

Minutes of Fulcrum Publishing Society Board of Directors Meeting

Saturday, May 24, 2008 10:30 a.m.

Location: Room 230C of the Déjà Vu Lounge

Attendance:

- Andrew Wing (Chair, voting member)
- Ross Prusakowski (President, voting member)
- Nick Taylor-Vaisey (voting member)
- William Stephenson (voting member)
- Maureen Hasinoff (voting member)
- Frank Appleyard (Business Manager, ex-officio)
- Emma Godmere (Editor-in-Chief, ex-officio)
- Amanda Shendruk (Production Manager, non-voting)
- Dave McClelland (Executive Editor, non-voting)
- Julie Séguin (SFUO VP Communications, ex-officio)
- Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya (Candidate for Board Ombudsperson position)

1. Opening of the Meeting

- Meeting called to order by Wing at 10:35am.

2. Approval of the Agenda

- Hasinoff/ Prusakowski move the proposed agenda be approved.
- Carried

3. Nominations, Deliberation (in-camera) and Appointment of Directors to Fill Board Vacancies

- Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya presented himself to the Board of Directors and outlined that he has some experience with dispute resolution from his time of service with the military.

-Prusakowski/ Taylor-Vaisey moved that Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya be approved as the Fulcrum Publishing Society's Board of Director's Ombudsman for the 2009-10 Publishing year.

- Carried with unanimous consent.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the 11 April 2009 Board of Directors Meeting

- As per standard policy minutes had been previously distributed to voting members for review.
- No changes were noted.

-Wing/ Stephenson moved that the minutes of the 11 April 2009 Board of Directors Meeting be approved
-Carried.

5. Report from the Business Manager

Business Manager's Report to the BOD - May 2009

Me: Hi, the Fulcrum would like to book the meeting room in Déjà Vu for May 24 at 10:30.

CLS: Sure. How many people is it for?

Me: Let's say a dozen or so.

CLS: Oh well you can't book that room for that many people.

Me: Ummm, we have every month for the last three years.

CLS: Well that can't possibly be true.

Me: Ummmmmm...

As you can see, this year is off to a fabulous start.

Things have been quite slow around the office for the last few weeks. I got a great dose of training from Ross, and aside from the occasional question I have settled into the job pretty comfortably. The only source of frustration right now is that the accounting software is still operating in 2008-09 mode until Huong, our bookkeeper, comes in to make the switch for us. This situation makes it impossible to process certain transactions through the software for the moment, and generally makes me bend my brain in trying to remember what I can and can't do without messing up the accounting. However, confusion and frustration aside, things are getting done, and the books will hopefully be getting switched in the coming days, making my life a lot easier.

In non-Fulcrum news I have been busting my ass at The Grand, the ByWard Market's hottest new restaurant. I've been working a lot as we're understaffed in my position at the moment. As such, I haven't been around the office much during business hours. This should change within the next week or two as I have altered my availability to ensure I have at least a couple mornings and afternoons off each week, with more likely to be scheduled in. I would consider it to be highly unlikely that I will get more than three weekday afternoons off from the restaurant right now, but I have been in the office at some point every day. Luckily there isn't much to do right now, so my absence is hardly noticed.

Financials

As of May 20 we have \$117,604.18 in our chequing account, \$20,053.15 in our savings, and \$20,336.06 squirreled away in our GIC. I feel like I should include a lot more information in this section, but there is little to report in terms of financial transactions. We haven't spent any money in the past month beyond payroll, bills, and other commitments, so at this moment there is precious little to mention about our financial situation. We likely have too much money sitting in our chequing account not gaining any interest; however, the BOD has expressed a desire to invest more money into our GIC this summer, which will look after the excessive funds in the account. In the meantime our cash flow will be in great shape for the summer months.

Collections

Collections have been going slowly but surely, and we are steadily climbing towards collecting on all of our ad contracts. To date we have collected \$109,622.62 on last year's ad sales, with \$11,280 still outstanding. Our two biggest clients with amounts outstanding are the SFUO and Canada Computers, both of whom are fairly big companies so there is little reason for concern over tracking down a good chunk of the money. The accounts receivable report that was attached goes over everything in much more detail.

