

**Queen's Journal Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2010**

Present: P.J. Lee, Sidney Eve Matrix, Emily Davies, Scott Turcotte, Leslie Yun, Annette Bergeron, Jane Switzer, Michael Woods, Kamil Wyszynski, Patrick Allin

Absent: Gloria Er-Chua, Gabe King

Adoption of the Agenda, 4:07 p.m.

Motion by Ms. Davies, Second by Mr. Wyszynski
Passes unanimously.

Adoption of the Minutes

Motioned by Mr. Woods, Mr. Wyszynski seconds
Passes unanimously

Chair's Report

Mr. Lee, the interim chair, has nothing to report.

Editors Report

Jane: Big elections coverage tomorrow night. Our reporters will be going out to various AMS executive, rector parties and so forth. Live-blogging. We only have two more weeks of one issue a week. Our elections are coming up. Tyler Ball is running for editor in chief. The Editor in Chief Q&A is on Wednesday, February 10 at 3 p.m. at the Grad Club. We're running ads in the Journal for it. Editor in Chief election voting days are Friday, February 12 and Tuesday, February 16.

Business Manager's Report

Mr. Wyszynski: Trying to hit as many 40 percent targets as we can. We haven't been doing it since the break. During once a week we were hitting 40 percent without much effort. That's positive. Online advertising pricing. We're looking to sell subscriptions for seven-day periods, starting this week. There is client interest. We're looking to charge \$28 a week to \$17 a week. It depends on type of advertisement. Web manager forecasting we hit our budgeted to year by end of April. Next year web ad will be substantially more significant figure. Ideally when the nine-month comes out there will be numbers there, not zeros. We got paid a bit more from Sushi Q, they owe us about \$3,000 still. The other item on expenses side is we're over budget on volunteer appreciation. Basically we'd still spend another 1000 or so under that line. The reason it's so over budget is my poor judgment when budgeting. Was looking back at previous budgets and there was 5000 budgeted. That explains why there's poor decision-making on that line item. Don't know if we should change it or just minimize it.

Media Director's Report

Mr. Lee: Last board meeting worked towards a proposal for Tricolour publication services. Also got all of our mid-year reviews in. Really appreciate Jane, Mike and Kamil handing it in on time. We're getting ready to plan for our AGM fee increase. We'll talk about that a bit later on.

Business from last meeting

Staff appreciation

Mr. Lee: We are currently over budget by \$1,200. This was largely to do with the dinner that you guys had for the mid-year dinner. Last meeting we decided that we were going to table it until this meeting so we could get more insight from Mr. Wyszynski, because he took care of that. Any suggestions on what we should do with this line item considering we're over for the year already.

Mr. Wyszynski: Poor decision to make it \$2,000 for the year. During the summer I thought where could we save money? We didn't do anything extra that hasn't been done for many years in the past. I just budgeted improperly. Don't know if this is possible but perhaps to change the budget number.

Ms. Yun; I'm not a fan of changing budget numbers. It's better to record discrepancies rather than adjust along the way. Something that I was unsure of was for the remainder of the year what arrangements of left. Megalos arrangements?

Mr. Wyszynski: There's no commitment. There's nothing in stone. Sushi Q owe us close to \$4,000. Potentially we could have it at Asha and they would just do it for free. Asha's a fairly nice place. They can close down and they have a liquor license. It wouldn't be neat as the basement of Megalos. It's an option financially speaking though. Having a dinner at Megalos ran us about \$1,800. I can see if there's room for any sort of exchange.

Mr. Lee: We looked into the past and there's been precedent. One year TAPS went over their budgeted numbers. They made the staff pay for their next event, or at least contribute to it. Another instance, TAPS went over and made the managers pay for it. This is obviously not going to happen. There has been in the past some precedents where you pass a budget at board, you're accountable to those numbers.

Mr. Allin: We have not made any deposits or anything, have we?

Ms. Yun: This number is year to date.

