

WLUSP Board Meeting

Virtual Conference: Monday, August 21, 2023 | 5:00 p.m.

Secretary: Maryka Van Wyngaarden

Attendance:

Serena Austin, President & Chair

Shelby Blackley, Community Director

Rosalind Horne, Community Director

Randy Moore, Finance Manager

Jacob Segal Rice, Vice-Chair

Maryka Van Wyngaarden, Secretary

Jack Vrolyk, Student Director

Aaron Waitson, Executive Director

Umaymah Suhail, The Sputnik EIC

Absent Membership:

Madalyn Mostacci, Treasurer

1.0 Call Meeting to Order

- Meeting called to order at 5:04 p.m.

2.0 Approval of Agenda: August 21, 2023

- Motion: Rosalind Horne
- Second: Jack Vrolyk
- Motion Carries: 5:05 p.m.

3.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes: May 3, 2023

- Motion: Jack Vrolyk

- Second: Umaymah Suhail
- Motion Carries: 5:06 p.m.

4.0 Ratification of Steel Rails/Bookfest Email Vote

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

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

Training, Workshops, Hiring

- Virtual summer conference held August 11-13, staff and volunteers attended various workshops. Department heads held separate meetings with their teams to set expectations.
- Necessary training will continue into the fall semester as hiring continues to help staff prepare for their roles.
- The Cord, The Sputnik and Radio Laurier will be covering O-week, production under way this week.

Budget Spending

- Radio Laurier purchased: soundboard, microphones, mic stands and other equipment.
- Brit Kovacs will be compensated appropriately for time she spent designing production assets.
- The Cord and The Sputnik merch items purchased for O-week giveaways. \$500 added to their budgets to purchase bigger ticket items for giveaways during first weeks of school year to encourage student engagement.

5.1 Comments

- No comments

6.0 Executive Director Report Presented by Aaron Waitson

Bill C-18

- The Online News Act Bill C-18 poses the largest threat to WLUSP publications' online presence (Facebook and Instagram).
- SEO will have to be a priority this year to increase traffic to our publications' websites rather than relying on social media.

Changes to The Community Edition

- Editorial Assistant position increased from part-time (15 hrs) to full-time (35 hrs).
- The part-time Creative Director position approved for permanent continuation.

Canada Summer Jobs

- Received less Canada Summer Jobs funding than initially expected: funding for two positions instead of four. We intended to still hire for all roles but ended up only hiring for two. Will save significant amount in summer payroll costs.
- Submitting final payment claim and will receive rest of grant payment soon.

TCE Steel Rails

- Made difficult decision not to host a TCE Steel Rails event this year, as unexpected circumstances made running a large-scale, high-quality event not possible at this time.
- TCE will instead host smaller events, like upcoming Night Market, throughout the year to build momentum and plan for next year's Steel Rails event.
- Steel Rails budget line will be used to support local artists and community events, and purchase items for next year's event in advance.
- Focus on building positive community relationships.

Extra Note (not included in report): The Lazaridis Review

- The Lazaridis Review (business-focused publication) has inquired about joining WLUSP.
- Opportunity to reach business students and expand beyond arts & culture topics.

- Serena and Aaron will be following up to learn more details, what that could potentially look like. Will bring information back to board to discuss.

6.1 Comments

- Rosalind suggested grassroots activism in relation to Bill C-18 and its impact on student publications, contacting local MPs in Waterloo and Brantford, lobbying.
- Shelby: Bill C-18 context—on desktop, Instagram hasn't blocked news. We can look into diversifying social media, considering TikTok and the use of email newsletters.
- Randy asked which 2 out of 4 summer positions were hired. Aaron: Summer Reporter & Production Assistant.
- Aaron: Questions about Lazaridis?
 - Rosalind: Would it come back to the board before going ahead?
 - Aaron: Board would likely discuss in dedicated meeting.
 - Rosalind: Have to consider the pros and cons for both parties. What an integration/partnership could look like other than their publication becoming part of WLUSP. E.g., could be included as a column in existing publication.
 - Shelby: It's a good opportunity to introduce more business-focused content. Have to ask what support they are looking for and if WLUSP would be able to provide that.

7.0 Budget Presentations

Annual Budget presented by Randy Moore

- Planning for a large loss/deficit this year. There have consistently been large surpluses in previous years, so planning to spend some money this year.
- Aaron: Possible adjustments made to NASH funding as it will be in Edmonton this year and accommodations budget will need to include air fare.
- Will lose some revenue from TCE Steel Rails event not happening this year.
- Serena: Can take out \$150 for podcast audio royalties, will not be used.

- Aaron: TCE department head has inquired about budgeting for 6 people from the department to attend NASH rather than 3.
- NASH accommodations for The Cord members decreased from 12 to 10.
- Sputnik changes: \$250 added for promo/giveaway items, and budget for 6 lead reporters, up from 4 (change more so in labels than in amounts).
- Radio Laurier changes: In-person events boosted to \$1500 from \$800, coming out of sound proofing budget. NCRA dues lowered this year. \$400 added for Brantford travel.
- Aaron: Laurier Student Poll has lost some of its momentum in recent years; WLUSP may need to invest more into the publication in the future to see LSP re-establish itself.
- Summary: after the above changes, the total loss/deficit is now \$181, 000.

7.1 Comments

- No comments

7.2 Approval of Budget

- Motion: Jacob Segal Rice
- Second: Jack Vrolyk
- Motion Carries: 6:09 p.m.

8.0 Adjournment

- Motion: Jacob Segal Rice
- Second: Rosalind Horne
- Motion Carries: 6:09 p.m.

WLUSP Board Meeting for Monday, August 21 is adjourned at 6:09 p.m.