

## **WLUSP Board of Directors Interim Budget Ratification Meeting**

**Virtual Conference:** Tuesday, May 14, 2024 | 5:00 p.m.

**Secretary:** Aaron Waitson

### **Attendance:**

Umaymah Suhail (President, Publisher & Chair)

Elisha Felician (Student Director)

Jacob Segal Rice (Student Director)

Nate Dawes (Student Director)

Brittany Kovacs (Community Director)

Aaron Waitson (Executive Director)

Randy Moore (Finance Manager)

### **Gallery:**

Tusharika Tyagi (Blueprint Editor-in-Chief)

Brontë Behling, (The Cord Editor-in-Chief)

### **Absent Membership:**

Madalyn Mostacci (Student Director)

Shelby Blackley (Community Director)

### **1.0 Call Meeting to Order**

- Meeting called to order at 5:13 p.m.

## **2.0 Approval of Agenda: May 14, 2024**

- Motion: Director Kovacs
- Second: Director Rice
- Motion Carries: 5:15 p.m.

## **3.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes: April 16, 2024**

- Motion: Director Kovacs
- Second: Director Rice
- Motion Carries: 5:17 p.m.

## **4.0 Chair Report Presented by Umaymah Suhail (President, Publisher & Chair)**

- Hiring: since the last board meeting, most staff positions within departments have been filled, contracts are being drafted, and Chair Suhail is working on communications to promote any vacant positions further
- Looking to fill positions for The Keystone/Carnegie and LSP
- CSJ: funding received for 1 out of 4 positions (Summer Reporter); Production Assistant and HR Coordinator have been hired as well, still looking for an Advertising Assistant; CSJ positions that were not funded were reduced from 35 hours/week to 15 hours/week to compensate for lack of funding
- Departments working on brand redesigns to elevate and update their respective publications (The Cord, TCE and BP)
- Three Radio Laurier members will be attending NCRC this year in Nova Scotia; Six members from TCE will be attending the upcoming CAJ conference in Toronto, other

department heads have expressed an interest in this as well (Chair Suhail & BP EIC Tusharika Tyagi)

- Beginning to prepare for the WLUSP conference, reaching out to other department heads to get their feedback and perspective in order to schedule sessions and workshops
- Will be working with department heads to train their staff and volunteers, while planning to prepare for September

#### **4.1 Comments**

- No comments

#### **5.0 Executive Director Report Presented by Aaron Waitson (Executive Director)**

##### **Waterloo Office Move:**

- As the board has been made aware, there have been indefinite delays on our office move while the university considers the significant renovations that would be required to bring the buildings we have been considering for our new leases (187 and 152 Albert Street) up to building code
- Met with Kristin Bridge from the Office of Student Affairs, as well as other parties involved in these ongoing conversations, last week to discuss our current and ongoing space needs and next steps
- Laurier will be undergoing a space audit over the next few months (which should finish around July), in which a third-party company will be evaluating every space on the Laurier campus to determine where efficiencies can be found, and to aid them in the process of selecting suitable spaces for various groups and departments on the campus

- Once that process is completed, FAM will have more information as to our options regarding a potential move
- Seeing as certain parties were not made aware of the status (or not) of our move, they have been looking into the matter internally to see what can be doing regarding the various committees and other parties involved in the decision surrounding our more permanent relocation
  - As a result, all parties involved will now be meeting on a monthly basis to connect and discuss any updates and changes in that process
- In the meantime, ED Waitson will be working closer with Kristin to secure any necessary updates to our 205 Regina St. office, and most immediately, ensuring that A/C units are installed in our building, so that we can actually utilize the space during the summer
  - Other improvements and updates will be worked towards in descending order of priority so that our current space is comfortable until such time as the move issue has been sorted
  - Will also be updating the “wish list” that was submitted to FAM regarding our space expectations, in the hopes that this will help them in the process of locating other potential spaces
- While Kristin is confident that a more permanent office move can take place before the end of the year, we are continuing to manage expectations until a confirmation can be provided

**Grad Photo Company Service Contract:**

- Following several conversations throughout the past year regarding our service contract with Pegasus School Images, and in consideration of the competitive bid for a future

contract from Lifetouch, we met with Sean Rutherford on April 19 to discuss a re-negotiation of the signing bonuses associated with an early re-sign of our service agreement that would align with the offer Lifetouch presented us earlier this year

- Current service agreement extends to 2025
- Worked out a service agreement for 2025-2030
- Sean and his team are eager to continue working with WLU Student Publications as the exclusive provider of official graduate photography for Laurier students, and we are happy to announce that we have successfully signed a five-year service agreement, and negotiated for a substantial increase to our historical compensation for this partnership
  - In addition to a \$10,000 signing bonus, Pegasus shall pay Student Publications an additional \$7,000 per year as a benefit subsidy, payable at the end of May each year, which will also become retroactive for the year of 2024-2025 (the final year of our current agreement)
- This amount will guarantee a total additional compensation of \$52,000 for WLUSP over the next five years
  - This agreement will not only help secure additional funds to ensure that we can continue investing in important tech assets for our organization (cameras, equipment, etc.), but will also provide an important injection of immediate funds going into a deficit year
- Now looking forward to our continued, ongoing and long-term relationship with Pegasus, and are happy that we were able to make this happen

