**Gateway Student Journalism Society**

Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2023

**Opening**

The regular meeting of the Gateway Student Journalism Society was called to order at 7:08 online and in-person by Emily WILLIAMS.

**Present:**

BROOKS, Sam

TEELING, Katie

WILLIAMS, Emily

SMITH, Jonas

THIESSEN, Nathan

CRAIG, Lee

WATAMANIUK, Adrian

POLENCHUK, Lily

DAUM, Evan

BAJWA-ZSCHOCKE, Anna

**Absent:**

FLAMAN, Levi

JICKLING, Sophie

FASSONE, Lale

**Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by TEELING

Seconded by BAJWA-ZSCHOCKE

There are no votes in opposition.

**Approval of Minutes**

Moved by TEELING

Seconded by THIESSEN

There are no votes in opposition.

**Reports to the Board**

TEELING presents the Editor-in-Chief report.

TEELING says about 30 class talks were done, resulting in many RSVPs to the speaker series and newsletter signups. Says the winter print edition schedule is finalized, and staff chose to work over the break and do the layout over the holidays. Says the content plan is done and most of the articles are already written and have gone through editing. Says SMITH has sold one ad space to AASUA and is looking for more. Says SMITH has sold all of the adspace for the rest of the terms, which results in almost $11,000. Looking to the new year, says planning is being done. SMITH is planning clubs fair and Isabella Yue is taking on open house. Says that almost all staff performance evaluations are done. Says she and POLENCHUK held the staff social last week.

WILLIAMS asks what marketing plans for the new year look like.

TEELING replies that they’re looking at the readership survey, and a lot of outreach will include posters, ads in the print, and trying to see how info can be sent to other student groups and their newsletters.

SMITH presents the Executive Director (ED) report.

SMITH says that ad sales on the site are going to slow down because as of today the last three spots will be signed-off on. Says that once all the payment is in, the year will finish around $12,000. Says that the print edition is mostly paid for. Says for marketing, he and Yue are working on plans for the donation campaign happening next semester. Says that the awareness campaign has been really successful. Says there are plans to have a table at the winter clubs fair.

POLENCHUK presents the Managing Editor (ME) report.

POLENCHUK says that the volunteer sign-up form has been getting responses continuously, and Campus Roundup has had many sign-ups. Says that the recent holiday social had a few volunteers come out. Says line editors will continue sending pitch emails throughout the break, and the current priority is the print.

CRAIG presents the Finance Committee report.

CRAIG says the financial review is now done. Says there are two items not accounted for in the financial review, one of them with the Canadian Revenue Agency financial subsidies and $1000 in fundraising revenue which the bookkeeper didn’t include in the statements. Says the committee talked about those two things, as well as an item that was in the accounts payable that was there for a long time. Says TEELING talked to the law firm, it’s not owed money but it’s not something that can be removed from Quickbooks because if needed, it’s something that could be owed. Said FLAMAN helped with that.

WILLIAMS presents the HR Committee report.

WILLIAMS says the committee is involved in the performance evaluations and will be wrapped up by this Friday. Says hopefully that will allow staff to set their goals for the new year.

POLENCHUK presents the Governance Committee.

POLNCHUK says that the committee is looking at changing language around audits, editing the current complaint process, and editing for inclusive language.

SMITH presents the DFU Subcommittee report.

SMITH says it hasn’t met recently since but once the DFU team meetings restart there will be more to discuss.

WILLIAM says that the DFU passed at UASU council and the fee will be on the undergraduate ballot. Says that it has tentatively passed at the GSA as well.

BROOKS says it’s not bright that the DFU subcommittee hasn’t met recently because things are moving in the background, and it would be nice to continue them.

SMITH says he’ll get a meeting going before the start of the new year and he was waiting for more updates to discuss.

CRAIG asks what the responses were like at the councils.

WILLIAMS says at the undergraduate level there was a lot of positive feedback, and there were a lot of meetings done with councillors beforehand which helped. Says there was mixed support from the GSA but in the end it passed.

**New Business**

**For Approval:** **Financial Review**

SMITH presents on the 2022-23 financial review.

SMITH says that this is an overview of the draft financial report and key takeaways, and then depending on what people think it may go for a vote of approval. Says that the purpose of a financial review is to assure the members of GSJS that finances are being properly maintained. Says this is valuable for potential legal concerns. Says this is for July 1 2022 to June 30, 2023. Says this is the first full year of operations with no DFU income, which will be reflected throughout the review. Says that much of the asset value is in cash, which is a reflection of the fact that we’re using cash for paying bills rather than expanding the operation. Says the success in the budget is that in the expenses review, there was only a $50 discrepancy from last year’s number. Says there’s a high degree of error in the revenue section, attributed to the failure of reporting donations and the missed subsidies by the auditors. Says the investment account is growing at the expected rate with no money being taken out, set to mature in the coming years. Says the going concern revolves around a DFU, because we would go under in the next year if the DFU fails. But, says that there is a prior arranged buyout offer from the SU, which should give coverage from the going concern raised by the auditors. Says that there’s a discrepancy between our final number for revenue in 2022-23 and the auditor’s final number that is roughly $11,000. Says that in order to fix this the misunderstanding on subsidies needs to be remedied, as well as the missing donation reports.

BROOKS says that some of the problems that come up with financial reviews come from the disconnect with the executive director and an outside bookkeeper. Says that the financial review sounds fine. Says that back in the day bookkeeping was done in house, and as the organization has evolved there’s probably not enough capacity, but perhaps it might be easier to bring bookkeeping back to being done by the business team.

SMITH says that’s a possibility, but it’s a question of if it can be added on to the requirements of a staff position as there’s already a lot to learn becoming executive director. Says that when there’s a limited number of applicants, adding experienced bookkeeping might cut off potential applicants. Says that it is a reasonable concern regarding the outside bookkeeper, which has been discussed at finance committee.

CRAIG says that it is a little too much to ask of people coming right into the job, as executive director is a fairly new position and the role has gone through changes. Says that Quikbooks isn’t that hard to learn, but there are many other more important responsibilities. Says that it is frustrating that the external bookkeeper is essentially the accountant, but doesn’t always act that way. Says that these are issues many nonprofits face.

WILLIAMS says that in theory the current system of having an external bookkeeper that knows the history and can mentor the business unit makes sense. Says that hasn’t happened, and the current bookkeeper is being paid discounted rates, and because of the current financial situation it doesn't make sense to replace them. Says that in future years when there’s more financial stability it would be a good idea.

TEELING agrees, but her and SMITH are picking up the slack of the current bookkeeper. Says it’s not sustainable but can be handled until funding is returned.

WATTAMANIUK says that there comes a point when chasing someone down to do things is no longer useful, and that speaking from his experience at ESS it is possible to do it in house.

TEELING moves the proposed motion to approve the financial review under the condition that the revenue line from the budget is amended.

BROOKS seconds it.

The motion passes unanimously.

**For Approval: Ombudsperson**

WILLIAMS says that CRAIG has resigned as treasurer on the condition that she’s approved as Ombudsperson. Says that CRAIG was the only applicant, however there were concerns that there could be a perceived conflict of interest. Says that if approved the treasurer position can be filled in the new year.

BROOKS moves that CRAIG be appointed as Ombudsperson.

DAUM seconds the motion.

The motion passes with an abstention from CRAIG.

**Adjournment**

THIESSEN motions to adjourn.

TEELING seconds.

The board unanimously votes to adjourn.

The meeting is adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Lily Polenchuk