Over the next week I am going to be contacting every advertiser with amounts owing, and attempting to track down the outstanding cash. In many cases Ross made contact with the advertisers before his term ended and got some sort of promise, so I will be poking and prodding to ensure that these promises turn into tangible cash.

In exciting news, the collections agency was able to get Responsible Choice to pay up. Well, part of their balance at least. The collectors managed to squeeze \$262.50 out of them, and after they took their fee we received \$179.81, which isn't bad considering they dealt with everything. They will continue working to collect on the remainder of their outstanding debt (\$173.50) so hopefully we can get their account resolved soon.

2009-10 rate card

Deeds and I have discussed changes to the advertising rate card for the upcoming publishing year, which will be discussed in more detail later in the meeting. The basic overview of the proposed changes to the rate card incorporate a desire to ensure that our prices keep up with inflation, but at the same time not scare away advertisers who may be wary of cost increases given the economic climate. As such, there are no radical changes to be proposed to the advertising rate card, but rather minor tweaks to ensure that we are keeping up with the times.

Art director computer

As had been discussed last year, the Art Director PC is slowly dying, and is in need of replacement. While the initial thought was that getting a Mac Pro for the position would be best, we have since learned that a Pro is a hell of a lot of computer. More than is needed for the Art Director. As such, there is a proposal (that will be dealt with later in the meeting) to purchase a 24" iMac for the Art Director so that we may complete our move to an all-Mac office.

Audit

Ross and I met with Luc Imbeau of Connelly and Cauchi, who looks after the FPS' audit, in May about getting the process started. Everything will be ready to go on our end once the books are flipped over by Huong very soon. I have since tried to get in touch with Luc on a couple of occasions regarding sending us some information/paperwork that we need to begin the process, but have yet to hear back. I'm not worried, as I'm sure he will turn up soon.

Bound editions

The 2008-09 bound editions have arrived! If you were on the board last year or paid for a bound edition, please come by the office and pick it up. They're snazzy.

Misc.

- We are no longer insured by ING Insurance. No, we didn't get dropped or change providers, they have just changed their name to Intact Insurance. Our broker and everything about the policy will remain the same.
- I have called the university about getting a certain hole in the office ceiling repaired. This hole in the ceiling was created by a certain president of this board who shall remain unnamed.
- I am in the process of coming up with a purchasing plan to upgrade the Fulcrum's photography equipment, and will be consulting with Emma in the coming weeks and presenting it at the next BOD meeting.
- Emma and I are going to be meeting within the next couple weeks to begin planning for and discussing the ORCUP fall conference that we will be hosting. While Emma and I will be doing most of the heavy lifting in terms of conference coordination, Ross and his CUP expertise will also be involved in the planning. It is still extremely early given that the conference won't be until October, so I hope to have more information and a progress report at the next BOD meeting.

-Appleyard noted that at the next meeting of the Board of Directors he would be bringing forward a plan on how to improve the photography infrastructure/equipment of the paper.

-In response to question from Prusakowski, Appleyard indicated that he isn't in a hurry to get the University to repair the minor hole in the ceiling.

6. Report from the Editor-in-Chief

Editor-in-Chief report May 20, 2009

Dearest BOD,

I am very excited to be writing to you for the first time in this official capacity. Interestingly, a lot has happened in my first few weeks on the job.

Hiring

Our sports editor Sarah Leavitt resigned at the end of April to pursue graduate studies in journalism at Concordia University. We immediately launched into a hiring process at the beginning of May in an attempt to fill the position as soon as possible (before any collective training or summer production begins). As per Fulcrum policy, the application period was open for a full two weeks, and in lieu of printing house ads—as we were not in production at the time—I ensured the word got out about the job opening by sending out two emails to the CUP listserv, sending three emails to the general Fulcrum listserv, and also by posting information on the Fulcrum’s Twitter feed, Facebook page, and Facebook group. We received a total of six applications and are in the process of interviewing four shortlisted candidates. We expect to have the position filled by the end of the month.