Mr. Woods said this isn't a situation where spending it atypical, but that the budgeted line item was lower than usual. He said the Journal isn't spending more than usual. He said the Journal has a holiday party and an end of year party.

Ms. Bergeron: Is there consistency across the board with the services in terms of volunteer appreciation?

Ms. Yun: It differs across the board.

Mr. Lee: AMS services that run with wage staff should be separate from honorarium-based staff, but maybe finding perceived values for staff.

Annette: Proportional to number of volunteers in any particular service.

Ms. Yun: Each of the commissions will do something like that.

Ms. Yun then ran through the Journal's volunteer appreciation numbers from the last few years.

Mr. Lee: Should in-kind agreements be tracked through the budgets? It is money that you are giving up. It's space lost to maximum ad sold space. Should that be reflected in the budget? It's something that from an accounting perspective that Scott felt we needed to do and the board did as well. That's how we would also know—because of the in-kind agreement.

Annette: I would support that because of best practice.

Mr. Lee: Option for line item the rest of the year?

Mr. Wyszynski: In-kind. Or being over budget. Are there any other opportunities where you would have to spend this money. We're doing sweaters but that's getting offset by honorarium. There's subsidy they're paying X amount of dollars. I still don't have a quote from TAMS. I offered to pay the cost they would get from their vendor and they want to charge a margin so I suggested they take that margin and stick it in advertising. They weren't in favour of that. I'll see if I can persuade them.

Mr. Allin: It's very important to recognize the volunteers. Given that it's funded mainly by student fees. I'd be in favour of establishing an in-kind limit, something like \$700-800 for in-kind advertisements.

Mr. Woods: Volunteers don't feel appreciated if they have to pay.

Ms. Yun: That's 23 bucks a head. The number does allow for a pretty good dinner.

Mr. Lee: A volunteer appreciates the fact that they're being taken out for dinner. \$23 is a decent amount.

Ms. Yun: For one of the services a couple of years ago, the manager booked out Alfie's and got it catered. Something like that might be better.

Mr. Wyszynski: What do other dinners of roughly 30 people spend?

Mr. Lee: Council dinner we spent \$24 a head, we went to Grizzly Grill. Brew pub was cheaper, like 21 bucks.

Mr. Lee and Mr. Wyszynski talk about specifics for Christmas dinner.

Mr. Lee: Let's table this for next meeting.

Mr. Wyszynski: There are many specifics to go over.

Accounting and In-Kind Agreements

Mr. Lee: We just talked about this. Is there a way to a line item on the budget for in-kind agreements be more transparent?

Ms. Yun: What does an account cost? Revenue price.

Annette: In-kind, you can have it as revenue or you can expense it. You can have it as two under the same title.

Mr. Wyszynski: It's not inventory or a hard asset. It's not stock. 40 percent is an ideal, abstract thing. What we need to figure out is what that standard would be. How do we value it. Would it be the normal revenue or at-cost or in-between.

Mr. Lee: Usually at cost. You're both not charging each other.

Annette: Even though it's a non-cash item it gets recorded in statement of operations.

Mr. Lee: Take this on to look at, Leslie.

AGM

Ms. Switzer: We've had a few meetings with CFRC about getting fee increases at the AGM. We've had meetings just to talk about clubs we can reach out to that have vested interest in the Journal. Strategies for getting people to go to the AGM, P.J. said he would talk to people on Council about the fee increase for the J and CFRC. Mike and I are working on a list of FAQ that people might have. How we spend our money, revenue, why we need an increase, etc.

Mr. Wyszynski: How would we answer that to somebody AGM vs referendum.

Ms. Yun: The best answer for that is the AGM is the best way for discussion to take place. Referendum, there isn't much discussion. CFRC's fee has failed at referendum—AGM is a much better forum. It's a technicality, the fee increases are technically approved by AMS assembly but they do have to be approved at AGM. Assembly likely wouldn't show a lot of opposition to it but we have to keep that in mind.

