

University of Michigan Board for Student Publications

Minutes of the January 15, 2018 Board Meeting

Board members present: John Bacon, Jennifer Conlin, Stuart Emmrich, Cindy Goodaker and Peter Mooney

Board members video-conferencing: Neil Chase (chair), Alan Broad and Terry McDonald

Board members absent: Kevin Tottis

The Michigan Daily was represented by: Alexa St. John, and Nathan Gupta

The Michiganensian was represented by: Matisse Rogers and Claire Bartosic

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: Kathy Ciesinski and Lisa Powers

Others Present: None

Chair Neil Chase called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

Minutes

A motion to approve the November 27, 2017 meeting minutes was made by Peter, seconded by Cindy and passed without dissent.

Public Comments

None.

SHEI Magazine

Maggie said they had a really great semester. Print magazine came out in December, which they were very proud of. There were 150 - 200 attendees at December launch party. A SHEI member did an article on a famous drag queen and she responded by tweeting it out and it was retweeted. While this was exciting, it led to a discussion on the challenge of generating awareness of SHEI beyond members and U of M Campus. How to break through to outside organizations and share their independent publication. Outreach coordinator to mail contacts at magazines such as Cosmo to see if they would like a free copy. Stuart mentioned *them* - a new online publication from Conde' Nast, and geared toward the LGBTQ community.

Lauren spoke about the Work It! Event, which is planned for January 30th. Three speakers Raquel Laneri, Satu Greenburg and Jim Murray will cover the fashion aspect of journalism, business and retail.

A theme for the second semester print issue was mentioned. Moving away from abstract themes to a more concrete theme such as empowerment, self-love and wellness. SHEI staff is currently in the early stages to conceptualize all photo shoots. This led to a discussion about advertising sales, both for the December issue and future issues and how having a theme might help identify potential advertisers, on both a local and national scale.

Gargoyle

Jenny shared copies of issue two, which was distributed a couple of weeks before the semester break in December. The next issue will be 24 pages and is expected to arrive at Student Pubs on February 20th. For the last meeting of the semester, they were visited by alumni Gil Borman. They are looking at inviting other alumni in during the winter semester; around publishing dates. Gil also shared old issues of the magazine that they are currently storing until they can be archived.

A challenge the Gargoyle is facing is distribution spots. They have some racks in key classroom buildings, but want to explore getting into residence halls. There are currently not enough racks to make this possible.

Molly discussed their recent cross-promotion with WCBN. The radio station will have ads in both winter publications and the Gargoyle will have an ad airing this semester. She also announced they now have a student who is interested in ad sales. They want to focus on ad sales in order to make sure there are back up funds in case a grant or CSG funding does not come through, and to purchase more distribution racks.

The Michiganensian

Matisse stated that while the semester started off slowly, they were able to make up some ground in December. Yearbook sales are up. Freshman four-packs are on track to beat last year's sales. Commemorative ad sales were on target. December Grad Extravaganza brought in almost twice as much as the December 2016 event. Sales increases can be attributed to the package price increase, as well as marketing to parents. She is currently working on project management and marketing plans for March and April events.

Matisse, Claire and another Ensian staff member, Dylan, will be visiting the Herff Jones plant in Kansas City on January 19th, to see a portion of their book being printed and finalize the cover design with on-site artists.

Claire spoke about the new spring publication that the Board previously approved. They are in discussions with Daily on bundling with the Daily's *In Review* poster. Claire updated everyone on the content for the supplement and that it will be one 16-page magazine rather than two 8-page magazines. The theme will be "A week in the life of students." This should have a broad appeal to audiences greater than just graduating seniors. Discussions with other units on campus who may be interested in purchasing copies will be taking place.

The Michigan Daily

Alexa discussed highlights of the year, including biggest stories such as the IFC and the ban on social activities, Richard Spencer and overall administrative coverage, as well as the Bicentennial issue. Coverage has resonated with campus community and greater Ann Arbor community. Edit staff working on Bicentennial issue were grateful to have access to digital archives. For 2018, they are looking at adding two new podcasts, possibly focused on the arts, and Michigan in Color. The current challenge with podcasts is the need to increase staff, especially on the technical side. The app is just about ready to be launched, as is the redesigned website. By-laws require them to vote on an annual digital initiative for the year and they will be doing so soon. Concerns were expressed about Standing Room Only being turned into a public event, in particular from a security standpoint.