We also successfully hired several other Fulcrum staff positions through the month of April: our two copy editors, Michael Olender and Des Fisher; our associate news editor Len Smirnov; our volunteer and visibility coordinator Anna Rocoski; and our webmaster Amira Elmi. We received no applications for the position of on-campus distributor, but will reopen hiring in June.

Plans for summer issues

As you will see or have seen in my pitch, I’m proposing to produce two summer issues this year. The principal reason behind having the two of them is the training potential. I go into a little more detail in the proposal, but having two summer issues allows every member of the ed board—and even our other recently hired staff—to go through an entire production at least once before we jump into our larger issues that have us working hard through the fall. And the great part about the web-only format that I’m proposing for the June 25 issue is that we can still go through a regular production and create a normal issue while conserving our printing budget. Another benefit that comes with getting to work earlier on in the summer is the motivation to work together as a cohesive editorial board well before September rolls around. It’s important to start off the publishing year on the right foot, and working together several times as a team in the summer will prepare us well... as cheesy as that all may sound.

That’s about all that’s on my plate for the time being, but if anyone ever has any questions, feel free to drop me a line anytime at editor@thefulcrum.ca.

-Godmere noted to the Board that the candidate they planned to hire for the position of Sports Editor is Andrew Hawley

-In response to a question, Godmere noted that the main method of summer training for staff was going to be the production of the summer issues. She noted that there might be some use of the website, but that the bulk would be conducted via the issues.

7. Approval of the Proposed Publishing Schedule

The Fulcrum Proposed Production Schedule 2009–10

Summer Issue: July 30

Issue 1: Sept. 3

Issue 2: Sept. 10

Issue 3: Sept. 17

Issue 4: Sept. 24

Issue 5: Oct. 1

Issue 6: Oct. 8

Issue 7: Oct. 15

Issue 8: Oct. 22

Issue 9: Oct. 29

Issue 10: Nov. 5

Issue 11: Nov. 12

Issue 12: Nov. 19
Issue 13: Nov. 26
Issue 14: Dec. 3
Issue 15: Jan. 7
Issue 16: Jan. 14
Issue 17: Jan. 28
Issue 18: Feb. 4
Issue 19: Feb. 11
Issue 20: Feb. 25
Issue 21: March 4
Issue 22: March 11
Issue 23: March 18
Issue 24: March 25
Issue 25: April 1
Issue 26: April 8

Notes:

- No issue Jan. 21 due to CUP national conference
- No issue Feb. 18 due to U of O reading week
- Due to Labour Day falling later this year, on Sept. 7, the school year begins and ends a week later than usual; hence Sept. 3 issue will be the “Frosh” issue and we will also be publishing twice in April (April 8 issue will be produced before exams begin)

- Taylor-Vaisey asked why there wasn't going to be an issue produced during the National Conference period. In reply Prusakowski noted that over the past couple of years the decision has been made not to try to make a paper due to the logistics and complications involved. Thinking has evolved to where it's better use of funds to substitute definitely paying for the “Frosh” issue in August/September than to pay for a hurried paper in January when staff are supposed to be mixing, learning and working at the CUP conference.

-Wing/Prusakowski moved that the Proposed Publishing Schedule for 2009-10 be adopted.

-Carried.

8. Bound Edition Motion:

-PRUSAKOWSKI/ WING move:

WHEREAS the result of discussions regarding honorariums for executive staff positions on the FPS Board of Directors was discussed and dismissed in the 2008-09 year, and

WHEREAS the solution of reallocating the money and using it to purchase Bound Editions of the Fulcrum for all directors and paid staff members of the paper was found to be a better, more fulfilling solution,

BIRT that the practice of the Society purchasing Bound Editions be continued for the 2009-10 fiscal year

BIFRT the following staff are eligible to receive a free Bound Edition:

- a) All members of the Board of Directors who remain in good standing on the board at year end who have attended at least 3 meetings during the fiscal year.
- b) The Business Manager and Advertising Representative
- c) All other paid staff that opt in to receive a bound edition.