Ms. Yun: Fees can be established through two methods. One through campus referendum, or through AMS Assembly with affirmation at AGM. Two-thirds membership of Assembly two weeks prior to AGM. Open forum unless it's closed session for discipline. Anyone can put forth a motion. Assembly members vote.

Ms. Bergeron: Is there a mechanism for proxy voting at AGM?

Ms. Yun: No. You have to be there.

Ms. Bergeron: So that's in our constitution and bylaws and so forth.

Mr. Lee: What is the number you guys are going for?

Mr. Wyszynski: \$6.50

Mr. Woods: We have the lowest student fee in the country for campus newspapers.

Ms. Yun: We would also have to go through SGPS next year.

Ms. Bergeron: You guys would be able to explain the numbers?

Mike: Yes.

Budget Review

Mr. Wyszynski: Nothing different than from what I said during business manager's report. Web revenue, next months' statement is the only thing that comes to my mind.

Mr. Lee: Has there been any updates from Campus Network regarding performance?

Mr. Wyszynski: They're sticking to their story.

Mr. Allin: What does the contract say?

Mr. Wyszynski: They're the only ones soliciting advertising on our behalf.

Allin: Do they promise a number?

Mr. Wyszynski: They give estimates. There's a line rate they pay us. They're business model is really awful and they don't know how to adapt. They charge substantial margin on 85 cents a line. Our national rates are maximum \$1.20 a line. We're expecting to sell people. Rogers was a big client. Globalive backed out of advertising. A bunch of excuses.

Ms. Bergeron: What will we recommend for next year?

Mr. Wyszynski: Likely a number will shrink substantially more considering taking circulation down from 9,000 to 5,500 and would take us out of their umbrella. We'd have to figure out what other agencies have to say. We'd likely go for a company that offers a basket of smaller newspapers or ones that do individual sales. If Campus Network wants to keep soliciting ads that's fine, but there definitely won't be exclusivity.

Ms. Yun said Golden Words has a non-exclusive contract.

Other business

Official complaint

Mr. Lee: Just to preface this, this morning this student Mira Dineen came in to talk to Greg McKellar, got some advice. Ms. Yun and I were pulled into the meeting. She told us her side of the story. Then I went to talk to Jane and Mike got their side as well.

Mr. Woods: I printed off e-mails she sent us that she didn't CC u on. Ms. Dineen sent us an email to the Journal editors news and features. The e-mail said the Journal has a pro-CHR biased. The e-mail said there was a Facebook note. She said the Journal should be investigating it. She sent another e-mail right after with a few afterthoughts saying she isn't affiliated with PNF's campaign. She admitted it was

entirely possible that the Facebook note was fabricated that we should investigate it. She said several years of Journal coverage have failed to meet her expectation. The Editors in Chief are responsible for dealing with complaints, but out of courtesy Gloria responded to the e-mail. She said (Mr. Woods reads the e-mail verbatim. Gloria essentially responded saying news is looking into the matter and thanking Ms. Dineen for her interest.). Ms. Dineen responded later that day on the Thursday it is important for the Journal to investigate. Ms. Dineen then e-mailed Gloria later that day. She told ... (Mike reads the e-mail). Ms. Dineen went through all of the actions Gloria took during the hour and a half class. Ms. Dineen said from "this evidence" the Journal had a pro-CHR bias. The Journal had been emailing both teams throughout the campaign for business purposes. Ms. Dineen took it to mean that the Journal has already endorsed CHR. Ms. Dineen said Gloria lied about what she said to her in the e-mail. (Mike reads more of the e-mail). Ms. Dineen said she didn't expect Gloria to respond. She then sent this e-mail to other people. At this point Gloria was shaken because someone had been reading her personal e-mail in a class. I believe it was then that it was our role to stick up for our staff. Jane I drafted an e-mail and sent it to Mira the next morning (Mike reads the e-mail. At issue is the last sentence of the e-mail which reads: "Your statements regarding our news editor are libelous and defamatory. If these continue, we will pursue legal action against you."). I haven't heard from her personally since then. The procedure when you're dealing with complaints is to go to the editors in chief and they are obligated to provide a response within three days. She has evidently skipped the first step. What makes it libelous is she took things down from Gloria's screen, made statements about her that were untrue, and forwarded it to several people. From our perspective, I've heard she sent around an e-mail retracting her statements and realizes what she did was very rude. From our perspective, we have a hard-working staff that make honoraria but are technically volunteers. We're trying to provide the safest and best accommodating atmosphere for them to work in. Although this was outside the Journal in a public space, I think that constitutes an invasion of privacy. When someone libels our staff to other people it's our job to take appropriate action. If Ms. Dineen's spooked now, I don't feel sorry for her at all. If you're going to sneak over someone's shoulder and send out an e-mail to other people with private action...