## **5.1 Comments**

- Director Dawes: required clarification regarding how the funding will be distributed to WLUSP, clarification provided (\$17,000 in 2024, remaining \$35,000 from 2025-2030 or \$7,000 per year)

## **6.0 Ratification of the Interim Budget (Chair Suhail, ED Waitson & FM Moore)**

- No funding for three out of the four CSJ positions; remaining positions will be reduced from 35 hours to 15 hours a week; contracts/agreements drafted for two of the remaining positions that have been hired already
  - See 6.2 for comments
- Blueprint: adding magazine subscriptions, a ticket to the upcoming CAJ conference
- President: adding a ticket to the upcoming CAJ conference
- Adding in HRdownloads into the Human Resources department
- Brantford rent — Laurier will not be charging back rent, no worried about that large expense
- The Cord: discussions surrounding the part-time staff roles, board was looking for a proposal regarding those salaries; keeping two positions salaried, make changes to the other two roles:
  - Proposal: Cord EIC Behling's team is essential to daily operations, would like to ensure these positions are not compromised; multimedia and web director has been key to their redesign and day-to-day operations;
  - Multimedia & Web Director Aysia Stein provided a statement for the board; wants to bring in new readership to The Cord, detailed branding requirements for the publication; would like to assist in redesigning The Cord's monthly newsletter; want to make The Cord more accessible

- News Director would like to remain in order to engage consistently and in new ways with WLUSP; big challenge facing the section has been volunteer engagement; plans on collaborating with clubs and associations on campus to source pitches; wants to diversify The Cord's content and ensure content is collected on a regular basis; feels that news is a section with a lot of potential, and deserves the time and attention to grow
- Based on the time that goes into both positions, EIC Behling would like to reduce the hours from 15 to 10 hours to keep them salaried; if that is not possible, would rather they maintain a large honorarium instead
- Summary: keep two positions as they are (Creative Director & Managing Editor), change News Director & Multimedia & Web Director to 10 hours/week
  - Director Kovacs supports the proposal; would like to revisit the amount of roles and hour; for the purpose of this year, she supports moving forward (prefer reducing the hours to 10)

## **6.1 Summary of Changes**

- The Cord: changing two 15 hours/week salaried roles to 10 hours/week
- Adding tickets for CAJ conference to Blueprint/President department
- Adding HRdownloads to the list of annual expenses

## **6.2 Comments**

- Director Kovacs: there was an understanding that positions that were not funded by the CSJ grant would be voted on by the board as to whether or not they would be kept, flagging it as a point to be more aware of in the future

- Director Felician wanted to consider lowering the number of copies The Sputnik prints monthly in Brantford, Chair Suhail responded by saying most copies were distributed this year and there was less leftover than in previous years, so the current number of copies is adequate
- Commentary from the Gallery (BP EIC Tyagi): believes that Cord staff positions are important, especially those with technical specializations; is important to bring The Cord back up to what it used to be, need salaried positions and experts in those roles to ensure everything is high quality, engage readership further
- Director Dawes: want to make sure we are addressing the root problems of some of these issues within The Cord with these decisions

### **6.3 Ratification of Interim Budget with Amendments**

- Motion: Director Kovacs
- Second: Director Felician
- Motion Carries: 6:05 p.m.

### **7.0 Election of Officer — Vice Chair**

- Nomination: Director Jacob Segal Rice nominates himself for the role
  - Director Rice has served as Vice Chair for several years now, has been a fulfilling experience and has taught him a fair bit about the structure of a Board of Directors; would be happy to do it again for this coming year
- Motion: Director Kovacs
- Second: Director Dawes
- Motion Carries at 6:07 p.m., and Director Rice is elected as Vice-Chair



## **8.0 Election of Officer — Secretary**

- Nomination: Director Nate Dawes nominates himself for the role
  - Believes that the accuracy of the historical record and important decisions is something that everybody should be interested in; would be privileged to fulfill that role on this board
- Motion: Director Felician
- Second: Director Kovacs
- Motion Carries at 6:10 p.m., and Director Dawes is elected as Board Secretary.

## **9.0 Election of Officer — Treasurer**

- Nomination: Tusharika Tyagi stands for the nomination, Director Dawes nominates Tusharika for the role
  - Good with numbers, working towards an MBA; has a basic understanding of budgeting, has learned how to keep books; has an interest in the position
- Motion: Director Kovacs
- Second: Director Rice
- Motion Carries at 6:15 p.m., and Tusharika Tyagi is elected as Board Treasurer.

## **9.1 Comments**

- Director Felician would like an updated version of the Board Orientation Package

## **10.0 Adjournment**

- Meeting is adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

**WLUSP Board Meeting for Tuesday, May 14, 2024 is adjourned at 6:17 p.m.**

