

Gateway Student Journalism Society

Meeting Minutes

June 21 2023

Opening

The regular meeting of the Gateway Student Journalism Society was called to order at 7:16 p.m. online and in-person by Emily WILLIAMS.

Present:

TEELING, Katie

WILLIAMS, Emily

BROOKS, Sam

CRAIG, Lee

O'NEILL, Olivia

SMITH, Jonas

FASSONE, Lale

JICKLING, Sophie

FLAMAN, Levi

Absent:

DAUM, Evan

THIESSEN, Nathan

O'CONNOR, Katie

KURANI, Danny

Approval of the Agenda

Moved by TEELING.

Seconded by O'NEILL.

There are no votes in opposition.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by TEELING.

Seconded by JICKLING.

FLAMAN abstains.

There are no votes in opposition.

Reports to the Board

TEELING presents the Editor-in-Chief (EiC) report.

TEELING begins by saying that June was very busy, but mostly with the budget. She says that deputy editors have been hired. Dylana and Lale are in news, Andie in opinion, and Amaya in Arts and Culture. Editing training will be happening next week, and all deputies will be expected to attend in person.. TEELING says she and O'CONNOR have been planning the mock production week in July. She went to Saskatchewan, but was still working. She explains that it was a much-needed break. She and SMITH have spoken to the auditors, which she is excited to share more about. TEELING says she met with folks from AUFSJ to discuss covering issues at CSJ throughout the year. She says they have a concrete plan for coverage. TEELING explains that there has been spring cleaning happening in the office, and that she's made space for each deputy editor to have their own desk in the office. She hopes this will encourage them to spend time around the office more often. She also explains that, in order to increase staff accountability, she will be asking staff to fill out a document ahead of editorial meetings that details the three articles they plan to publish in their section that week.

WILLIAMS opens the floor to questions about the EiC report.

TEELING presents the Managing Editor report.

TEELING says that O'CONNOR has been in Italy, has been sick, and has injured her hand. She has been taking it easy, and has been focusing mostly on editing. She and TEELING have been having weekly calls to keep each other updated. They have worked together on plans for training the deputies, and O'CONNOR has been working with her deputy in order to ensure she transitions smoothly into the role. O'CONNOR plans to work on more in-depth Google analytics for the website, and has been working with TEELING to increase accountability measures of staff. She looks forward to editing features from each staff member.

WILLIAMS opens the floor to questions about the ME report.

SMITH presents the Executive Director (ED) report.

SMITH begins by saying that this month has been very busy with budget work. He and TEELING have spent most of June focusing on it. He says he has met with three more clients

regarding advertising, and he shares that he is in the final stages of an advertising deal with AASUA for \$3000. He mentioned organizing more advertising meetings, and discusses meeting with TEELING and members from the auditing firm, which he plans to expand on later in the board meeting.

WILLIAMS opens the floor to questions about the ED report.

For discussion:

TEELING and SMITH share about the auditing process. TEELING shares that they met with a representative from the auditing Yates and Whitaker. The representative was very concerned about the cost of the audit and The Gateway's financial situation. She explains that the representative shared that there are three types of financial reviews possible: audits, financial reviews, and notices to the reader. The representative said that financial review is probably the best for The Gateway, as it still has rigidity, but less cost. The auditor should be able to complete a financial review within three weeks, and it is possible to move from a financial review back to an auditing process, if things do not go as planned. Auditor stated that it does not make sense for The Gateway to do a full audit, and that a financial review would be sufficient.

WILLIAMS states that some grants and scholarships may require a full audit to be conducted, and reminds TEELING to ensure this isn't the case.

FLAMAN agrees with The Gateway using a financial review process in the future, so long as it does not impede on The Gateway's ability to obtain certain grants or scholarships.

BROOKS says that the board seems to have reached a consensus, but wonders if TEELING would feel more comfortable pursuing an audit if the board made an official motion.

BROOKS moves that The Gateway pursues a financial review.

FLAMAN asks the board to double check if pursuing a financial review instead of an audit will interfere with any grants or scholarships.

BROOKS rescinds the motion.

SMITH presents The Gateway's 2023-24 Annual Budget. He shares the Gateway's 2022-23 revenue. Expected revenue was \$4,963.01. Actual revenue was \$26,011.97. He shares that there is a large difference between expected revenue and actual revenue, and that this is due to a large amount of unexpected grants. He continues, stating that the large disparity in prediction and actual revenue comes from a late deposited COVID relief cheque. There was a generous

donation of over \$5000, which also boosted the Gateway's income. Some ad revenue was lost, due to a failure to send invoices for the winter print run ads. SMITH moves on to projected revenue for the 2023-24 year, which is \$14,591.43. He shares that The Gateway plans to sell \$5,000 in advertising. Grant revenue is also reduced, to reflect the lack of undeposited cheques this year.

FLAMAN asks about the late deposited COVID relief cheque, wondering if there has been efforts to prevent this from happening again.

SMITH shares that this was a very transitional year at The Gateway, and it was during the height of the pandemic, so everything was hybrid, and the cheque got lost in the shuffle. He shares that he and TEELING are keeping on top of receipts, cheques, and invoices this year, so as to prevent missing cheques and paperwork.

WILLIAMS adds that the year where the cheque was deposited late, the ED resigned early, and there was an interim ED.

FLAMAN asks about the failure to send invoices for winter ads.

SMITH explains that this was last year, and was likely due to the fact that it was The Gateway's first year doing a print run in some time. He says that sending the invoices must have slipped through the cracks, but that he is personally committed to ensuring that doesn't happen again.

