

Gateway Student Journalism Society

Meeting Minutes

April 17, 2024

Opening

The regular meeting of the Gateway Student Journalism Society was called to order at 7:05 p.m. online and in-person by Emily WILLIAMS.

Present:

BROOKS, Sam

TEELING, Katie

WILLIAMS, Emily

SMITH, Jonas

POLENCHUK, Lily

HENNIG, Leah

CRAIG, Lee

FLAMAN, Levi

THIESSEN, Nathan

WATAMANIUK, Adrian

DAUM, Evan

Absent:

JICKLING, Sophie

FASSONE, Lale

Approval of the Agenda

Moved by TEELING.

Seconded by HENNIG.

There are no votes in opposition.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by TEELING.

Seconded by THIESSEN.

There are no votes in opposition and two abstentions.

Reports to the Board

TEELING presents the Editor-in-Chief report.

TEELING says the focus has been transitioning. Says all the staff are hired for next year, HENNIG has been going through minimal training, and her and POLENCHUK are meeting weekly for transition meetings. Says that things were escalated with the bank to address issues, but things aren't working, so further steps are required. Says this is her last board meeting as EiC, and it's been great working with everyone the past year.

BROOKS says that threatening to move banks is an empty threat and an exit strategy needs to be planned.

TEELING says that they've decided to have a conversation with POLENCHUK and the incoming executive director to discuss what they'd like to do.

SMITH presents the Executive Director (ED) report.

SMITH says that all ad slots are sold and the new executive director will have space for their vision, which they'll discuss. Says that transition day and AGM is being planned, and the financial review will be presented at the AGM. Says that for finance, most things should be online and up to date, and things with the bank have gotten more frustrating — but nothing has prevented regular financial operation. Says that it's been a pleasure working with everyone.

POLENCHUK presents the Managing Editor (ME) report.

POLENCHUK says her and TEELING have been doing transition meetings, and there was a B-Unit transition meeting with the incoming ED.

THIESSEN presents the Finance Committee report.

THIESSEN says the banking situation isn't great, but it's ultimately up to the incoming management. Says that pressure needs to be continuously applied while having an exit plan.

WILLIAMS presents the HR Committee report.

WILLIAMS says there's nothing to report as there haven't been any HR concerns.

POLENCHUK presents the Governance Committee.

POLENCHUK says that the committee is looking to propose changes to the board seats, but that will be touched on later.

New Business

For Approval: AGM 2024

TEELING presents the 2024 AGM.

TEELING says that they're hoping to host the AGM on April 24 at 4:00 p.m.. Says because of finals there isn't a great time, but hopefully people will have finals on Wednesday, and the time is the same as pitch meetings. Says pizza will be ordered and all the bylaw stuff will go for approval as well as the financial review, and POLENCHUK will present her vision while TEELING will present what has happened over the year.

TEELING moves to have the AGM on April 24, 2024.

WATTAMANIUK seconds.

There are no votes in opposition.

For Approval: Staff Contracts 2024-25

POLENCHUK presents the 2024-25 staff contracts.

POLENCHUK says that during the DFU campaign, several promises were made regarding staff structure and salary. Says that because funding was won, after consultation, they're looking to increase all honorariums but ED by 15 per cent, as staff honorariums hadn't been increased since 2019. Says that for ED, instead of an increase they're proposing a commission structure of 15 per cent on all ad sales.

TEELING says that because of the nature of the role, it's a lot of independent work for EDs, and it's a role where the EiC and ME can easily absorb the tasks which has happened before. Says they felt this is a good way to increase productivity and show students we're not fully reliant on the fee.

POLENCHUK says they're looking to split the arts & culture section from the current ME role, because the position has faced a lot of burnout and the section is unable to have full attention. Says that the A&C editor would be paid as opinion with the same expected hours. Says that they're looking to hire a sports editor and additional staff reporter, both paid the same, to fill a

gap in sports coverage and allow staff members to focus on their roles instead of always filling in for news.

BROOKS says the commission structure makes a lot of sense. Asks if the budget reflects these increases, if the commission based ad sales have a cap.

SMITH says that he wouldn't discuss the cap until the ED has been in the position in a while, because ads are easy to sell and the prices can be raised.

WILLIAMS says that for future, perhaps there needs to be a policy for increasing ads, and that maybe it should be brought to the board. Says it can be done in an email vote.

DAUM says the digital ads are one asset, but the paper could have other assets too. Says because of this there is no such thing as maxing out on sales.

