

WLUSP Board Meeting

Virtual Conference: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 | 4:00 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

Randy Moore, Finance Manager

Shelby Blackley, Community Director

Gallery:

Umaymah Suhail, The Sputnik EIC, incoming WLUSP President

Brontë Behling, The Cord EIC

Kurtis Rideout, Advertising Manager

Tusharika Tyagi, The Sputnik section editor

Harleen Kaur Dhillon, The Community Edition EIC

Absent Membership:

Rosalind Horne, Community Director

1.0 Call Meeting to Order

- Meeting called to order at 4:07 p.m.

2.0 Approval of Agenda: April 16, 2024

- Motion: Jack V
- Second: Madalyn M

- Motion Carries: 4:07 p.m.

3.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes: February 27, 2024

- Motion: Madalyn M
- Second: Jacob SR
- Motion Carries: 4:07 p.m.

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

- All publications besides TCE have wrapped up regular production for year. Radio Laurier doing 24-hour stream marathon today. Blueprint put together full-size magazine, first in a long time. Pages for Keystone-Carnegie submitted. Ending the year on a high note!
- Highlights of year: RL held three concerts, Sputnik increased from 12 to 16 print pages, 15 staff went to NASH in Edmonton, and 100% pick up rate for WLUR.
- Incoming President Umaymah has already hired most department heads, who will help Umaymah and Aaron with hiring for CSJ, editorial board and senior staff roles before the end of April.
- Wrapping up performance reviews for current staff. Emphasis on updating transition reports for incoming staff, most department heads have already passed those on. Listings for positions we didn't get applications for have been updated on Navigator.
- Volunteer Appreciation Night at Abe Erb on 15th. Recognized a few volunteers from each department with awards and sent everyone home with some WLUSP swag.
- Focus for last weeks of my term will be training Umaymah; bringing incoming student directors up to speed about board procedures; ordering bound copies for The Cord and The Sputnik, and plaques for VA awards.
- So proud of growth of publications, closing out term in amazing position heading into next year. Can't wait to see what's next for WLUSP with Umaymah and incoming department heads.

4.1 Comments

- No comments

5.0 Executive Director Report Presented by Aaron Waitson

WLU'er Updates

- Looking at four options for print quotes for the book: 4000 or 5000 copies of either a 176-page (current page count) or 184-page book. Really want to keep investing in the WLU'er because it was statistically our most successful publication this year.
- 176 page x 4000 = \$26,381 | 176 x 5000 = \$31,239
- 184 page x 4000 = \$27,581 | 184 x 5000 = \$32,739
- Given state of budget, I recommend printing 5000 copies but keeping page count to 176.

Waterloo Office Move

- Indefinite delays on office move due to significant renovations required.
- From talking with Facilities and Asset Management (FAM) contact, we should manage our expectations about move in near future.
- Have made variety of improvements to current space, 205 Regina St, ahead of summer.
- Laurier internal affairs contact Kristin Bridge has gotten involved, hopefully can help solve problems and delays. Meeting with Kristin and FAM in early May, will hopefully have an update next time the board meets.

Grad Photo Company Service Contract

- Meeting with Sean this Friday to discuss options for a re-sign with Pegasus. Continuing partnership with Pegasus, don't want to jeopardize that, but will try to see what the best deal we can get is. With Lifetouch we used to get \$5000/year tech subsidy, would like to try to leverage that when negotiating signing bonus with Pegasus.
- More information to come after we meet this week.

HRdownloads: Human Resources Management Support

- Improving HR processes and policies was a focus this year. Because we're student run, don't think our organization's HR needs are currently being fully met.
- Brit introduced me to option of HRdownloads. I met with company's lead account executive in March. They gave us very reasonable annual quote (\$4600) for services that we are in critical need of and will help us streamline our HR work.

- I think these services, including unlimited HR advice and consultation, are super important and valuable. Strongly encourage board to use this company, long-term cost-savings solution for us.
 - Would be in addition to HR Manager position.

5.1 Comments

- No comments

6.0 Web Manager Health & Dental Proposal (Aaron)

Sam is interested in adding his spouse to the health and dental benefits that come with his position. Is the board willing to add that expense for WLUSP, or should the expense fall on Sam to add his spouse to his benefits plan?

6.1 Comments

- Umaymah, Shelby, Brit: Whatever decision we make would set a precedent, so we have to be aware of that.
- Randy: You could say ‘As of right now, if someone wants to add their spouse, they can pay out of pocket to do so, but we will table the decision about WLUSP paying for the expense until later.’
- Serena: What’s the figure for us if we take on the expense? Aaron: About \$350.

6.2 Motion to table decision to cover spouses in Health & Dental Plan but allow employees to pay out of pocket to add a spouse

- Motion: Brit K
- Second: Shelby B
- Motion Carries: 4:31 p.m.

7.0 TCE Editorial Assistant Vacation Time Proposal (Aaron)

- Adrian inquiring about adding vacation time into his contract. It is typically a perk exclusive to department heads, senior staff. Adrian is in unique position though, as he's full-time staff member.
- We would also have to be prepared for that to set a precedent—should it also apply to part-time department heads, e.g.?

7.1 Comments

- Jacob: I think that while it's unique situation, we should try to be careful around renegotiating contracts as it could set a precedent.
- Harleen (TCE EIC): Our reasoning is that he has been producing much more work now that he's full-time.
- Umaymah: I agree, if someone is full-time staff, they should receive the same benefits as other full-time staff.
- Bronte: I agree, and I think part-time staff have understanding that they are in a different situation and aren't entitled to same perks as full-time staff.
- Aaron: Adrian currently not included in health and dental coverage, that might be something to consider as well.
- Randy: Just so we all know, vacation pay is built into everyone's salary as that's required by law.
- Shelby: I recommend tabling this decision for the next meeting if Adrian doesn't need an immediate answer.
- Harleen: For context, Adrian took a vacation for 10 business days and we saw that vacation time wasn't included in his contract, so that's how the conversation started.
- Tusharika: Is vacation time not required to be included for any full-time staff?
- Randy: Yes. There is a legal precedent that he gets 2 weeks of vacation, so if that is not already in his contract, adding that should be easy to confirm.