Ms. Yun: What concerns me is there's legal action threatened against her, which isn't in the editors' purview. She did consult with family lawyers. Aside from everything else, perhaps was an unfair reaction. We can't quantify if this was more or equal to what Gloria went through, but the way she put it, is she would be concerned if that response was given to other students, especially when it wouldn't be within the normal procedure for dealing with issues like this. We wouldn't pursue legal action against one of our own students.

Mr. Woods: I can understand how this would have caused distress. Libeling someone is illegal. We could have said that instead. I think the actions she took were not acceptable. We can't quantify whatever grief she experienced from this e-mail versus Gloria's grief. But we have to protect our staff.

Ms. Yun: I'm sympathetic to that.

Ms. Davies: I know that if I was in that situation ... I commend Mike and Jane for doing what they did. Gloria was only doing her job and she had her personal privacy invaded. Ms. Dineen consciously, copied those e-mails and then forwarded it to either PNF supporters. Gloria I spoke with her the next day she was completely shocked and only doing her job ... how could Mira be so naïve to think that she did something like that that a response of this nature wouldn't come about.

Mr. Woods: She had CCed the editors on her previous emails, but she did not send this Gloria email to the editors. She sent it only to Gloria. Although it was to the journal news account it seemed on a personal basis. For us, we are receptive, we are accountable to students, and for her to say we aren't is inaccurate. Objectivity is a valid thing to look at, which is why I think Gloria responded initially. Copying down emails isn't a way to express concern about the Journal.

Ms. Yun: You said the e-mail was circulated to her friends?

Mr. Woods: Yes.

Mr. Turcotte: Was the e-mail that was forwarded to people not affiliated with the Journal the one that she sent Gloria saying you lied to me?

Mr. Woods: Yes.

Mr. Turcotte: Would the Journal editors be in the wrong for pursuing legal action?

Mr. Lee: The Journal is not a legal entity. The AMS would have to pursue on their behalf/ We wouldn't pursue a lawsuit on the AMS's behalf.

Ms. Yun: I probably wouldn't pursue legal action against the student. I would be really hard-pressed to find a reason to pursue legal action here.

Mr. Wyszynski: This is a potential threat to Gloria's security overall. I think the statement "if these continue" is completely appropriate. If you continue to invade the personal security of our member then legal action is an appropriate course. If I feel my decision is being threatened somehow because I'll see you in class that could be interpreted many ways. Suppose this persists. I would even as a person not as a member of the Journal. If that happens to me I have every right as a person to pursue legal action as well.

Ms. Bergeron: I'm all about the action item. Editors were not aware that she has rescinded her comments. Is this new?

Mr. Woods: We didn't know. She hasn't told us.

Ms. Bergeron: Maybe we let her know that we understand you have rescinded your comments. Just leave it at that. Your statements are libelous and defamatory. She's withdrawn her accusations towards the individual. Every time we have a complaint to Journal Board we have to take action of some kind. What might that response be? We can spend all day talking about the event.

