

Minutes of the January 6, 2014 Meeting of the UCLA Communications Board

Board members present: Hossain Albgal, Lauren Ball, Steve Greim, Sofia Haq, Kimberly Horn, Josh Levine, Erik Peña, Arvli Ward

Board members late: Mohammad Ahmad, George White

Board members absent: Cuauhtémoc Ortega

Guests: Jillian Beck (Daily Bruin EIC)

I. Call to order (Peña)

Peña called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

II. Approval of the agenda (Peña)

Levine moved to approve the agenda. Albgal seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

III. Approval of December minutes (Peña)

Ball moved to approve the minutes. Haq seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

IV. Executive Committee Report (Peña)

Peña said he met with Bob Williams regarding a loan for Student Media. He will discuss details during item VIII on the agenda.

V. Operations Committee Report (Ball)

Ball said the committee did not meet, but would meet in January.

VI. Finance Committee Report (Haq)

Haq said since committee would meet either during second or third week.

VII. Media Director's Report (Ward)

Yearbook

Ward said that the 2013 Bruin Life yearbook had arrived, several months behind schedule. Ward said the book was “fantastic” and that most of the content was repurposed from the Daily Bruin. Using Daily Bruin content helped reduce yearbook expenses by about \$10,000 Ward said.

Carpet replacement

Ward said the carpets in the office were currently being replaced by ASUCLA. Ward said that Roy Champawat was responsible for making it happen. Ward said the original plan was to have a concrete floor but that the concrete was damaged and it was recommended that the floor be re-carpeted.

Newsmagazine room

Ward said that the newsmagazine room would be dedicated on Thursday, January 9. He said that newsmagazine editors Colleen Casabal and Michael Reyes were planning to invite editors to . Board members were invited to attend.

Winter internship

Ward said that he and Jillian Beck and other members of the Daily Bruin staff were working on the preparations for the winter quarter internship workshops. Ward said that he had met with many of the instructors and was impressed by their dedication to the training program.

Daily Bruin Native App

Ward said that the Daily Bruin native mobile application was about to be launched after an initial rejection by Apple. The app was rejected because UCLA Radio's stream, which the Daily Bruin app carries was down. Ward said that the department should do a better job of supporting UCLA Radio's technology.

Mobile

Ward said that Bruin Mobile was making progress. Among new features was a crowd-counting function students had built for apps being built in conjunction with student government. Distribution had reached 89,000 downloads.

November financial statements

Ward said he emailed the November financial statements to board members but that the finance committee had not reviewed them yet so Ward said he would summarize the statements. Ward said that revenue was ahead of budget by \$6,418. November expense was over budget by \$14,870 due to severance payments. Net revenue was a loss of \$27,082. Cash reserves as of the release of the November statements were \$66,000, which was in deficit to policy by \$168,364. Cash as of meeting date cash was \$69,000.

December estimates

December revenue was estimated to be \$75,900 against budgeted revenue of \$73,889.

Student Media recovery efforts

Ward wanted to review the current state of recovery efforts. He said it was important to the board to keep in mind the course it was following.

Ward said that in order to recover, the organization had balance its budget by reducing expense and generating new revenues. Ward said that cost cutting has been ongoing since 2007, the last year the organization was profitable. Ward said since 2007 overall expenses have been reduced by \$580,000 (28 percent) and that career payroll was taken recently from about \$37,000 to less than \$19,000 per month. More than \$550,000 in new revenues had been created through outdoor, online and fee revenue sources since 2007, but that this figure still trailed the more than \$1 million lost in print advertising revenue since 2007.

Ward said after accelerating declines between 4 and 7 percent between 2008 and 2010 , revenues grew about 3 percent in 2011 and were flat in 2012. But in 2013, revenues plummeted 13 percent, which has caused today's cash shortage.

Controllable expenses have been reduced 30 percent since 2007. Much of this was due to the cost savings in two favorable printing contracts negotiated during that time period. While there was a 10% increase in Controllable Expense in 2010 as the organization began to invest in the second part of its recovery plan, overall spending increased by only 1%.

In 2014, the Communications Board should see another 15 percent reduction in overall expenses Ward said.

The second part of the Communications Board's recovery plan was to replace its dying advertising delivery system (the newspaper) with one relevant to today's readers. Ward said that new method must be mobile since that platform is beginning to dominate audience share and advertising dollars. Ward said creating a mobile network to deliver editorial content, while providing new effective ad formats for our ad clients were critical steps in the recovery.

Ward said the last stage was to prepare students to lead and manage. The goal is to create a culture in which students could teach other and manage publishing tasks and act on their own initiatives. Ward said he planned to build programs capable of producing a generation of new managers. Ward said this would have the overall effect of lowering expense while unlocking more student creativity.

Action/Discussion Items

VIII. BOD loan discussioin (Peña)

Peña said he met with Bob Williams recently to discuss ASUCLA's current policy of deferments for the Communications Board A&SS payments. Peña said the BOD chairman emailed him informing him that the maximum deferment they would allow is up to \$180,000.

Ward if Williams explained why ASUCLA favored a loan as opposed to continuing he current practice of deferring A&SS payments. Peña said that Williams Bob told him that ASUCLA sought more control and if the Communications Board were given a loan they would appoint someone to sit on the Communications Board.

White mentioned again his desire to create a student chapter of the Association for Professional Fundraisers. Ward said he welcomed White's efforts to seek foundation support.

IX. Adjourn (Peña)

White moved to adjourn the meeting. Levine seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent. The meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Submitted by Doria Deen