

# Gateway Student Journalism Society

Meeting Minutes

January 17, 2024

## **Opening**

The regular meeting of the Gateway Student Journalism Society was called to order at 7:10 p.m. online and in-person by Emily WILLIAMS.

## **Present:**

BROOKS, Sam

TEELING, Katie

WILLIAMS, Emily

SMITH, Jonas

THIESSEN, Nathan

CRAIG, Lee

POLENCHUK, Lily

FASSONE, Lale

FLAMAN, Levi

## **Absent:**

JICKLING, Sophie

BAJWA-ZSCHOCKE, Anna

WATAMANIUK, Adrian

DAUM, Evan

## **Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by TEELING.

Seconded by FASSONE.

There are no votes in opposition.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Moved by TEELING.

Seconded by FASSONE.

There are no votes in opposition.

## **Reports to the Board**

TEELING presents the Editor-in-Chief report.

TEELING says staff chose to work on the print edition over the break, and there was a printing error on the January 5 delivery. Says the printing company agreed to reprint and fix the errors, but the print edition went on stands a few days late. Says there have been many compliments on the print. Says election coverage is being planned, and POLENCHUK and the deputy photo editor are being trained to take photos and headshots in place of SMITH. Says the report cards are underway and interviews have been scheduled. Says there was a break-in in the Student's Union Building and someone broke into the office and stole a few items. Says she immediately froze the accounts and is trying to get those back up with SMITH. Says she's making sure the corporate filing gets done as soon as possible. Says this semester's clubs fair was a little quieter than fall. Says for open house there were 15 RSVPs but only four people came. Says her and Isabella Yue are planning an awareness campaign. Says they're also working on a donation campaign. Says her and POLENCHUK have been working on a conflict of interest guide for the election, which got good feedback from Karen Unland and CRAIG. Says that today she talked to SUB staff for security updates, and Craig is looking into either changing the office's locks or putting on a keypad. Says they also talked about having rounds done on the third floor more often, and a security camera if possible.

SMITH presents the Executive Director (ED) report.

SMITH says for advertising he closed another online ad which buys out the bottom slot for almost the rest of the year, and there's almost nothing left for online slots. Says that Yue has been working on outreach projects including the DFU. Says in mid-December the break-in stole credit cards and a safe with cheques in it, and the financial loss is an estimate of less than \$5000 because the accounts were swiftly closed. Says they're still in the process of creating new accounts.

POLENCHUK presents the Managing Editor (ME) report.

POLENCHUK says clubs fair resulted in numerous sign-ups for the pitch email and Campus Roundup. Says that the first pitch meeting of the semester saw old and new volunteers. Says that she's currently working on the purity test, and is working with TEELING on the elections conflict-of-interest plan.

TEELING adds that staff have decided not to go to NASH this year because it's very expensive, and NAIT has offered two free tickets to members of staff.

WILLIAMS presents the Finance Committee report.

WILLIAMS says the treasurer position is vacant as CRAIG resigned. Says she served as the interim treasurer to chair today's meeting. Says they mostly talked about the break-in and if it's worth it to file an insurance claim.

WILLIAMS presents the HR Committee report.

WILLIAMS says there's nothing to report as performance evaluations are finished, which was a valuable process all around.

POLENCHUK presents the Governance Committee.

POLENCHUK says the committee has drafted edits to replace the word 'audit' with 'financial review' and other changes to Article 10 of the GSJS Bylaw, which is now ready to be presented to the board.

BROOKS adds that as a courtesy to the board members it's good procedure to show the board the bylaw changes.

SMITH presents the DFU Subcommittee report.

SMITH says the subcommittee caught up on what's been happening, and a meeting will be scheduled for this next week. Says they're going back to biweekly meetings.

## **Special Orders**

### **Selection of New Officers — Treasurer**

WILLIAMS opens the floor to nominations.

WILLIAMS nominates THIESSEN who accepts.

TEELING seconds.

There are no votes in opposition.

## **Unfinished Business**

### **DFU update presentation**

WILLIAMS presents the January Campaign Update.

WILLIAMS says that from talking to people, the biggest obstacle as an organization and in the campaign is visibility — the reputation has improved however, but most don't understand what The Gateway is. Says that this is a concern, but is a blank slate. Says that physical presence is the best according to the readership survey, and the semesterly print editions help. Says student group outreach is being done — there was a fall awareness campaign that included tabling, class talks, and that TEELING is promoting a speaker series. Says that the Friends of Gateway Instagram account is promoting The Gateway's history. Says there's plans underway to do a big poster campaign in January for Campus Roundup.

