

WLUSP Board Meeting

Virtual Conference: Monday, May 20th, 2025, | 5:07P.M. EST

Secretary: Ayden Elworthy

Attendance:

Thando Bhebhe, President and Board Chair

Jacob Segal-Rice, Vice Chair

Tusharika Tyagi, Treasurer

Elisha Felician, Student Director

Shelby Blackley, Community Director

Safina Jennah, Community Director

Nate Dawes, Secretary

Absent Membership:

Madalyn Mostacci, Student Director

Gallery:

Kurtis Rideout, WLUSP Executive Director

Sam Nabi, WLUSP Web Editor

Jack Vrolyk, Radio Laurier Station Manager

Ayden Elworthy, WLUSP advertising manager

Mackenzie Worton, WLUSP human resources manager

1.0 Call Meeting to Order

- The Meeting was called to order at 5:07pm

2.0 Approval of Agenda: March 24th, 2025

- Motion: Shelby
- Second: Aluma
- In Favour: Unanimous
- Opposed: N/A
- Abstentions: N/A
- Motion Carries and the Agenda is approved at 1:04 P.M.

3.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes: April 29, 2025

- Motion: Shelby
- Second: Grace
- In Favour: Unanimous
- Opposed: N/A
- Abstentions: N/A
- Motion Carries and the Minutes are approved at 5:09pm

4.0 Chair Report

• Department head transition night took place on April 30th 2025, with a good turnout from all publications. A great social night, and a way to chart the path forward for the new hires.

- The Cord and the Sputnik has been focused on hiring new staff and have been working closely with the new president as they settle into their new roles. This has resulted in a steady trickle of applications coming in for the various roles. All departments are moving forward on their hiring schedule's.
- Keystone Carnegie has put forward a schedule for the upcoming year
- Station Manager Nate Dawes has taken the initiative to lead the charge on the Laurier Student Poll to make sure that this publication is used in the upcoming year

- CSJ Hiring has all been filled except for summer reporter. Summer advertising assistant has been filled, and has been working in office with Executive Director Rideout and ads manager Ayden Elworthy
- President Thando has also begun training, and notes appreciation for everyone patience as he settles into his role
- President Thando, Executive director Kurtis and editor of The Cord met with the new president of the students union in order to help repair the relationship between WLUSP and WLUSU
- Moving forward, moving buildings is the most urgent objective on the agenda.
- Shelby Blackley states that she is excited about the upcoming year at WLUSP, and commends Thando on his chair report.

6.0 Executive Director Report

- The school has asked for us to be out of 205 by the end of May 2025. Negotiations have begun with the office of student affairs, and the office has decided to give us 45 days from the date of signing the agreement.
- We will be moving around the corner to university street
- Have been focused on onboarding and trading for CSJ, as well as new hires.
- Zaynab has been offered the role of HR Coordinator, which should make a smooth transition as she begins the HR role for the full year in the September
- Balancing the budget has been pushed to a late date as we move to University street.
- Starting to look as though one of the only places that we can cut costs will be payroll
- WLU-ER is still going to strong, looking to sell lots of ADS, will be printing the planner in B&W to reduce costs
- Clearview training has offered Board training for free under 30. Allows board members to make empowered decisions at the board table.
- Ads with The Community Edition has been really great lately, have seen more interest in advertising across the board.

6.1 Comments

- WLUSP web manager Sam Nabi noted that it was important that the organization be

prepared and start working on mortgage pre-approval.

o Executive Director Rideout notes that he'd already begun meeting with WLUSP's finance manager about these processes and recommends that he, the finance manager and Nabi, who'd been a vital part of the moving process thus far meet in the near future.

7.0 Nomination for Vice Chair for 2025/2026

- Aluma has nominated herself for vice chair

7.0 Motion to nominate Aluma as vice chair

- Motion: Shelby
- Second: Grace
- Opposed: N/A
- Abstentions: N/A
- Motion Carries and Aluma has been elected as Vice-Chair for 2025/2026

8.0 Motion to nominate a secretary

- Both Ayden Elworthy and Nate Dawes were interested, as Nate Dawes performed the role last year, they stepped down from nominations
- Motion: Grace
- Second: Safina
- Opposed: N/A
- Abstentions: N/A
- Motion Carries and Ayden Elworthy has been elected as Secretary for 2025/2026

9.0 Nominations for treasurer

- Tusharika and Nate have both nominated themselves for the role of treasurer

- Tusharika notes that she is currently getting a certification in accounting, and is working towards becoming a CPA. She understands the role, and believes this would be a great opportunity to boost her resume.
- Nate notes that they have only nominated themselves as they are interested in maintaining a voice on the board in regards to an AI policy, and budget shifts. They are worried about the board passing an A.I policy that does not protect the rights of content producers for WLUSP.
- Voting for treasurer took place

9.1 Call for a vote in favour for Tusharika to be appointed as treasurer

- Four votes in favour of Tusharika

9.2 Call for a vote in favour of Nate Dawes as treasurer at WLUSP

- Two votes in favour of Nate Dawes.