-Carried.

9. Discussion/Motion regarding Rack Purchases, Off-Campus Distribution and their effect on the Society's Budget and Cash-Flow

-Prusakowski noted that during his tenure as Business Manager in 2008-09 he had hoped to improve the Fulcrum's distribution infrastructure and methods but a combination of factors prevented him from moving forward too far. It was only at the end of his term he was able to receive quotes from companies regarding the manufacture of new on-campus racks and off-campus distribution boxes. Initially planned to propose to the Board an overall replacement of Fulcrum racks, but believed the cost would be too prohibitive.

-Instead after discussion with Appleyard, Prusakowski proposes purchasing a number of racks for off-campus distribution that the Fulcrum can place around Elgin, Campus, Sandy Hill and the Market to increase distribution and visibility of the paper in and around these areas. The proposed motion includes the costs of the boxes, silk-screening of logo onto the boxes and the initial (2009-10 year) cost of permits for the City of Ottawa to allow the boxes to be put off campus. The lead time to receive the boxes is approximately one month.

- Prusakowski/ Taylor-Vaisey move that the Board of Directors approve spending no more than \$8200 on the purchase, shipping and initial permits for Fulcrum off-campus distribution boxes.

-Carried. 4/1/0 (Hasinoff opposed).

10. Fulcrum Advertising 2009-10 Rate Card Adjustment Motion:

Proposed 2009-10 Fulcrum Advertising Rate Card Changes

In proposing an update to the Fulcrum's advertising rate card, two values emerged as the driving forces behind any decisions.

First, ensuring that the Fulcrum's prices keep pace with inflation and increases in CPI was a core consideration. It doesn't make sense for our prices to fall out of line with other businesses, especially given that our expenses will realistically continue to climb and we must ensure we can maintain our financial position.

The second priority was ensuring that our ability to lure new advertisers and retain smaller advertisers not be compromised by any increase in our rates. This is primarily a factor given the current economic climate. Ensuring that our prices not increase so much that some advertisers might be tempted to advertise with our competitors (The Charlatan) whose rates are already lower than our own was another consideration in forming this proposal. Lastly, given the cutbacks in many companies' budgets stemming from the economic situation, it is wise to ensure that any increase not make advertising inaccessible for our clients.

As such, while an increase in our advertising rates is undoubtedly necessary, the scope of the increase should be limited to ensure that we can maximize our revenue instead of potentially driving clients away. Given the current economic climate, a modest increase based off the increase in CPI over the last 12 months is the best course of action.

Proposal

The Fulcrum's advertising rate card shall be updated to reflect an approximate increase of 1.5% on most current ad rates. This increase shall be applied in approximation and rounded to the nearest \$5 to ensure the simplicity and legibility of the rate card.

Ex: An \$825 full-page ad will now cost \$840. (An exact 1.5% increase would otherwise bring the cost to \$837.37.)

A \$140 1/8 page ad will now cost \$145. (An exact 1.5% increase would otherwise bring the cost to \$142.10.)

If adopted, this proposal will have a net effect of increasing each of our rates by at least \$5—even where this represents an increase far greater than 1.5%.

Ex: A \$75 business card ad will now cost \$80. (This represents an overall increase of 6.7%.)

-Appleyard noted that in previous years we have adjusted the entire rate card by as much as 10% in one go.

-PRUSAKOWSKI/ STEPHENSON move:

BIRT that the proposed changes to the Fulcrum's Advertising Rate card as outlined in the "Proposed Rate Card Changes" document presented to the Board be adopted for the 2009-10 Publishing year.

-Carried.

11. Discussion/Motion regarding Quotes from Printing Companies

-Prusakowski noted that as part of the off-campus distribution agreement with La Rotonde last year part of the requirement was that La Rotonde's printer be allowed to offer a printing quote to the FPS.

-After receiving the quote and having discussions with Barry, the Fulcrum's rep at Performance Printing, Performance offered to match the lower quote provided by Royal to retain us as customers.

