

WLUSP Board Meeting

Virtual Conference: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 | 5:00 p.m.

Secretary: Maryka Van Wyngaarden

Attendance:

Serena Austin, President & Chair

Madalyn Mostacci, Treasurer

Jacob Segal Rice, Vice-Chair

Maryka Van Wyngaarden, Secretary

Jack Vrolyk, Student Director

Aaron Waitson, Executive Director

Brit Kovacs, Community Director

Absent Membership:

Shelby Blackley, Community Director

Randy Moore, Finance Manager

Rosalind Horne, Community Director

1.0 Call Meeting to Order

- Meeting called to order at 5:05 p.m.

2.0 Approval of Agenda: February 27, 2024

- Motion: Jack Vrolyk
- Second: Jacob Rice
- Motion Carries: 5:05 p.m.

3.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes: February 1, 2024

- Motion: Jacob Rice

- Second: Jack Vrolyk
- Motion Carries: 5:06 p.m.

4.0 Chair Report Presented by Serena Austin (President/Publisher)

- Busy last few weeks for WLUSP. At AGM, new President Umaymah Suhail elected, Workplace Relationships policy ratified, auditor for next year ratified.
- 15 staff from our newspapers attended NASH86 in Edmonton from Feb. 16-18. Connected with other student journalists and learned from experts in field.
- We've received one application for the Cord, one for Radio Laurier, one for HR, two for the Blueprint, and three for The Sputnik. Umaymah will be reaching out to applicants to schedule interviews.
- Brit will be helping with final design of Keystone-Carnegie cover, production under way. Presold over 200 yearbooks already.
- Blueprint, Sputnik, Cord heading into one of their final production weeks of the year, with new Arts & Life Editor on Cord team.
- Couple events coming up. Possibly escape room admin social at end of year. Lia and I planning Volunteer Appreciation night in coming weeks, details soon.
- RL launched promotions for another concert at the Yeti on March 22 after last one was very successful, tickets now live. Student opening act and alumni trio.
- Blueprint hosting another launch party for their last issue of year, details soon.
- Discussion with Umaymah re: Sputnik EIC's weekly contracted hours, would like input from board.

4.1 Comments

- No comments

5.0 Executive Director Report Presented by Aaron Waitson

Welcome to Brit! First meeting as Community Director.

WLU'er Updates

- Conversations regarding handbook getting started now. Would like feedback from board re: print quantity, possibly upping by 1-2 thousand (to 5-6 thousand copies total). Would increase reach of publication and value for advertising clients. Some rough numbers: about \$6-12,000 increase in price, would push our overall production cost into range of \$31-36,000 altogether.

TCE Steel Rails

- Recap of details with Steel Rails: The Community Edition has been shifting away from Steel Rails, so proposal from Lakyn Barton (former WLUSP ED) for City of Waterloo to acquire rights to Steel Rails is promising. But WLUSP and TCE would like to stay involved. Will have more of an update/acquisition proposal from Lakyn at next board meeting, so can put a pin in it for now if we like.

WLU Milton Campus

- Spoke with Kristin Bridge from Office of Student Affairs about official opening of Milton campus.
- Financial side: decided it's too early to have a full conversation about whether we should charge Milton campus students the Independent Student Media fee, so will not be doing

so in 2024-2025 year. This is a longer-term goal, will eventually have a referendum for Milton students to decide.

BvA Report Periods 1 & 2 (Spring/Summer and Fall 2023)

- Where organization is at thus far with its spending. Looking across the board, WLUSP is looking healthy, revenue from SAC fee a little higher than anticipated, expenses coming in under projected numbers.
- NASH and other large expenditures will be included in P3 BvA report.
- Looking to prioritize some more spending according to departments' budgets, as we were actually aiming to have deficit this year rather than surplus. Update on Period 3 when Randy is back in-office.

5.1 Comments

- Jack: Regarding WLUEr, I think a raise of 1000 copies is a good amount, could be something we come back to every year to decide if we need more or less.
- Aaron: Could definitely come back to it yearly.
- Jacob: Generally agree, 5000 copies is a good number, can plan to go back each year and make adjustments.
- Aaron: If anyone has other thoughts, can reach out to Serena or me.

6.0 Approval of Office Supplies Budget Amendment

Aaron: Looking for more flexibility, budgeting to get some new furniture, replacing outdated office chairs and furniture, coffee maker, etc. Fairly conservative numbers, about \$2500 increase to cover cost of new office supplies. Goal with this is to make people comfortable, incentivize staff to spend more time in the office.

- Motion: Jack Vrolyk
- Second: Jacob Rice
- Motion Carries: 5:28 p.m.

7.0 Future of Steel Rails (Aaron)

- Will hold off on discussing this until we hear Lakyn's proposal and have more information to work with.

7.1 Comments

- Brit: If the intention is to keep TCE/WLUSP involved in Steel Rails if we give the City the rights to it, will there be any proposal to Lakyn on your end about what that looks like?
- Aaron: Won't be formal proposal on our end when she speaks to the board, kind of an ongoing conversation, our thoughts might be reliant on what Lakyn has to say. However, would be valuable to define exactly what we would expect in an agreement, so a proposal from us will come at some point after we hear from her.

8.0 Sputnik EIC Hours Adjustment (Serena)

- Umaymah came to me at the end of last term saying that she often works a lot of overtime, some 24-28 hour weeks, especially production weeks. As a result decreases the amount of time she works in other weeks, which isn't the best/most sustainable system.
- After hearing her concerns, proposing to increase her weekly hours from 15 to 20.

8.1 Comments

- Aaron: To preface, the Sputnik EIC is sort of unique in WLUSP; historically wasn't even salaried role. Sputnik, Cord, Blueprint now all print once a month, where Cord and Blueprint used to print weekly, so at this point it makes sense to reconsider policies, etc.

- Is it a problem of too much being put on Umaymah's shoulders because of The Sputnik's structure? Or another reason?
- Equity something we would like to be front of mind, don't want staff to feel overworked, but also ensuring staff are putting in the hours that they are contracted.
- Jack: Personally like the idea of upping hours. As well as making that increase, can take a look at if there's something that can be changed within Sputnik team.
- Brit: Mirror those comments, evaluation of how the Sputnik team is structured.
- Aaron: Worth considering a non-department head salaried position within Sputnik.
- Serena: Can discuss financials and potential options with Randy.
- Aaron: If this is something we want to address this term, we might want to have to go to a vote very soon.

8.2 Vote on increasing The Sputnik EIC weekly hours from 15 to 20

- Motion: Brit Kovacs
- Second: Jack Vrolyk
- Motion Carries: 5:42 p.m.

Aaron: 5-hour increase is very conservative, not a significant change, warrants a larger conversation about how problem of Umaymah taking on too much can be addressed.

9.0 Adjournment

- Motion: Brit Kovacs
- Second: Jack Vrolyk
- Motion Carries: 5:43 p.m.

WLUSP Board Meeting for Tuesday, February 27 is adjourned at 5:43 p.m.