

The Queen's Journal Advisory Board Meeting December 8, 2016

*Attendance: Jacob Rosen, Jane Willsie, Mike Blair, Dave Walker, Joe Cattana, Tyler Lively, Andrew DiCapua, Max McLernon, Stuart Clark, Miguel Martinez, Max Garcia, Ben Rudson*

*By conference call: Lyn Parry, Victoria Gibson*

Motion #1: Passes

Motion #2: Passes

Chair's business

Andrew: Nothing to add

Journal Reports:

Editor in Chief report

Jacob: Mid year review meetings; haven't had any resignations from the editorial side

Dave: Are we still publishing during the exam period? Employees are still being paid and Board of Trustees and Assembly meetings are still occurring

Victoria: Worth noting that news updates are still happening online

Jacob: It is in our policy that we take a break from publishing during exams

Dave: Worth noting in the advertising that

Business Manager report

Max: Had one Sales Representative position, looking into what works and what doesn't work. In the meantime been pitching into sales efforts. Been working with Janice to clean up revenue allocation, more has been put into local revenue than should be. Going forward looking into online advertising, connecting with past Business Manager who did better on online sales last year to look at strategies.

AMS Reports:

Dave: Nothing to add.

Max: Have been noticing upward trends in ad revenue online, level of print revenue has been sustainable. Keep it up for next term.

Ben: Any development on ad blocker discussion?

Andrew: Refer that to discussion later.

No new business.

New Business:

Motion #3

Miguel: Any timeline that is generally followed?

Jacob: Typically happens after AMS elections so that we can focus on coverage of that.

Victoria: (incomprehensible) Oh shit.

Miguel: How long is nomination period and campaigning period?

Joe: It is three weeks post AMS-elections.

Dave: I remember anecdotally that Editor in Chief elections were during hiring for AMS.

Miguel: More at the discretion of us as far as the nomination period timeline goes. The way it works is a five-day nomination period, followed by eleven to twelve days

Jacob: Jan 12 was beginning of nomination period, last signatures submitted on Jan 27 and campaigning starts Jan 28 and Feb 11 was the election.

Joe: There is also always a Q&A.

Mike: If nominations open on Feb 7<sup>th</sup> that would be the last day to open them given the necessary timeline.

Miguel: Recommendation for an all candidates meeting to be Feb 6<sup>th</sup> and start the nomination period the day after. The election day would be Feb 28<sup>th</sup> of February.

Jane: That's very late, the earlier the better to allow for a proper transition.

Mike: Ten weekdays of campaigning are necessary.

Dave: What does the campaigning consist of?

Jacob: There is a forum and a platform circulated.

Dave: Is the full time necessary?

Jane: Yes, it would be unwise to amend that for the future given that elections may be contested in the future and time would be needed. Is there a reason that we can't make the nomination period earlier?

Miguel: Nomination period starts on Jan 13<sup>th</sup> to Jan 25<sup>th</sup>. Campaigning from 26<sup>th</sup> to Feb 8<sup>th</sup> and election on the 9<sup>th</sup>. There will be an all candidates meeting.

Motion #3: Passes.

Motion #4:

Dave: First change to make sure that it says Secretariat instead of Commissioner of Internal Affairs. It would be beneficial to have it centralized through the Secretariat and would eliminate the possibility

Jacob: We looked at this and we think it would be beneficial to have these conversations before Journal Board.

Dave: We had the discussion.

Jacob: When we are making policy amendments, we should see it before it comes to J Board. That being said, we think that it is fixing a problem that doesn't exist and there hasn't been a problem and if there is a conflict of interest the policy provides for an alternate option of replacing a CEO or CRO. The biggest issue we see is that if someone from The Journal is running for an Editor in Chief and there might be a conflict of interest arising, for example last year when the referendum was nullified, and then I ran as Editor in Chief. If the CRO was running our election it poses a problem where I've publically criticized them.

Miguel: The CRO wouldn't be acting in a position that personally benefits them. They don't have a personal relationship.

Jacob: It's the same reason why we don't have the AMS involved in our elections as a whole, personal biases might come out.

Miguel: Even in AMS elections, anyone who sits on council has zero control and say in terms of what happens, they can be there as advisement. The Secretariat is it's one entity separate.