-In light of the quotes being identical, the Board declined to contemplate a motion or further discussion regarding switching printing companies.

12. Discussion/Motion regarding Publishing Summer Issues of the Newspaper.

The Fulcrum Proposal for Summer Issues 2009–10

Background:

The summer months provide ideal training time for the incoming editorial board and other new employees. By producing summer issues, editors have the opportunity to get the feel of a regular production and get used to their new responsibilities before the onset of a busy fall.

Last publishing year, we produced one summer issue at the end of July. While it was an excellent opportunity to train two section editors as they took on the role of coordinating editors, other members of the editorial board were not able to benefit from the same kind of training.

Proposal:

To produce two issues this summer—one in a solely electronic format, and one in the regular published format. The proposed publishing dates would be June 25 and July 30, respectively.

Reasoning:

By producing two summer issues, incoming editors and writers receive equal training experience. There are four section editors: each would have the opportunity to be a coordinating editor, since each summer issue would require two coordinating editors. The executive editor and art director would have the opportunity to work on both issues, which would work out to be a regular workload for a regular issue. The copy editors and associate news editor would work strictly in a voluntary capacity, but would still receive experience and training. To break down the staffing and extra salary needed for each issue:

June 25 web-only issue:

- Two coordinating editors (section editors) paid regular per-issue salary of \$270.76
 - Executive editor paid regular per-issue salary of \$270.76
 - One copy editor working in voluntary capacity
 - EIC and Production Manager paid salary as per usual
 - No extra printing costs
 - Total cost for salaries for the issue: \$812.28

July 30 issue

- Two coordinating editors (section editors) paid regular per-issue salary of \$270.76
 - Art director paid regular per-issue salary of \$270.76
 - One copy editor working in voluntary capacity
 - EIC and Production Manager paid salary as per usual
- Low printing costs—circulation of only 5,000 and no more than 16 pages
 - Total cost for salaries for the issue: \$812.28

Total costs for salaries for two summer issues: \$1624.56

-In response to a question, Godmere noted that the online issue wouldn't consist of just uploading new content onto the webpage. Rather, the staff will produce a full, ready to send to the printers PDF that will then be posted onto the webpage and used to populate the site as well.

- Taylor-Vaisey wondered how the June, online only issue would be promoted. Godmere replied that it would be a good opportunity to train the Volunteer & Visibility Coordinator and that using the various Fulcrum twitter, Facebook and email connections to get the word out would work as well. Julie noted that there would be a possibility that the SFUO could send out a notice to the student list serve as well.

-In response to a question regarding advertising in the online only issue, Appleyard noted that the lead-time and format make it very unlikely that any advertising would be sold. The July issues provides an opportunity to recoup some of the costs, but the summer issues serve as more of an investment in training of the editorial staff

- Hasinoff/ Stephenson move that the Board of Directors approve the production of summer issues as per the plan presented by the Editor-in-Chief and that the \$1624.56 in salary costs be added to the proposed 2009-10 Budget

-Carried. 4/0/1 (Prusakowski abstains).

13. Final Discussion and Consideration of the Fulcrum Publishing Society's 2009-10 Budget

The Fulcrum Publishing Society

Budget 2009-10
2009-10 Budget

REVENUE

Sales Revenue

Operating Revenue from Fund Raising	\$12,000.00
Local Advertising	\$105,000.00
National Advertising	\$52,000.00
Net Sales	\$169,000.00

Other Revenue

Student Levy	\$160,000.00
GSAED Student Levy	\$6,200.00
Interest Revenue	\$350.00
Bound Editions Revenue	\$800.00
Miscellaneous Revenue	-
Recoverable Expense Telus	-
Total Other Revenue	\$167,350.00

TOTAL REVENUE **\$336,350.00**

EXPENSE

Payroll Expenses

Wages & Salaries	\$164,625.00
EI Expense	\$4,000.00
CPP Expense	\$5,600.00
WSIB Expense	\$850.00
GST	-
Employee Benefits	-
Ceridian payroll expense	\$1,400.00
Total Payroll Expense	\$176,475.00

