

Journal Board Minutes

January 11, 2008

Present:

Andrew Bucholtz
Colleen Davis
Jane Hilderman
Lisa Jemison
Katherine Laidlaw
Katrina Ludlow
John Manning
Anna Mehler Paperny
Claude Sherren
Gillian Wheatley

Adam Say was present for the first part of the meeting.

Absent:

Gabe King
John Hoey
Matt Trevisan

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. Minutes from the previous meeting were passed unanimously.

Mr. Say introduced the report he and Mr. Trevisan wrote recommending changes to Journal policy.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: Do you want to pass it at Journal Board or at the Board of Directors Level?

Mr. Say: It depends on the different aspects of the report. We want to take thoughts and recommendations now and then amend the report.

Mr. Sherren: Bodies normally accept the report and then take it on themselves to implement. Approving the whole document isn't plausible.

Mr. Say: I'll e-mail the report out to everyone.

It was decided that future Journal Board meetings would be on Fridays at 11:30 a.m. but that a meeting to discuss the report before it went to the Board of Directors would be held on Wednesday, January 23 at 10 a.m.

Mr. Say: Even before the meeting, please e-mail us with your feedback.

Mr. Say left the meeting.

The next item of business was to review the November actuals.

Mr. Bucholtz asked why there wasn't a cost for libel insurance and was told the Journal does have insurance, the cost just hasn't been invoiced yet.

Mr. Bucholtz: Why were printing costs double what was budgeted?

Ms. Davis: The cost went up.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: It's not a timing thing. It's against our mandate to run large ad papers and we had some supplements that contributed to the higher costs.

Ms. Laidlaw: Some October papers were paid for in November.

Mr. Sherren: How much higher will the end cost for printing be?

Ms. Davis: I can ask Thousand Islands.

Ms. Wheatley: It should be about double the actual-to-date, shouldn't it?

Ms. Davis: Do you think it's worth a budget re-adjustment?

Ms. Mehler Paperny: No.

Mr. Manning: When the paper size increase, the number of ads go up, don't they? So the ration between advertising increases and printing costs should give a good idea of what's appropriate.

Mr. Sherren: The top ratio is defined. The paper isn't designed to produce ads, it produces content. It starts becoming a tough decision about how much more content you can produce. I thought the increased printing costs was a timing error, not that we didn't have a handle on the printing costs.

Ms. Davis: We're reliant on the campus network for advertising.

Mr. Bucholtz: We're actually ahead of budget by a half thousand.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: We're also ahead of budget overall.

Mr. Manning: It's important that Colleen and the editors are aware of costs to make a decision about paper size. We should do a rough projected budget. It's encouraging that local revenue has gone up.

The next item of business was to review the Journal editor in chief election dates, decided at the last meeting.

Ms. Laidlaw: Campaigning starts on January 28th.

Ms. Wheatley: So nominations start on Monday?

Ms. Mehler Paperny: We need to determine the number of signatures necessary for a nomination form.

Ms. Laidlaw: Journal policy suggests making it about double what EdBoard is.

Mr. Manning: How many people vote?

Ms. Mehler Paperny: It depends on the number of staff writers.

Ms. Laidlaw: We compile the list later. I'd estimate it'll be about 60 people.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: To sign the nomination form, you don't have to be an eligible voter.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: There was a notice in today's paper. Voters have to be contributors so they're already regularly in touch with the Journal. I don't think being in the AMS is a provision for the Journal, but generally our contributors are undergraduate students. Nominees and people who sign the nomination forms must be undergraduates.

It was decided that, as in years past, nominees must collect 50 signatures.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss the possibility of the election of an editor and managing editor team.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: Historically, the Journal has had one editor in chief. That ended in the late '90s when it switched to being a team of co-editors. We wanted to ensure there's a possibility for people to run as an editor and managing editor team. There's nothing about this in policy, so it's okay. We just wanted to make sure this situation is clear.

Ms. Laidlaw: The managing editor will carry responsibility over EdBoard, so the position should be elected.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: There would still be the option for someone to run as a sole editor in chief, but it's important if they have someone already in mind, for a team to run together. Even if they're running alone, a candidate should have someone in mind for the managing editor. We brought this to Journal Board because it is a change in practice.

Mr. Manning: What's the role of the managing editor?

Ms. Mehler Paperny: It depends on the team. It would be similar to co-editors, but the editor in chief would have final say.

Ms. Laidlaw: The editor in chief would deal primarily with business stuff

Mr. Manning: Could they just run as co-editors and then change their responsibilities?

Ms. Mehler Paperny: That's dishonest.

Mr. Bucholtz: Electing a managing editor is more fair to voters.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: We want voters to know who's going to be in charge. If there's going to be a managing editor, that position should be elected.

Mr. Sherren: We would need to determine how the position would be paid. In practice, there's an understanding between co-editors, who has a sphere of influence over which area. If you're going to define that relationship at the election level, there'd be no concept of those spheres of influence.

Ms. Laidlaw: But the managing editor would have authority over those people and they would have decision-making power over content, so voters should have a say in who that person is.

Mr. Manning: It could be a problem during elections if you have one person running alone, and one editor/managing editor team running together. The team would automatically have an advantage.

Mr. Sherren: An editor/managing editor team would be good, but I'm not sure about the election.

Ms. Ludlow: Aren't we just clarifying that there are three options for editor in chief elections? There are already two options.

