

Martlet Publishing Society Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

November 6th, 2013

Present: Regan Shrumm, William Workman, Jeremy Vernon, Graham Briggs, Jon-Paul Zacharias, Janine Crocket, Sonya Hoonjan, Erin Ball, Shandi Shiach, Chorong Kim, Ryan Ziegler.

Absent with regrets: Jules Hogan

1) Call to order

Briggs called the meeting to order

2) Agenda:

A) Motion to dispense with Robert's Rules

B) Board Reports / Questions

C) Review of labour law and resources

D) Discuss Oct. 24 article, "Altered Living Alliance pushes for Halloween costume ban", and community response

E) Posting board documents online

F) Review full-time staff evaluation policy

G) Review roles and responsibilities of board members, and important policies

A) Motion to Dispense with Robert's Rules

-Forwarded: Vernon Seconded: Briggs

B) Board Reports/Questions

-Clarification that collecting funds from students has to go through UVSS.

More international students have contributed to the increase in our budget, and UVic now has undertaken a different way of calculating how much they owe the Martlet. Some people pay their entire tuition at the beginning of the year, sparking a concern we may get less in the Spring.

-Job descriptions of each employee offered to board members. Need to be emailed and included in reference manual.

C) Review of labour law and resources

-ESA section to be added for reference. Erin led discussion of training, rules are relatively straightforward in guide

D) Discuss Oct. 24 article, “Altered Living Alliance pushes for Halloween costume ban”, and community response

-Two martlet.ca, emails and personal comments that were very critical of the article.

-Shandi presented the developing story surrounding the article.

-Martlet’s version of “A Modest Proposal” garnered a similar reception. Kiara Woldenga’s statement:

When writing this article I did not intend to single out any particular group. This is clear due to the fact that in my humour piece there is no mention of specific names of real organizations or people except for Prime Minister Harper.

My humour piece should not be compared to “A Modest Proposal” because it is written by a different person. The Martlet’s Editor-In-Chief is also a different person. This year has had high turnover and 90 percent of our employees are new, to compare us to last year’s Martlet staff and any conflict they may have had is not logical.

My humour piece is displaying the humour of the process of protest and regulation, not of the protestors themselves. If the creatures in my story were real it would be likely that they would be going through the process as illustrated in the piece.

And that’s it. Let me know what you think, and whether or not I should turn this into a paragraph.

Ryan-there’s nothing that’s absurd that can’t be criticized. If we say certain topics are off-limits, it limits what we can talk about, stifling our dialogue to be creative. Criticism should be universal.

Graham-although a lot of people read it as a mock of cultural appropriation practices, based on the community feedback it really missed its mark in attempting to be satirical. We greatly value community feedback, and if the feedback we received was positive, it would’ve indicated we got the article right. Good news that Shandi will step-up outreach.

In the future, should be more sensitivity and how an article may affect impacted groups.

Will-New writer, they're doing their best, and we rely so heavily on volunteers that we don't have the resources to respond to community feedback like we have here. Our status as a student paper gives us some freedoms, and we're learning. We receive a lot of feedback and don't necessarily need to approach each one actively.

-perhaps a change of perspective in the article might've garnered a more positive approach and achieved better satire, and writer may have to learn to think in different ways.

-Erin and Will debated whether we should follow up on further comments regarding this story. To conclude, it was deemed that we've spoken about it enough.

Shandi-full statement attached-made it known that we still have an open letters policy as a format to respond to the article. So far, we've received none.

Will-should we develop a policy for people contacting us through social media?

Shandi followed up on people who responded to the article and was offered no response. People were very passive aggressive on Twitter about it.

-most helpful complainant offered a few suggestions, which she is incorporating.

Erin-feedback calling us racist was not constructive.

E) Posting board documents online

Evolving page for board members to access list of documents, meeting minutes, EIC board reports, protocol board reports and any additional documents (financial). Will increase transparency and accountability. Liaise with Will about forwarding board report minutes.

F) Review full-time staff evaluation policy

Last year we tracked down and consolidated all policies into one manual. New policy was drafted. We then went over the draft. Should we forward reports to hiring committee? Agreed upon that we should. Good to include recognized volunteer staff in review process? JP suggested they should do a different kind of survey.

-sometimes volunteer staffs don't interact with full time at all.

Ryan-they don't have consistent exposure to Martlet operation, and their contribution will skew process.

Will-perhaps it'd be better to offer a separate section for volunteer contributions.

Shandi-good idea to include volunteer survey.

Will-any feedback is valuable.

Graham-value in full-time staff giving each other anonymous feedback? Suggested we should push reviews back from November.

Erin-suggested January. More time to gauge efficiency of each staff member. Agreed that surveys will be conducted with Survey Monkey or whatever program is used during any future survey.

Note timeline change in word document.

Likert rating system and comments section to be used.

Ryan-pointed out importance of comments section, Sonya affirmed keeping both sections intact.

Erin will send the board her survey in order to reconfigure the key evaluation questions.

-She will include questions from years past.

G) In Camera

H) Review roles and responsibilities of board members, and important policies

Current document is somewhat outdated, initiative to create a new reference manual.

I) Motion to adjourn

Forwarded: Reagan. Seconded: Sonya

Action Items

- 1) Erin, Shandi and Ryan to forward statements.
- 2) Graham to propose bylaw changes to ensure that all changes to staff remuneration must approved by staff and then sent to board for final approval.
- 3) Create a master policy manual and administer to staff members.
- 4) Tabled: Potentially adding question of fee increase to 2014 UVSS voting ballot.