7.2 Motion to confirm that TCE Editorial Assistant and all full-time staff get 2 weeks vacation time

- Motion: Brit K

- Second: Jack V
- Motion Carries: 4:47 p.m.

8.0 Approval of the Interim Budget (Serena, Aaron & Randy)

- This past year budgeted for significant loss, will budget for another loss this upcoming year.
- Budget for year ending April 30, 2025. Expect revenue to be about \$710,000. SAC fees usually go up each year, but recommend not doing that this year, as government is decreasing number of international students allowed → less students.
- Huge loss of -\$211,511. Just because we budget something, doesn't mean it will be met. Still, 200,000 is a very large deficit even though we can afford it. We might want to decrease that.
- Aaron: Because this is the interim budget, the board can focus on mostly May-August portion of budget. In terms of Central Department, if we're looking to trim deficit, I might recommend not funding summer positions ourselves if we don't get the funding from CSJ.
- Aaron: Looking for new laptop for Executive Director as it is long-term position.

WLUSP Conference

- Aaron: I personally feel like the conference hasn't had desired organization-wide impact. Maybe it needs to be overhauled, reintroducing something like camp WLUSP or something more local—it needs some sort of change. Otherwise it seems like wasted money.
- Serena: The \$2,600 could definitely be cut a bit, last summer we spent about half of that.

- Umaymah: We've had conversations about making it in-person, transitioning to at least a hybrid format.

Finance Department: No significant changes from last year.

Human Resources

- Aaron: Would like to pay for the year subscription to HRdownloads, which will have to be added to budget still.

The Community Edition

- Aaron: Update on Steel Rails: Still have not heard back yet with official proposal (for City to buy the rights to the event). Don't think it would be possible for it to happen this year, but no harm in keeping the line for Steel Rails in the budget until we hear back officially.
- Aaron: Highly recommend approving TCE Creative Director position hours raise (proposal attached in Serena's email), from 15 to 20 hours/week, at \$20 an hour.

The Cord

- Serena: We cut their NASH budget slightly based on recent years' interest and decreased their publishing from 6 issues per term to 3.
- Aaron: Conversation to be had about how many part-time roles is equitable for the Cord to have, considering that Sputnik doesn't have any part-time positions. One option is to consider cutting two of the four part-time positions.
- Umaymah: I agree, the positions could receive honoraria instead of being part-time.

- Brit: It's a tough call, would have to revisit what the role looks like before making a decision. A proposal brought to the board before ratification would be helpful.
- Aaron: Would also be a different conversation if the Cord was publishing online weekly, but they're currently publishing biweekly online.
- Madalyn: From personal experience, the part-time pay is great incentive for the positions to be filled and for high quality work. Bronte's insight on this would be valuable so the board can make more informed decision.

WLUer

- (Brit stepped out briefly) Aaron: Does the board approve of Brit designing the WLUer again this year, and of keeping the compensation for that as is?
- Jack: Yes, feel good about that.

The Blueprint: Pretty standard budget for this department.

Keystone

- Big revenue generator, about \$50,000 after expenses.

Brantford Department

- Standard SAC fees, paying rent, holiday parties, transportation to VAs.

The Sputnik

- Added Creative Director position.
- Umaymah & Serena: Canva Pro membership can just be in central budget as it's used organization wide.

Radio Laurier

- Regular supplies, socials, prizes for events. Will keep NCRC costs in budget in case Jack (same time as his convocation) and two other staff members are available to go.

Laurier Student Poll

- Aaron: LSP has been a loose limb at WLUSP for years. We either need to drop it completely, incorporate it into the Cord, or it needs a complete overhaul and someone who is passionate about it to lead it.
- Umaymah: If we want to, I'm willing to look for someone who could take the lead on it.
- Aaron: Umaymah, myself, and possibly others in WLUSP can take the summer to draw up a more comprehensive plan for what to do with the LSP publication.

Summary of Changes

- Benefits for Sam (Web Manager); Sputnik office expenses moved to Brantford central, remove Sputnik Canva membership line (included in central department); talk to Bronte about potentially switching Cord part-time positions to honoraria.

8.1 Comments

- Aaron: I'll be pushing to hold referendum for Milton campus to see if they're interested in having student publications and a student fee for WLUSP, and I think we need to do something significant to make sure things are equitable.
 - Focus on issue of SAC fee revenue maybe not being as high as it could be.
Potentially hold a referendum to slightly increase SAC fees for students. As it is right now, we can increase it each year between 3-5% to account for inflation, but more than 3-5% requires a referendum. Would like to increase it by a couple of dollars. It's something to consider for long-term of WLUSP.

8.2 Vote to Approve the Interim Budget with Changes Made

- Motion: Madalyn M
- Second: Jacob SR
- Motion Carries: 5:51 p.m.

8.3 Approve decision to contract HRdownloads for 2024-2025 year

- Motion: Madalyn M
- Second: Jack V
- Motion Carries: 5:51 p.m.

9.0 Adjournment

- Motion: Brit K
- Second: Jack V
- Motion Carries: 5:52 p.m.

WLUSP Board Meeting for Tuesday, April 16 is adjourned at 5:52 p.m.