BROOKS says there's lots of ways to raise revenue, the commissions makes sense, and we should establish an ad rate process separately. Says that for the sports editor position, it's needed because there's not enough sports coverage, but perhaps the title should be changed to reporter considering it will be paid like a reporter. Says that another argument is for it being a full editor position. Says that if there is some budget for it, a photo or visuals editor should be brought back, perhaps not in this round but in the next one. Says that this would bring back photo volunteers, and it would be a massive asset.

TEELING says the reason that's not in this meeting's document is because the additional staff reporter and sports editor are currently just suggestions, but a photo editor and section is being considered.

POLENCHUK says that this position is something to be considered, and it is important to return back to.

WILLIAMS asks if any responsibilities were added to the managing editor position. Says the list of duties isn't often reflective of the actual job, and it could be revisited more, especially when considering print editions and new work. Says that now is the time to redefine the position. Says additions could be an email vote.

TEELING says that it didn't have news coverage before, so they added that.

POLENCHUK says that the ME is responsible for many little tasks, and with new roles and responsibilities it might be easier to revisit later in the fall and see what's best to add.

WILLIAMS asks for the reasoning behind A&C starting May 1, and says perhaps adding an earliest start date clause would be best.

TEELING says it can be returned to at the next motion.

BROOKS says that in a traditional newsroom the ME is the newsroom boss that keeps the day-to-day business in line. Says that things like community partnerships and social strategy should be responsibilities for the EiC.

TEELING says that she agrees, and overtime we've lost sight of what the ME role is because it has changed so much.

TEELING moves to approve the 2024-25 Staff Contracts.

LEE seconds the motion.

There are no votes in opposition.

For Approval: A&C Editor Job Posting

POLENCHUK presents the A&C 2024-2025 job posting.

POLENCHUK says the contract will go from June 1 2024 to April 30 2025, and will be responsible for the A&C section. Says the posting outlines duties including writing and editing copy for the section, recruiting and training volunteers for the section, writing editorial and news content as necessary, create and maintain working relationships with publicists and venues, and work with the ME to solicit feature ideas.

TEELING says that this posting will close after training is done for the other section editors, but the line of an earlier start date will be added.

WILLIAMS says that it could be posted now.

TEELING says that there isn't time to do so diligently at the moment.

BROOKS says that it could be posted now because it wouldn't have to be dealt with ahead of time. Says that especially in this year team unity is important, and the scenario that it will take a while to fill needs to be considered. Says that the earlier it can be done, the better.

WILLIAMS says that if it's posted now the timeline doesn't necessarily have to be moved, but it gives the option for starting on May 1. Says that she's slightly worried about filling the position, and by opening it early is that there's more time.

TEELING says she can post it tomorrow and have it closed on May 2.

TEELING moves to approve the job posting with the new date.

WATTAMANIUK seconds.

There are no votes in opposition.

For Approval: Bylaw Amendments

TEELING presents.

TEELING says that these changes revolve around board seats, which started from a conversation she had with BROOKS about creating a new seat, and how the board tends to be oversaturated with Gateway people because definitions of board seats are more restrictive. Says that they want to add a graduate student at large to the board to increase coverage of graduate student issues and give graduate students a voice. Says the definition is the same, they have to be a random student that can't be a member of the Graduate Students' Association council. Says that they also edited the definition of the alumni representative to be someone who previously used to be eligible for GSJS membership. Says this is less restrictive and more representative. Says the overall changes are adding one seat and clarifying two.

WATTAMANIUK asks if there's any idea for the process of selecting the graduate students' association.

TEELING says they'd put it through the digests and circulate it amongst graduate students familiar with The Gateway.

BROOKS says that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the audience are undergraduate students, so maybe there could be an extra undergraduate student. Says that changing a lot as well is a little scary.

WATTAMANIUK says that it will be beneficial to have the graduate perspective in a formalized position. Says that for a second undergraduate seat, it's not proportional to begin with, so having one grad and one undergrad is good.

TEELING says that there's been a historic struggle to have a consistent student-at-large anyway. Says that doesn't mean there can't be a conversation later.

DAUM says how big we want the board to be is important to consider, and that it needs to be purposeful. Says he would speak against having another undergraduate seat to make sure the board remains an effective size.

FLAMAN says he agrees, and that adding a graduate student seat will bring the board closer to too big of a size. Says that it's something to keep in mind in addition to the conversation on efficiency.

WATTAMANIUK says that as long as there's new perspectives it's still valuable, and he wouldn't worry about it too much.

TEELING motions to receive board recommendation on the bylaw changes.

HENNIG seconds.

There are two abstentions and no votes in opposition.

Adjournment

TEELING motions to adjourn.

WATTAMANIUK seconds.

The board unanimously votes to adjourn.

The meeting is adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Lily Polenchuk