Stuart: It's suspect that a power superiority, it makes no sense to have a system in place where an internal position evaluates the ruling and assignment. Separate is better and it solves itself.

Victoria: Joe and I were talking about this, it's a system that hasn't had a problem. It should be someone who is independent of the Journal and independent of the AMS CRO and we can't operate based on the assumptions of this year. If there is a situation of the

referendum then it should be someone independent so that we can continue to be independent.

Stuart: It doesn't constitute a conflict of interest because there is no material benefit. The situation described is a not a conflict of interest if you move it over to the AMS.

Victoria: Call it what you will, there is a problem if you move it over to the AMS there is a problem. Take the situation of last year, there has been instances of the last year.

Miguel: There was been no uncontested elections in a couple of years. Regardless of who the CRO and the CEO has been there hasn't been a problem, conflicts of interest can arise.

Mike: The AMS bylaws state, the elections shall be run by the Society Bylaws and it doesn't even have to be the Editor in Chief, it just says generally. And the Board shall conduct a review annually. The historical precedent of it being the Editor in Chief

Tyler: A conflict between the CEO and the potential candidates of the Editors and Chief, the same conflicts can exist between the Editors in Chief and the candidates. When we are talking about conflict of interest, someone who does have the potential to run shouldn't be commenting on the policy. The third thing is, going back to the first point, this may not be an ideal situation and it's never an ideal situation, this is a material improvement in the situation and if we want to make it perfect we would have to outsource the elections to someone else.

Jacob: I understand what's been said, but I think we're jumping to a solution to a problem that doesn't necessarily exist without actually looking at it. These things should be brought up before hand and see, talk to past Editors and see why it has run this way historically and make sure that we are making a well-researched well-thought-out decision as opposed, we're the only service that has a separate advisory board. We should look at the big picture and I would like to propose to table this motion, to hold off until next Journal Board and we can prepare better our thoughts and more of an educated and well-thought-out plan for this and you can do the same.

Andrew: The board does exist and I don't want the credibility of the board to go off the cliff, we are in full force and objectively looking at policy. Everyone brings a certain experience and everyone needs to look at what is in the best interests, Dave bringing this to the table is fair and the agenda was sent out.

Victoria: I recognize that us talking about this that the people who aren't on Journal staff so I thought this would be helpful to share, after a story came out that the AMS didn't like I was banned, we have the personal bleeding into the professional and it's something that we don't want to bleed into an election and have to be careful of.

Dave: I don't think this is going to happen, I'm not sure its relevant. The elections team is trained to do this and they are aware of elections policy.

Miguel: The role that the CRO and the CEO have, they should be impartial and they should be perceived so by the student body at large. They must be removed from the Editors in Chief. I can't see how that would create a conflict of interest for individuals, both candidates are striving to be editors in chief.

Stuart: We should disabuse ourselves of the conflicts of interests discussion, the elections team doesn't have a forward facing role, it doesn't have a way of prejudicing itself, they don't have a communicatory role, their job is to arbitrate disputes. It uses a body that has no ability to response to criticisms on campus.

Jacob: One issue that this board has is that there isn't any institutional memory and we approach this on a short term mindset and we might not see the issues that a policy like this would affect elections, we need to think and look through our history and see if this change has happened and when was this policy made and for what reasons. I do agree that we look at this critically and what we do miss is institutional memory and we should look into more before we change it. This board can choose someone else to be the CRO and CEO but before we make those amendments we should look into it more before we make that change right away.

Mike: In the interests and the obligations that the procedures and process is transparent and defensible, the electronic system, the nature of their positions, any unlikely situations of a conflict of interest, for examples if something happens like last year, sure I'd buy that there may be a conflict there, I have deep concerns that we do this on an ad hoc and variable basis, this change should be a permanent one.

Ben: We have institutional memory but that shouldn't uphold outdated procedures, keep up to date with current procedures. It is in everyone's interest that it should be as transparent and clear as possible, and shifting it over to the AMS would make it much more so, in my opinion it seems like a logical decision to make.

Jacob: Motion to table it, I don't want to reject it but I do want to consider and look into the policy more and consider how this has been in the past and has this change been talked about before and see why it has or hasn't been changed recently, I think it needs more time and before we go ahead and vote on it and change it just like that.