Mr. Lee: Let's go through the speakers' list.

Ms. Davies: She might have withdrawn her accusations but that doesn't take away from the fact that it's defamation of character. I feel that Mike and Jane stepped up and they protected their fellow staff which is their job and I know as a journalist if I was in Gloria's position I would take great comfort in knowing that action such as this was taken on my behalf.

Mr. Allin: I agree that her actions were highly inappropriate and I agree with editors' response. But I don't think it should be the place of any member of the Journal to say your comments are libelous. As a conclusion, even though she seems to be over it, we should make sure people don't lose faith in questioning the Journal. We should address her main complaints in the Journal.

Ms. Yun: A couple things. She did seek personal legal counsel. The response she got was the statements wouldn't be considered libelous. What she wanted is that the threat of legal action isn't used so lightly in the future. She just wants it on the record so that in the future it doesn't happen. Patrick's response is considered appropriate.

Mr. Woods: In terms of maintaining students' faith in complaining or talking to the Journal, here she hasn't followed the proper complaint procedure. The fact that she has by-passed that whole process, it's not a priority for people to maintain faith because it wasn't followed in the first place. She went straight to Journal Board. The situation was resolvable in Jane's or my office. If she sought legal counsel and they said it wasn't libelous, she could have brought that to us. She's gone about this in an irresponsible manner. I don't see an apology in this e-mail she's sent. I would be very reluctant to apologize for something that was initiated by her and that she hasn't apologized for yet. IN terms of legal action being used lightly, I've threatened it once in my life and it was this. We take it very seriously. Regardless of what her opinion is, I would be reluctant to issue a retraction. We can say listen, this has come to our attention that you've retracted your comments. We maintain that your actions were inappropriate and we will not pursue legal action. The matters closes there. Mr. Wyszynski pointed out that we didn't threaten legal action. We said "if these continue." That is a fairly key different. That is why I think a retraction is out of the question.

Ms. Yun: On her bypassing procedure, she contacted me and Greg yesterday afternoon. We informed her that she could bring it to Journal Board.

Mr. Lee: She didn't even want me and Ms. Yun in the room yesterday. You would feel even more disinclined. She can't be held at fault for bypassing procedure there.

Mr. Lee: Patrick proposed a retraction. Mike you proposed a letter legal action. She writes an apology letter to Gloria. And we'll write her a letter apologizing and saying we won't do it again. We

Ms. Switzer: No sympathy for her. She's made a mistake and hasn't apologized.

Ms. Davies: Forced apology seems disingenuous as well.

Mr. Wyszynski: "If these continue." That makes it a huge difference. That's a pretty big qualifier.

Ms. Matrix: It is a threat to say if you do this then I will do that. It's a very large blanket statement you have made against her.

Mr. Woods discusses what he meant by "they".

Ms. Yun: If there is a letter saying we won't pursue legal action we need to be careful with the wording. We want to make sure it comes across that we weren't going to do it at all.

Mr. Lee: Vote: To write a letter stating that in some way that we will not be pursuing any legal action at this time.

Ms. Bergeron: I would include the part about new information at Journal Board that you presented your comments. Some of your actions were libelous and illegal, but we won't be pursuing legal action at this time.

Ms. Matrix: Which is it? You're saying no legal action at this time, or you're saying no legal action at all. Which is it?

Ms. Bergeron: Leave out the word legal. We won't be taking any further action at this time.

Mr. Lee: Vote to pass the spirit of the motion in principle. The editors will write a letter to close the issue. Does the board feel like they should see the letter?

Ms. Yun: As long as we keep some of the contentious stuff out of it.

Ms. Bergeron: We agreed on the tone in the letter.

Ms. Yun: You guys are right o stand by your original point and stand up for your staff. The point is the specific legal jargon.

Mr. Lee: On the table, we vote for the editors to write a letter to say we will not take future action.

Passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned, 5:25 p.m.