

University of Michigan Board for Student Publications

Minutes of the November 12, 2018 Board Meeting

Board members present: Alan Broad, Jennifer Conlin, Stuart Emmrich, Cindy Goodaker, Terry McDonald and Peter Mooney

Board members video-conferencing: Neil Chase (Chair) and Jacob Smilovitz

Board members absent: none

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

The Michiganensian was represented by: Joseph Coates and Dylan LaCroix

The Gargoyle was represented by: Molly Miller

SHEI Magazine was represented by: Liv Velarde and Serena Pergola

The Student Publications Staff was represented by: Kathy Ciesinski, Lisa Powers and Jon Schlitt

Others Present: None

Chair Neil Chase called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. and thanked everyone for his or her attendance and contributions at the September retreat.

Minutes

A motion to approve the September 23, 2018 meeting minutes was made by Stuart, seconded by Jennifer and passed without dissent.

Public Comments

None.

Publication Reports

Michiganensian

Joseph began by explaining some of the large variances in the budget and that some of the expenses will actually come in October. Senior portraits were up in September over the previous year. Staff is also smaller than last year.

A new initiative for this year is selling Master's regalia online. Sales went fairly well given the amount of lead-time needed to ship grad packages. The target audience was December 2018 graduates - which is a much smaller audience than spring. 175 packages were sold and the commission on each sale was approximately 36%, thus generating a little over \$4,200 for not much effort. Info from the registrar's office indicates a little over 1,000 masters students expected to graduate in the spring. November Grad Extravaganza has gotten off to a strong start. There was additional discussion as to what is planned for the spring and whether it's worth investing more in marketing or personnel to increase sales at the event.

Dylan said they've sent over 100 proofs to the publisher. One of Dylan's projects was to bring back the Greek Life section of the yearbook. Parents have expressed interest in purchasing a yearbook when they know their son's or daughter's photo is in the book.

Some photographers have been utilizing Ensian cameras or lenses for their own personal endeavors. There have also been instances of photographers gaining access to events using Ensian credentials and then not submitting the "best" photos for the yearbook and keeping them for their own sales efforts. Dylan is in the middle of rewriting the Ensian's copyright

agreement and could use some help with it. Additional discussion of this topic took place and other publications were asked how they handle photo copyrights. It was suggested that there should be a clear policy for all publications moving forward.

SHEI Magazine

Serena presented the financial numbers. They are currently in the black. Mass meeting and SHEI-wide welcome meeting were held in classrooms, so no rental fees. Grants applied for and received this semester will not cover the printing of the fall issue.

Fall magazine went to print. They are a month out from the launch party. Student orgs have been advertising in SHEI digital, a new focus for the sales team.

Liv mentioned that approximately 50 copies of the winter 2018 issue were not to their satisfaction. The ink coverage bled onto some pages. Liv is working with the printer on how much of a credit SHEI will receive toward printing of the next issue. They are moving their release of SHEI Digital from Fridays to Mondays.

Serena and Liv presented their initiative. Funds are being requested to transition SHEI to a fully digital ad-based model, and thereby release the print magazine for free. They would like to print a larger number of magazines with fewer pages and use the print publication as a marketing tool to increase awareness of SHEI on campus and drive people to the website and SHEI Digital - where they have been successful in selling ads. Board members asked several questions and dialogue continued. It was determined that this was - in essence - a request to revise SHEI's budget, and if that were the case, what would this new model look like in years two and three as it relates to the budget's bottom line.

Gargoyle

Molly walked through the financial highlights. They have a new distribution manager who did a comprehensive rack evaluation. She also now has access to the dorms to be able to place magazines. Their second issue of the semester is going to press in early December. The new website is still a work in progress.

With regard to challenges, Molly shared that the staff has a greater level of interest in writing and art than layout and business-related positions. After the winter semester there will only be the business manager, and no business staff. Meetings have been moved from Fridays to Tuesdays and that has resulted in greater turnout and retention.

The Michigan Daily

Nathan walked through the financial highlights and shared that October will be down from budget figures. November is expected to be better than budget. He spoke about the Michigan Football 950 wins issue, which will come out later in the week. There was approximately \$6,600 in ad revenue for the section. A coupon book is in the works, and is hoping to launch before the end of the semester. The marketing consulting team brought in about \$1,500 for the semester and is working on a proposal for a potential long-term client. The business staff is also working on a newsletter for clients.

Alexa shared some of the special projects the edit staff has been working on until this point in the semester, including a special election results wrap, the Michigan Football 950 wins

section and the media partnership with Roger Rappaport. She and her team are preparing for the first community forum as part of the Poynter grant project that will be held in early December. Her staff has also been working on a very large sexual misconduct series.

Alexa introduced 2019 Editor-in-Chief, Maya Goldman. Maya shared that a big goal for her tenure is to work on the Daily's brand, especially with the student and faculty communities. She wants to build on the foundation Alexa's team started as it relates to diversity in the newsroom and recruiting efforts.

Committee Reports

Trusteeship/Operations

Alan suggested the Trusteeship Committee be changed to Board Organization and Operations Committee. Alan circulated a redlined first draft of the Regent's bylaws for review by the board as it relates to the Board being a private corporation and his recent conversations with the General Counsel's Office. Discussion ensued on items such as publication oversight and composition of the board. Neil suggested the members of the board take a further look at it and send any comments and suggestions to Alan within the next week.

Pete emailed the bylaws document he had been working on, and asked for further review. According to the current bylaws a 15-day notice is required for a vote to any changes.

Finance/New Initiatives

Jake and Cindy reported they had no major updates to share.

Development/Advancement

Terry had nothing new to report.

Board Recruitment/Nominations

Stuart shared his research on and recent communications with potential board candidates as the Board looks to fill the open University community position. Lisa mentioned another person for consideration. The nomination/renomination process itself was also discussed, in addition to the number of actual board members and whether that should be changed.

Stewardship & Development

As a follow up to the retreat, Lisa put together a document about the scholarship event, and how it's been done in the past, and what it would look like if it were moved from April to September. She also spoke about the mentorship survey she is working on. Cindy expressed interest in being involved with the mentorship project/process. Lisa and Kathy worked on a couple of stewardship reports that were shared with donors and they were well received. Giving Blueday is coming up on November 27th. Barbara McQuade is speaking on November 28th.

GM Report

Kathy referred back to her report from the September retreat and that there are a lot of items now in progress including: getting some documentation for publications in place and communicating better with our donors (stewardship reports). She asked Jon to do an assessment of the Daily and its business staff, which we're now reviewing in segments.

Meetings with all publication leaders have uncovered more overlap areas between the publications, while also identifying what each publication is doing well (i.e.: outreach to student orgs, publication distribution). Discussions continue about moving toward one unified sales team. She also gave some updates on the building and building repairs.

New Business

No new business was discussed.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Peter, seconded by Terry, and passed without dissent.

At 8:04 Chair Neil Chase closed the meeting.

Actions Taken:

Motion to approve the September 23, 2018 Board Meeting minutes: Stuart Emmrich

Seconded by: Jennifer Conlin

The motion passed without dissent.

Motion to adjourn: Peter Mooney

Seconded by: Terry McDonald

The motion passed without dissent.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Ciesinski

General Manager

Office of Student Publications