Liabilities

Due to SFUO	-
Total Due to SFUO	-

General & Administrative Expenses

Accounting & Legal	\$6,500.00
Advertising & Promotions	\$1,650.00
Bad Debts	\$4,200.00
Bound Editions Expense	\$1,100.00
Capital Assets	\$7,000.00
Conference Expense	\$14,500.00
Contingency Fund	\$3,329.50
Courier & Postage	\$750.00
Credit Card Charges	\$750.00
Distribution Expense	\$1,700.00
Employee Appreciation	\$1,200.00
Fees and Subscriptions	\$5,800.00
GST	\$2,500.00

Insurance	\$3,000.00
Internet expenses	\$900.00
Interest & Bank Charges	\$125.00
Miscellaneous	\$500.00
Office general	\$200.00
Office Supplies	\$5,000.00
Parking	\$1,300.00
Printing	\$92,000.00
Recruitment and Training	\$900.00
Research	\$200.00
Repair & Maintenance	\$500.00
Telephone (Cell and Landlines)	\$5,000.00
Transportation	\$150.00
Utilities	-
Website expense	-
Total General & Admin. Expenses	\$160,754.50
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$337,229.50
NET INCOME	<u>(\$879.50)</u>

-Prusakowski/ Hasinoff move the Fulcrum Publishing Society Board of Director's approve the proposed 2009-10 Budget
 -Carried (with unanimous consent).

14. Update from the President on the Adhoc Website Committee

-Prusakowski noted that the committee met earlier in the week to discuss features and design wishes for the new Fulcrum website being designed by Hotink. Meeting went well and a number of items have been laid out. Will provide another update at the July meeting by which point in time the design and features should be nearly finished and the new website should be ready to go live.

15. Motion to amend the End Date of the Business Manager's Contract

- PRUSAKOWSKI/ HASINOFF move:

WHEREAS, included with the meeting documents there is a document from Ross Prusakowski outlining the challenges and problems with the current start/end dates associated with the Business Manager's contracts,

BIRT the FPS Board of Directors authorizes a change on the end date of Business Manager Frank Appleyard's contract from the current "April 30th 2010" to "May 31 2010,"

BIFRT the Board will formalize a policy regarding future contract Start/End dates for the Business Manager position prior to striking the next Business Manager Hiring Committee.

-Carried.

-Some members of the Board asked Prusakowski what this would mean financially. Prusakowski notes that what this means going forward would be that the FPS would hire a new (aka "incoming") Business Manager in April and their start date would ideally be the middle of May. Then for two weeks the "incoming" Business Manager would be working while the "Outgoing" Business Manager is as well, allowing for some structured training time to occur and for the "Outgoing" Business Manager to complete the closing of the books of the fiscal year, which would have just concluded with 1 May. For the FPS this means that in the month of May there will be a little higher payroll because the "Outgoing" Business Manager's contract wouldn't expire until 31 May while the "Incoming" Business Manager's contract would (for example) start on 15 May.

16. Art Director Computer Motion

- PRUSAKOWSKI/ TAYLOR-VAISEY move:

WHEREAS, the 2009-10 budget has been approved, and
WHEREAS, the last PC in use for the office is in need of replacement so as to improve workflow and fully transition to a Mac office,

BIRT the Board of Directors authorizes spending not to exceed \$4200 from the "Capital Purchases" line of the budget to purchase a new iMac computer and any additional required software.

-Carried.

17. Trademark Motion

-PRUSAKOWSKI/ WING move:

BIRT that the Board direct the President to undertake the process to receive a trademark for the society, and
BIFRT the Business Manager provide any necessary support in this process, and
BIFRT that the application cost shall be spent from the budget line labelled as "miscellaneous."

-Carried

18. (In-Camera) Update and Discussion on the status of the SFUO-FPS Agreement

-Prusakowski/Stephenson move to go in-camera
-Carried

-Prusakowski/Wing move to go ex-camera
-Carried

19. Any Other Business

20. Adjournment

-Prusakowski/ Hasinoff move to adjourn.
-Carried at 12:43 pm.