Says that early consultation was done on messaging, and the readership survey had the highest sample size in recent years, which asked about Gateway awareness and receptiveness to paying a fee. Says that there's been many team brainstorming sessions and a branding survey was distributed to staff, volunteers, and the campaign team, with a follow-up survey distributed to alumni. Says some key takeaways include that we need to focus on why the DFU is good for students, not The Gateway; institutional news continues to be our most valued content; ground campaign is biggest tool at disposal; many continue to not know what the Gateway is, or understand what it does; and that the print helps with visibility but isn't highly valued. Says it's worth doing, but when people ask what their fee gets them, we won't say the print as the first answer.

Says that for branding direction, the most popular branding direction is a fill-in-the-blank campaign: your gateway to \_\_\_\_\_. Says that this caters to many different groups of people and is very flexible. Says that this shows The Gateway can be what you want it to be, but it also reflects a sense of uncertainty that can be leaned into, because The Gateway has been alongside everything.

SMITH says that this would be easy to identify and is visually congruent with the theme.

WILLIAMS says from the branding survey, the most popular slogan was “student-powered, truth-driven, your Gateway to the U of A.” Says that people encouraged us to think about what students get from the DFU.

Says the supportive graphics from the last campaign strayed from The Gateway brand, and supporting graphics should be something students care about. Says the campaign team is starting to recruit more people.

FLAMAN asks if a particular demographic will be targeted for endorsements.

WILLIAMS says it's a matter of our capacity, and they're seeking out different people. Says alumni testimonials were done, and now are leaning into students. Says at some point they'll take the more traditional route like governance people.

CRAIG asks if there will be a kickoff event for the campaign.

WILLIAMS says that hasn't been discussed.

CRAIG says sometimes that is a good consideration. Asks if mid-campaign, there will be a check-in to see the progress and reception.

WILLIAMS says that the more fun of an experience it can be for everyone, the better, and those ideas are good in their own way.

FASSONE asks how they're going to approach the fact that The Gateway is not as strong in some coverage such as Sports.

WILLIAMS says that the way they framed it when presenting to councils is that The Gateway is trying its best to do these things, but can do so much more with student funding.

## **New Business**

### **For approval: 2024-25 Hiring Timeline**

TEELING presents the 2024-25 Hiring Timeline.

TEELING says not much was changed from last year's, and that line editors have to be hired before March 15, and typically the EiC is involved in the process. Says nothing was changed about the EiC job posting including the salary, but if the DFU is won the salaries will be raised for incoming staff.

BROOKS asks if there's a contingency plan in the case that The Gateway loses and if it should be mentioned in the job postings.

TEELING says no but what could happen is that line editors are hired after the election results.

WILLIAMS says that's what happened last year.

TEELING says the EiC is typically someone who has had editorial experience on the staff itself, and they know of the situation.

FLAMAN asks how salaries are made.

TEELING says there hasn't been a raise in a long time, and these are technically honorariums rather than salaries.

FLAMAN says that it should be reworded to honorarium to set that expectation, as it doesn't meet minimum wage.

TEELING motions to approve the postings.

THIESSEN seconds.

There are no votes in opposition.

### **For approval: Elections Conflict of Interest Plan**

TEELING presents the Elections Conflict of Interest Plan.

TEELING says that historically The Gateway hasn't covered itself, and her and POLENCHUK decided that it's better to include The Gateway in coverage. Says that they're hoping to write a statement that will go on the site before the campaign period starts, and this document will be linked there. Says that election coverage that involves The Gateway's campaign would have disclosures at the top. Says that the plan covers different groups involved and what they can and can't do during the campaign period.

CRAIG asks how many people the plan involves overall. Says it's complicated but nothing people can't handle.

TEELING says there are seven staff members, five people per coverage team, and the campaign can be around 20 people. But for staff it's around 17.

BROOKS says it's a little convoluted, but there's no question that it covers all the bases with necessary information. Asks if there's a way to graphically represent how the different groups

interact with each other, which could be more accessible. Says maybe more work could be done to make it easier for it to be done.

TEELING says there would be a published statement that would simplify what the document covers, but then there would still be an overall document. Says that a TLDR could be added to the top of the document, but the one page statement is a good way to simplify the information.

BROOKS says that a quick summary would be really beneficial to the audience, and that the document itself needs to be this complex. Asks why The Gateway ceases other coverage during the election period.

TEELING says it's because of capacity issues.

FLAMAN motions to approve the plan.

THIESSEN seconds.

There are no votes in opposition.

### **Adjournment**

TEELING motions to adjourn.

THIESSEN seconds.

The board unanimously votes to adjourn.

The meeting is adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Lily Polenchuk