Nathan asked the Board for advice on how to get more national recognition for the things it's currently doing. That led to a conversation about being a possible aggregator for happenings on other college campuses. Nathan and his team have been working on identifying potential partners, how to monetize new projects like the app, and podcasts. They are in the process of evaluating the media consulting team and what it has contributed so far. The national accounts team has increased in size to do more outreach to agencies, as well as regional and national accounts directly. There will also be a consultant assigned to do outreach for political advertising. Additional hiring for the semester is also currently taking place.

Finance

Kathy mentioned that December financials would be later than usual as it was the end of the quarter.

Board Nominations and Other Schedules

Kathy shared the Board nomination schedule. Both Kevin and John will be leaving the Board when their terms expire, generating a need to fill both a Student Publications Alumni and U of M Campus Community position. Ads are scheduled to run in the University Record, The Michigan Daily's print and online publications. Applications are due on February 13th and Kathy will share with members to review before our meeting on February 19th. Neil suggested we consider candidates who will be instrumental in shaping the strategic plan.

GM Updates

Scholarship and award information will be distributed earlier this year, giving students additional time to apply. Schedules have been adjusted based on earlier meeting date in April. Plans are to use this space to touch on things not necessarily covered in the student reports, updates from CMBAM, etc. Kathy is also making a concerted effort to have students who are using donor funds (travel, conferences, other) to provide content for Lisa's alumni and donor communications.

Development

Lisa reported on Giving Blue Day Success for Student Publications - approximately \$7,000 in total, including a pledge. Rick Freeman Memorial Merit Award was fully endowed in less than a month's time. She's written about 400 thank you letters in the past year to donors, with 200 of those coming through in the last two months of 2017. Lisa has been receiving a lot of communication and feedback from alumni newsletter recipients. She is working hard on increasing alumni engagement. She mentioned the U of M event in March at the Jack Roth Center at UM Stadium. It's a lunch for scholarship recipients and supporters. Plans are in the works for the April 15th Scholarship and Awards event at Student Pubs and the post-graduation luncheon on April 28th. Lisa is reconvening discussions with the alumni committee, with the key topic of the summer satellite sessions in June. This is as an opportunity for students who are doing internships in the host cities to network with alums in those cities. She is also working with the committee to set a date for the fall tailgate. Jennifer inquired about giving out alumni awards, and a discussion ensued.

Strategic Plan

Neil began the discussion emphasizing the need for the development of a strategic plan; something that needs the time, attention and focus of board members, the professional staff and student leaders. Kathy mentioned that in conversations she's had with students, including outgoing student leaders, there is a receptiveness to the development of a plan. Initial thoughts are to create something that sets the tone overall, but allows for innovation and creativity, while also holding the publication leaders accountable for staying on track with the fulfillment of the plan. The five-year plan itself should be comprised of a max of 5 goals, with one-to two-year innovation goals and action plans developed by each group of student leaders. The challenge for the group is to begin a new framework of thinking about things such as environmental impacts, political impacts, etc. will affect Student Publications. What does the rest of the world look like and how will that impact Student Pubs? Kathy will be sharing access to a Strategic Plan Google folder this week. It will be used as a repository for information that all can contribute to. Kathy asked the students to be thinking about what they want to be known as the leaders in over the next five years.

Concerns were expressed about the board taking over, and really wanting the students to express their thoughts and ideas first. After much discussion, it was agreed on that what it comes down to is working together to determine broad goals and how they're accomplished is determined by the students. The board's financial responsibility was also discussed. The strategic plan is more of a guideline for how things need to/will work in the future. Objectives, strategies and tactics will come as a result of establishing those broad goals.

Everyone was asked to review contents of the folder, add to it, and be prepared to continue the discussion at our February meeting.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Jennifer, seconded by Stuart and passed without dissent.

At 7:36 Chair Neil Chase closed the meeting.

Actions Taken:

Motion to approve the November 27, 2017 Board Meeting minutes: Peter Mooney

Seconded by: Cindy Goodaker

The motion was passed without dissent.

Motion to adjourn: Jennifer Conlin

Seconded by: Stuart Emmrich

The motion was passed without dissent.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Ciesinski

General Manager

Office of Student Publications