9.3 Motion to appoint Tusharika as treasurer

- Motion: Shelby
- Second: Safina
- Opposed: N/A
- Abstentions: N/A
- Motion Carries and Tusharika has been elected as Treasurer on WLUSP board of directors for 2025/2026

9.4 Comments

- Shelby notes that the passion Nate has brought up towards the A.I policy is crucial, even if they do not hold a direct role on the board

10: Update On The Move

- Many of the potential spaces must be taken with a grain of salt, as our moving plans have sped up with the schools decision
- Given some of the recent updates ED Rideout is more just looking for validation and support in regards to WLUSP's relationship with the school.
- We have some support in regard to our move, and we will be able to leave some of the bigger things like desks etc.

10.1 Comments

- Shelby notes to try and negotiate an agreement with the school that would be inclusive of allowing us to move in the future.
- Safina asks if the hope is to find something before the 45 days to buy a property, ED Rideout notes that we will be moving to the location on university street
- ED Rideout explains that his thought process is that moving to the university location will help us pair down some of our things, and help keep the organization lean. Buying a building is not something that is going to happen within the next 6 months or 8 months.
- The new space will be a transitional space more than anything

11. Motion to go in camera discussion

- Motion: Shelby
- Second: Aluma
- Opposed: N/A
- Abstentions: N/A
- Motion Carries and in camera discussion is passed

13 In Camera Discussion

Budget has inflated from 300,000 to 500,000 over a couple of years, there aren't many places to cut budget without significantly impacting payroll

- Payroll must give, TCE is looking at possibly cutting payroll
- ED Rideout proposes cutting hours, considering we have already made reductions to every other department
- ED Rideout stresses the difficulty of the position, and would like support in the decision
- Safina notes that fundraising has dwindled in recent years, Steel Rails used to be a significant contribution to both WLUSP as well as TCE
- TCE's costs are about 30% higher than any other department
- Shelby notes that this is still a majority student organization, one of the top priorities as publisher for Kurtis is to maintain TCE's ability to operate but also balance the budget
- Dumebi notes that we need to see a return on our investment to justify the spending on TCE

- Tusharika comments that she thinks TCE's members need the full time; they work diligently
- Ayden asks about how matching fundraising for The Cord works
- Shelby notes that The Cord proposed increasing the EIC's salary, alongside a fundraising increase of 50% of the EIC's salary
- President Bhebe notes that fixed contracts could be a way of navigating these budget changes in the future
- Executive Rideout says that wages should reflect hierarchy within the organization – possibly reducing wages for both Adrian and Jessi to 15hrs a week
- Rideout encourages the Board to be critical of problems within raising payroll
- Rideout decides that his approach will be to create new contracts with lower hours, and keeping the wages the same
- Thando encourages cutting editorial assistant roles, it doesn't make sense for the assistant to make the same amount of money as the EIC
- Shelby comments on cutting hours instead of eliminating of roles, stresses the importance of working through the interim budget; we can revisit this come September with the option of fundraising
- Fundraising would put some of the antomany back into the paper
- Safina asks if cutting hours will impact the publications in a big way, ED Rideout doesn't see the hours cut affecting the publications very much
- Tusharika notes that in the future fundraising to match wage increases should become policy in the future of the organization
- ED Rideout notes that this issue exists because we ran a deficit for two years; we should have been purchasing assets instead of raising wages
- President Bhebe stresses the importance of enforcing fixed contracts
- ED Rideout sums up the discussion: TCE is a unique publication within our organization we need to reexamine onboarding and the publication as a whole, ED Rideout feels more confident moving into these changes

13. Motion to go Ex Camera

- Motion: Grace
- Second: Shelby
- Opposed: N/A
- Abstentions: N/A

- Motion passes and the discussion has gone Ex-Camera

14. Motion to ratify interim budget

- Motion: Safina
- Second: Shelby
- • Opposed: N/A
- • Abstentions: N/A
- • Motion passes and the interim budget has been ratified

15 Approval of the A.I Policy Discussion

- Nate Dawes stresses the importance of an A.I policy that will defend against future administrations that could take advantage of the policy to create A.I generated content
- Dawes notes that the policy is too broad, and notes that the policy does not specify specific situations to use generative A.I and grants publications too much power to use the software by simply disclosing the use of A.I
- Both Sherryl and Ayden agree with Nate Dawes problems with the policy
- Shelby asks if the policy has been run through a Lawyer, asks to consider doing this
- ED Rideout notes that the policy will not be passed today
- Safina agrees that the tools of spellcheck are ok to use but trying to get a professional drafting an A.I policy would be important for the policy
- Nate Dawes advocates for tighter language in the policy beyond terms like “Fair Use”
- ED Rideout advocates for coming up with a list of tools that use A.I, anything outside of that we are not able to use
- President Bhebe pushes back on the A.I policy saying that A.I could be used for creative potential, and that A.I could be used not as a means for convenience, but as a tool for creative work
- Tusharika notes that an A.I policy should be comprehensive in covering both publication written content, but additionally administrative use
- Nate comments on the use of A.I as a politicized movement, using A.I will be a political statement whether we like it or not

15. Motion to table the A.I discussion for the next board meeting

- Motion: Ayden

- Second: Grace
- • Opposed: N/A
- • Abstentions: N/A
- • Motion passes and the AI discussion has been tabled

16. Meeting is adjourned at 6:43 PM.