. The third change is similar, with an amendment to say that \$1,000 for "Special Projects" should not be required in the budget, but encouraged when able.

The fourth change is about the scholarship sponsored by The Gateway. This change suggests striking the entire clause, which does not prevent the organization from doing them in the future, but the organization is no longer in the position to sponsor this scholarship anymore. This scholarship was part of a promise to students when the organization ran for independence from the UASU. This sponsorship required a \$1,500 budget, which is no longer realistic due to the DFU loss. This was previously a DFU obligation, but with the DFU loss, this is no longer an obligation. KERR says that he's in contact with the UASU about getting rid of the clause, but cannot do so until the operating policies change.

The last proposed change is about events and sports coverage reimbursements. The changes would strike this clause entirely because this is not something that happens often, and not foreseen to be in the future. The budget would no longer be obligated to reimburse people if they travelled for a story.

BROOKS suggests a friendly amendment to one of the motions that the operating policies should fix the incorrect numbering.

WILLIAMS moves to strike "Managing Editor" from Gateway Student Journalism Society Standard Operational Policies Section 4.2 and insert "Executive Director".

WILLIAMS moves to insert "When financial conditions allow," before "The budget" of Gateway Student Journalism Society Standard Operational Policies Section 4.5.

WILLIAMS moves to insert "When financial conditions allow," before "Each" of Gateway Student Journalism Society Standard Operational Policies Section 4.7.1.



WILLIAMS moves to strike section 5.1 from Gateway Student Journalism Society Standard Operational Policies.

WILLIAMS moves to strike section 5.2 from Gateway Student Journalism Society Standard Operational Policies.

WILLIAMS moves to approve all the operating policy changes via omnibus.

VILLOSO seconds.

There are no opposing votes.

The last item is on the budget. KERR and WILLIAMS present the budget. This year is the first time in a long time that the organization will run a deficit because of the DFU loss. This deficit was anticipated and prepared for by Adam LACHACZ, who was PAWLUK's predecessor. Last year, there was a little bit more money from student fees than expected, and a COVID-19 grant was received. Investment was projected to be \$300, and that account accrued \$413. Ad sales were projected for \$7,000 and fundraising was projected for \$2,000 but neither saw money that year (fundraising saw around \$12). Overall, there was a 23.2% greater revenue than expected. The grant from last year is not reliable because it relied on the pandemic. Ad revenue was difficult because of the loss of the magazine.

Looking to next year, \$615.60 in ad sales is needed to break even on the advertising software needed for the site. The projection for this year is \$2,000 because of rekindling student relationships, but KERR expects that this will be higher. \$730 has been made from office sales, and KERR feels that this is the ceiling. Donations are not reliable, so KERR projects \$1,000. The investment should mature, and the organization should receive \$1741.01 in June 2023. Grants will also be looked out for, but everything in the budget are what the Board can expect, with the aim to match the projections for last year.

WILLIAMS presents next, and says that the staff salaries had a small \$1,500 discrepancies because of late hiring and lack of a Webmaster. Two people are also owed \$100 each for writing a transition report, which was not struck from their contract last year. There was also a slight miscalculation in CPP and EI overestimated costs. WCB management has been poorly coordinated in the past 2 years, and we are currently in credit. Because WCB is tied to the number of staff, the number was not updated when staff reductions happened, and paid too much.

The staff salaries are higher because there is a full staff in the summer this year compared to last year. The bonus for transition reports will be struck from the contract. Because of credit with the WCB, only \$250 will be required. Freelance fees is a new budget line, and brought in to address Webmaster work and possibly artwork for bigger projects. \$500 is budgeted for this. The Executive Director role is now folded, and that saved the organization some money.

KERR says that computer software was higher last year because of poor documentation of subscriptions, but this year it will change because of better documentation. The office supplies and photo budget is also higher because much of the money came from the COVID-19 grant money. Last year's Executive Director did not spend any money and KERR cut down the budget this year. There is also an excess of merchandise from the year prior. The CUP fee has also increased.

Next year, a lot of subscriptions have increased in price but the organization has cut everywhere that they can, and this should not increase unexpectedly. The office supplies and photo budget will be dependent on the SCF grant. Marketing and outreach will be pushed for this year — poster, tabling, etc. so the budget will increase for that year, but still lower than last year's projection. The CUP membership and Alberta magazine publishers Association is stable this year. The rent and custodial service is an estimated 6% increase due to inflation, but this is still on the table.

WILLIAMS says that bank and service charges went up unexpectedly last year, but switching banks is a lot more difficult than expected, so this may be returned to later on. However, the remainder of administrative fees are relatively stable.

The administrative fees are projected to increase because of inflation, but renegotiation is on the table due to several years having passed since being sued and the flooding in the office.

Finally, KERR says that the total expenditure went up because of staff fees, but tried to offset this cost with lower operations costs, but a lot of this is out of the organization's hands. Last year, the total revenue was higher than expected and there was a surplus, and this year without the DFU, the deficit will be higher than \$118,000.

BROOKS asks what the cash position is right now, seeing that there was a surplus the last year. He asks when the money will run out.

WILLIAMS says the organization has \$266,554 in cash. She estimates two years as the time for the breathing room before the organization must run a DFU, and acknowledges that this model is not sustainable.

KERR says that there is room to run an identical budget next year with a \$40,000 buffer.

WILLIAMS motions to pass the budget.

VILLOSO seconds.

There are no votes in opposition to the motion and the budget passes.

**For discussion:**

The discussion topic for meeting times in the future is tabled until the next meeting.

**Adjournment:**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m. by PAWLUK.

Minutes submitted by: Jin He