FLAMAN asks about the donation of over \$5,000, and if The Gateway thanked the donor.

WILLIAMS explains that this donation happened during her tenure as EiC. During her year, she revamped The Gateway's donation structure. She shares that The Gateway had a CSL relationship with a marketing class, and that they asked for advice from the class. The class prepared a report on how to best thank a donor, and WILLIAMS shares that, while she did not have time to thank the donor during her tenure as EiC, SMITH and TEELING both have access to the resources from this class, and have plans to thank donors in the future.

FLAMAN recommends that The Gateway writes a handwritten thank you letter, explaining that it is more personal, and could encourage further donations in the future.

TEELING adds that she has been considering other ways to thank donors, citing the newspaper as a possible way, or setting up meetings with CJSR, who thank their donors in unique ways.

CRAIG explains that it might be advantageous to consult alumni who are involved with The Gateway to handle thank-yous, helping alleviate some work from staff.

SMITH continues with the budget report. He shares staff expenditures, explaining that there is a slight discrepancy between projected and final staff salaries due to staff leaving mid-year. The projected staff expenditures were \$74,046.00, while the final expenditures were \$73,231.56. He also shares that there was less money than expected spent on freelance fees. He states that a previous EiC paid the WCB too much, and they have been using that surplus to pay for The Gateway's expenses. That surplus is now used up, and the WCB will be charging The Gateway as usual going forward. Moving onto the projected staff expenditures, he shares that staff has grown due to the Marketing Outreach and the Executive Director positions being separated, and thus staff salaries have grown. Projected staff expenditures for 2023-24 is \$83,343.01.

WILLIAMS explains that freelance fees were dedicated for use for webmasters, as there is no longer a web editor position.

TEELING looks at the staff expenditures for the 2023-24 year. She explains that volunteer and staff appreciation expenditure has increased, due to The Gateway's plans to increase social events, especially during a DFU year. She adds that she and O'CONNOR are hoping to host an event with APIRG in the future, and that the increased volunteer and staff appreciation expenditure also reflects this fact.

SMITH moves onto operations expenditures. Projected expenditures for 2022-23 were \$17,813.50. Actual expenditures were \$18,357.64. SMITH explains that actual costs increased due to a change in software subscription prices, and a clerical error determining the cost of ad software. He shares that there has been a large decrease in office supplies and the photo budget, as the previous year's staff had planned to paint the office, but that this did not go through. Society and membership fees expenditures have also decreased, as The Gateway is not longer a part of AMPA, and CUP's fee has decreased.

FLAMAN asks how CUP determines membership fees.

TEELING explains that CUP's fees are charged in brackets, based on the revenue that The Gateway makes.

SMITH moves on to the 2023-24 operations budget, and states that the previous year's budget did not include a separate section for print edition fees, but that it has been given its own category in this year's budget, thus it looks like there is increased costs. The 2023-24 operations budget is \$18,170.00. He shares that there are large cuts in projected expenditures, thanks to a low need for office supplies. Print edition fees are decreased from the previous year, due to the intention to only do one print run during the 2023-24 year. Rent and custodial fees increased, thanks to increases in cost.

TEELING states that the outreach and marketing budget has increased, thanks to the fact that the position has been split into two.

SMITH moves on to administration fees, sharing that bank and services fees were much lower than expected. Projected fees for 2022-23 were \$25,207.90, while actual fees were \$24,166.75. The administration fees for 2023-24 are projected to be \$19,540.08, reflecting the decrease in cost from the auditing company. He shares that there are some increases in expected administration expenditures, due mostly to inflation, but that professional costs have decreased greatly, due to the choice to move from an audit to a financial review. SMITH then shares total expenditure for 2022-23. Predicted expenditure was \$221,397.86. Actual expenditure was \$217,163.97. He shares the projected total expenditure for 2023-24, which is \$222,566.10, explaining that increases in expenditure are largely due to inflation in costs. He shares the budget balance, explaining that The Gateway projects a middle ground in revenue for the 2023-24 year. The expected total revenue for 2022-23 was \$4,963.01, with \$221,397.86 in expenses. Actual revenue for 2022-23 was \$26,011.97, with actual expenses of \$217,163.97. Projected revenue for 2023-24 is \$14,591.43, while projected expenses are \$222,566.10.

FLAMAN asks about the budget balance, explaining that there is a mathematical error with the total expenses in the budget. The expected expenditures for 2023-24 have accidentally been doubled. He fixes the error on the budget spreadsheet.

SMITH explains that The Gateway is in deficit spending, due to the loss of the DFU. In the upcoming year, The Gateway plans to increase more sustainable forms of income, such as advertising.

FLAMAN asks about a statement of financial position. He wants to know how long The Gateway could survive on deficits this size, if the DFU does fail.

SMITH explains that The Gateway would not be able to run through an entire fiscal year, if the DFU were to fail. Without a large donation or an unprecedented increased in advertisement, it would be possible for The Gateway to run until fall of the following year.

WILLIAM wonders if there should be an official motion to officially amend the total expenses in the 2023-24 budget.

FLAMAN motions to amend the total expenditures in The Gateway's 2023-24 budget from \$222,566.10 to \$121,053.09.

CRAIG seconds.

There are no votes in opposition.

WILLIAMS wonders if the board can approve the budget.

FLAMAN motions to approve The Gateway's 2023-24 budget.

TEELING seconds.

There are no votes in opposition.

Adjournment

TEELING motions to adjourn.

O'NEILL seconds.

The board unanimously votes to adjourn.

The meeting is adjourned at 8:21 p.m..

Minutes submitted by: Olivia O'Neill