Mr. Sherren: Co-editors have specific responsibilities. How would voters know about managing editor responsibilities?

Ms. Mehler Paperny: We would hope that elected managing editors and editors would make their responsibilities clear.

Ms. Wheatley: Right now, the editor in chief would hire a managing editor, right?

Ms. Mehler Paperny: Policy doesn't specify that.

Ms. Jemison read comments submitted by Mr. Trevisan, who couldn't attend the meeting. He said he was in favour of the motion to allow two people to run as an editor and managing editor team because it's more transparent. He expressed concerns with the process we would

have to go through to put the motion into policy because it would need to be passed by AMS Board.

Ms. Wheatley: We should look into changing the policy.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: It's more of a clarification. We would add a clause to define that people could run as a single editor in chief, an editor in chief and managing editor team or as co-editors.

Ms. Wheatley: Section 10.01 in policy says the editor must be chosen in the winter term.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: We could add 10.01.01: Candidates may run as a co-editor team or editor/managing editor team or as a single editor.

Mr. Sherren: Would the managing editor then fall into the same category to be removed from office if necessary?

Ms. Mehler Paperny: Yes.

Mr. Sherren: This change won't be treated as trivial by Assembly or Board.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: We'd be delighted to talk to Assembly.

Mr. Manning: Who was the last elected sole editor in chief?

Ms. Mehler Paperny: Sarah Crosbie. Ed Board elected the managing editor.

Mr. Sherren: I've always wondered why we didn't have a managing editor. I'm not convinced if a managing editor should be elected or hired. I don't think any other papers elect a managing editor.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: Other student papers do. There are some where the entire editorial board is voted on.

Mr. Sherren: It's not defined anywhere.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: There is reference to it. We want to add a provision to section 10. The job of running the Journal means it needs to be divided between two people. From our point of view, it's very difficult for one person to run the paper.

Mr. Bucholtz: The current system is disadvantaged because it's unclear as to who would be in charge.

Ms. Jemison: It'd be like if an AMS president were elected and then hired vice-presidents.

Ms. Ludlow: We're not getting rid of any other options.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: It doesn't change anything.

Ms. Ludlow: It's just specifying that it exists.

Mr. Sherren: I think there's accountability issues. It would be creating a position which is subservient to the editor but which falls under the same elected constraints. I predict some people will say no. We would have to change the Constitution.

Mr. Manning: We would need to have a detailed proposal for Board. I understand the logic, but there are a couple details to be worked out.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: We'd be happy to do that. What would need to change? We'd like to rectify the problem for the upcoming election.

Mr. Sherren: An editor in chief would have to run as if they had no idea who they would hire as a managing editor.

Ms. Laidlaw: If you don't, you're not prepared.

Mr. Bucholtz: There are two possible scenarios: You could have someone already in mind to be managing editor, and then any hiring process would be a sham. If they have someone in mind, they should be able to run with them. If not, then the person can run alone.

Mr. Sherren: You can't characterize it as a sham. You'd be surprised at the talent that comes forward. If you make the managing editor position really open and don't fall into the trap of hiring one person then you have the potential of opening up opportunities for managing editor. I don't think it's necessarily corrupt.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: It's important to have that option. It's important for a position with so much authority. If one person wants to run and they have a managing editor in mind, then they should run with a managing editor.

It was decided that Board of Directors chair, Greg McKellar and the internal affairs commission would be consulted about the constitutional aspects of the change, salary and an honest hiring policy.

It was also decided that, if necessary, Journal editor in chief elections would be pushed back until after Reading Week in order for the necessary policy changes to be implemented.

The next item of business was to discuss a motion brought forward by Ms. Mehler Paperny and Ms. Laidlaw to change Assistant A&E honorarium from \$1,920 to \$2,160.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: Right now we have an A&E editor and an assistant editor. We've found in this case that the assistant A&E editor is doing a lot of the responsibility of the editor, which isn't fair to the assistant. We want to make their honourarium equitable with the A&E editor.

Ms. Jemison: Would this also involve a change in title? Have you discussed this with the editors involved?

Ms. Mehler Paperny: Yes, and we're meeting with them today. We don't think they'll object to the change.

Mr. Sherren: Would it change the final grid for the budget?

Ms. Mehler Paperny: No, because of the next item on our agenda.

The motion passed unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was an announcement by the editors in chief that half the Opinions and Letters editor honourarium, amounting to \$830, was to be absorbed into the budget.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: Our ops editor quit and because it's too late in the year to hire a new person, the editors will absorb the ops responsibility and the Journal will absorb the remaining honourarium.

Ms. Jemison read comments submitted by Mr. Trevisan, who couldn't attend the meeting. He said the editors should try to find someone else to take over some of the ops responsibilities, such as a copy editor or an upstart staff writer, so that the editors in chief don't have to take the job on themselves.

Ms. Laidlaw: That's not really possible. It would result in taking more time away from the Journal because copy editors or staff writers would need to learn layout and training would take too much time.

Ms. Mehler Paperny: We could have someone do part of the section, like Talking Heads, but the actual hiring and training would take away from other responsibilities.

Mr. Manning: There isn't anyone who could step up?

Ms. Mehler Paperny: People are already overworked, and we can't hire someone new.

Mr. Bucholtz: And if you did promote a copy editor, there would still be a lot of training.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:27 a.m.