

University of Michigan Board for Student Publications Minutes of the November 27, 2017 Board Meeting

Board members present: Neil Chase (chair), John Bacon, Alan Broad, Jennifer Conlin, Cindy Goodaker, Terry McDonald, Peter Mooney and Kevin Tottis

Board members video-conferencing: none

Board members absent: Stuart Emmrich

The Michigan Daily was represented by: Emma Kinery, Alexa St. John, Nathan Gupta and Bob Lesser

The Michiganensian was represented by: Claire Bartosic and Matisse Rogers

The Gargoyle was represented by: Jenny Ghose and Molly Miller

SHEI Magazine was represented by: Maggie O'Connor and Lauren Ayers

The Student Publications Staff was represented by: Mark Bealafeld, Kathy Ciesinski and Lisa Powers

Others Present: none

Chair Neil Chase called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

Minutes

A motion to approve the October 23, 2017 meeting minutes was made by Peter, seconded by Alan and passed without dissent.

Public Comments

None.

The Michiganensian

Matisse provided numbers on book, senior portrait and grad extravaganza sales compared to prior year. The latter two look good but book sales are slightly down. They expect to make up this shortfall later in the year.

Claire stated that they had submitted the cover for the book. She discussed a proposal she has to use the Ensign staff to produce two eight page magazines which would concentrate on specific topics (news and the year in review and either athletics or the arts) that are not covered in the book. She was requesting additional payroll for the staff and funds to cover the printing costs, a total of \$4,400. They hope to recoup these amounts with sales of the magazine at April Grad Extravaganza. There was a general discussion about the content of the magazines and the pricing.

Cindy made a motion to approve the additional \$4,400 of cost, this was seconded by Kevin and passed without dissent.

Gargoyle

Molly stated that they had received funding for their first two issues. They are collaborating with WCBN to cross advertise. They are planning a bake sale as a fund raiser. She also explained that she is still having trouble recruiting students for the business staff.

Jenny said that they are finishing up their second issue and that it should be out next week. They are planning to increase the page count in their winter editions from sixteen pages to twenty-four. There was a general discussion about increasing their sources of content.

The Michigan Daily

Nathan discussed the progress that's been made by the media consulting team. He updated the Board on the Football Lookback issue. They are making it more digitally oriented. He discussed the progress on selling the podcasts that the Edit team created earlier in the semester. He has been working with Live Intent on increasing the ad revenues from the Daily's daily newsletter.

Emma introduced Alexa, the incoming EIC. She recapped the accomplishments of the Edit staff during her tenure. Bob Lesser discussed the progress on creating a Daily app. They hope to have the beta version available within a couple of days.

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Neil mentioned that the Web Team is planning to make a presentation to the Board in January regarding their future plans and projects.

Emma stated that the Axios event is scheduled for December 14th. Alexa told the Board about her background and what she hoped to accomplish during her tenure.

SHEI Magazine

Maggie noted that they launched their November SHEI Digital a couple of weeks ago. They had over 2,000 reads. She discussed some of the methods that they have been using to promote their issues.

They are focusing their December issue on Ann Arbor. They sent the print edition to the printer the previous week. The theme is gender. They will be reducing their print run from 500 to 300. They hope that the pdf download sales will make up the difference. There was a general discussion about how they might go about doing that.

Finance

Mark briefly discussed the year to date results and the cash situation. He mentioned that the cash account was overdrawn by over \$100,000 which requires that the Board to authorize the sale of shares from the Student Publications Quasi-Endowment account. He requested a motion to that effect which was made by Peter, seconded by Cindy and passed without dissent.

Development

Lisa announced the establishment of a new fund - the Rick Freeman Memorial Scholarship Fund. Rick was a Managing Sports Editor in 2000. It had \$14,000 in donations in the first two weeks. She provided a summary of the overall giving to date and a preview of Giving Blue Day. She discussed the results of the post-reunion survey which showed that the alumni are interested in getting together on a regular basis. She mentioned that she is trying to arrange some summer satellite reunions in D.C., NYC and LA for local alums and students there for summer internships.

Neil suggested that it might be beneficial to the diversity of the newsroom and the other publications to set aside scholarship money for some incoming freshmen that are interested in the publications but that cannot afford to work here. This generated a general discussion about how to go about pursuing this goal - high school advisors, the admissions office, a larger scholarship committee meeting earlier in the semester, or some combination thereof.

Long Term Financial Plan

Neil tabled this discussion until the next Board Meeting when he expects to have some rudimentary ideas ready for discussion.

General Manager Search

Neil asked anyone in the room that was a candidate for the position to excuse themselves. He asked everyone to keep the details of the upcoming discussion confidential. He reviewed the process to date. Then he asked the subcommittee (Cindy, Alan and Peter) to update everyone on their views of each of the candidates. Alan pointed out that the subcommittee was not tasked with making any decisions but rather to rank the candidates and present those findings to the entire Board for their consideration. Cindy explained some of the criteria that the subcommittee used to evaluate the candidates - their ability to manage a portfolio of publications, to lead Student Publications into the future, did they have ideas or have ideas about how to get ideas, the ability to strategize and move forward, and how well they would fit into the existing culture here. Peter expressed that his primary concern was finding someone that could work well with all of the students as well the leaders and the Board and who could understand the scale of the operations here. Peter then revealed the rankings to the Board. This generated a discussion about some of the specific candidates. Eventually, Neil called for a motion to authorize Mark to make an offer to the Board's candidate of choice. This generated a discussion about how much to offer the candidate and how to set goals and measure the GM's performance going forward. Afterwards, Peter made a motion to authorize Mark to make an offer. This was seconded by Jennifer and passed without dissent.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Kevin, seconded by Alan and passed without dissent.

At 7:47 Chair Neil Chase closed the meeting.

Actions Taken:

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Motion to approve the October 23, 2017 Board Meeting minutes: Peter Mooney

Seconded by: Alan Broad

The motion was passed without dissent.

Motion to approve a \$4,400 increase to the Ensign's payroll for winter semester: Cindy Goodaker

Seconded by: Kevin Tottis

The motion was passed without dissent.

Motion to approve the sale of \$100,000 worth of shares from the Student Publications Quasi-endowment Fund: Peter Mooney

Seconded by: Cindy Goodaker

The motion was passed without dissent.

Motion to authorize Mark to present a job offer to the Board's preferred candidate: Peter Mooney

Seconded by: Jennifer Conlin

The motion was passed without dissent.

Motion to adjourn: Kevin Tottis

Seconded by: Alan Broad

The motion was passed without dissent.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Bealafeld

General Manager

Office of Student Publications