Stuart: Important point to make, there is a material relationship between the Editors in Chief and we should go ahead.

Jane: Have we established that there is a status quo problem?

Dave: There is a certain level of autonomy, when it is the outgoing people selecting the outgoing people. We have the ability to use and apply those who know elections policy and can use it. I don't think those people get in the way. I don't see that phasing them,

Stuart: Move to call to question. We aren't going to move past this without a vote so let's vote.

Motion to table, seconded by Stuart.

Motion fails, 3-4.

Jacob: There is a discrepancy between Journal Policy and AMS Bylaw, whether Editors in Chief share a vote or whether Journal Editorial staff representatives each have a vote.

Motion #4

Stuart calls to question.

Motion passes, 3-4.

Discussion period:

Review of October financial results:

Max M.: Current and actual month is under budget, we have had quite a bit of discussion of advertising budget, we haven't used any advertising in terms of expenses and we haven't used that at all. Other things to note, there was a Whig salary internship mix up and that is just going to sit there for awhile.

Dave: The Whig internship position is higher currently, there is a larger gap than normal given that the Photo Editor is currently being paid for the salary ongoing and she will be paying that back.

Jacob: There is an example here of how institutional memory fails and this is how it affects the budget.

Max: The volunteer appreciation number is larger than normal, this is one that I did not take into account. The Dominos ad is being run with more value to them than we receive in pizza.

Dave: That might be a deal to look at in the future.

Max: It's my fault for not recognizing that earlier, it's been carried on from previous years. Revenue that has been allocated to local should be reallocated to campus and national.

Ad-blocker implementation update:

Andrew: Costs, benefits etc.

Max: I don't have anything right now to add, did talk to Jane about the concerns we had.

Jacob: I don't think it's the board job to implement ad blocker on our website, it's the business team and editorial staff's job to see to the changes, it's nice to suggest but out of the board's jurisdiction to implement. It wouldn't help the bottom line, as of right now we aren't making money on our website regardless of ad blocker or not, the issue isn't that we don't have an ad-blocker, it hasn't been an issue yet and before we invest in ad-blocker we need to find a way to sell ads on our website first, we need to find clients to buy ads first before we can offer them this.

Dave: Correct me if I'm wrong, the way it works is number of impressions and by not having the ad-blocker we are losing the revenue.

Max: The ad-blocker implementation comes with no cost, so we're not losing anything but gaining them.

Stuart: Discussion with jurisdiction, any decision of whether it is a good decision or bad decision is well within the jurisdiction.

Max: We talked about it, I'm unsure where you got the information that not having ad-blocker, the money we have lost from people having ad-blocker?

Max: Don't have information in terms, in terms of the cost per clicks, that's money that isn't coming in.

Mike: This board operates in the purview, the investment in it doesn't make up for the cost, is it being implemented? Is that worth our time, should we talk about whether we should be implementing it? Does an issue exist where we are losing money because of not having this?

Max: No.

Mike: The entire idea behind this was that it would be a sweet thing to offer to clients, are we doing it? are we

Andrew: You can do a soft implementation, a 4 second delay. Some sites do a hard white-list and you have to turn them off to go. Considering that our revenue is based on impressions, I don't think there is a case to make that not having are not affecting our numbers, I'm not going to propose a motion to make a directive.

Max: I was largely unaware of the discussion going on, it's a no brainer.

Jane: I am concerned about the usability of the website given the readership that we are currently trying to expand.

Ben: Confident that we can strike that balance

Max: A valid concern and need to consider that the new that comes out The Journal is quite niche. People wouldn't be stopping from reading The Journal

Tyler: You're never going to know whether people drop off, you could do an A, B test and look at the differences, we can bring this back to the board and then we can make an informed decision.

Journal House Formal Consultation

Jane: I would suggest we postpone it because I am trying to collect documentation regarding the space requirements of The Journal and it would be helpful to have those documents in having that discussion.

Dave: One of the board members who is a chair of the long-term planning committee, looking at the report and what The Journal requires in the future.

Dave: Happy to postpone it to next semester, but request that

Chair's last words:

A note that any member's of J Board who are running in the Editor in Chief elections that they will need to take a leave of absence from J Board for the duration of the election.

Move to adjourn. Passes.