

Minutes of the November 4, 2013 Meeting of the UCLA Communications Board

Communications Board members present: Hossain Albgal, Lauren Ball, Steve Greim, Sofia Haq, Josh Levine, Cuauhtémoc Ortega, Erik Peña, George White, Arvli Ward

Communications Board members absent: Mohammad Ahmad, Kimberly Horn

Guests: Jillian Beck (Daily Bruin EIC)

I. Call to order (Peña)

Peña called the meeting to order at 5:41 p.m.

II. Approval of the agenda (Peña)

White made a motion to approve the agenda. Levine seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

III. Approval of June, September, and October minutes (Peña)

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

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

Albgal moved to approve the October minutes. Ortega seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

IV. Executive Committee Report (Peña)

Peña said he would discuss his meeting with ASUCLA Executive Director Bob Williams during item IX on the agenda.

V. Operations Committee Report (Ball)

Ball said the Operations Committee met on Monday, October 28. Reports from the editors included: Ha'Am was publishing online and updating their app, and staff was using Camayak. UCLA Radio's audio stream crashed because of a hardware malfunction but it was repaired. UCLA Radio received about 100 intern applications fall quarter. UCLA Radio was researching a second stream so they could have one for music and one for talk shows. Al-Talib was updating their website twice per week and preparing to bring a speaker for an event. The Daily Bruin had fully deployed Camayak and was using it in daily production. The Daily Bruin recently printed a series stories on gay rights and AIDS in Malawi that was made possible by the Bridget O'Brien Scholarship, which funded travel and support for the reporter and photographer who spent a month in Malawi. Daily Bruin Editor in chief Beck reported positive response to the series. Some the editors were interested in attending the Communications Board – ASUCLA BOD summit meeting, Ball said.

VI. Finance Committee Report (Haq)

Haq said the committee met on (need date) to discuss the schedule of professional staff layoffs and the impact of recent staff reductions. Haq said there would be significant savings but it would take time for the results to show because of the expense of one-time severance payments.

Haq said the committee discussed four areas of focus for the board, as presented by Ward: (1) business development, (2) programs, (3) operations, and (4) revenue. She said the Finance Committee's responsibility was to focus on revenue and business development. Haq said the committee would focus on how it could fund new equipment for the department.

VII. Media Director's Report (Ward)

Preliminary September Revenue

Ward said that preliminary estimates for September revenue were about \$201,000, while budgeted revenue was \$196,000 for a positive variance of just over two percent. Daily Bruin print was up about \$11,000 to budget, outdoor was up about \$3,000, and mobile was almost on plan (\$450 short of budget). Cash reserves as of the end of September stood at \$114,000, but cash as of the meeting date was \$71,159.

Ward said that cash levels remained lower than what the department required. The Communications Board was several weeks behind in payments due to ASUCLA S&E for payroll and department overhead.

Discussion Items

VIII. Student Media Strategic Plan Update (Ward)

Ward presented slides that detailed the strategic plan for Student Media. Ward said he needed feedback from the board because he said he would like to present this information at the Communications Board - BOD summit meeting.

The slides focused on the three models at the core of a student media organization that have to be repaired or improved. They were the organization's service, editorial and business models. Ward said that the service model was successful but would need refinement to fit new funding realities. Ward said that a new staff structure, partnerships to deliver some services and new programs would help. The editorial model was challenged by a shift away from the distribution of content in paper to the growing trend toward mobile readership. Ward said that the media had to shift to channels readers preferred. The business model was in the poorest condition. High prices for print advertising and less circulation meant that the main product, print ads, presented a very poor customer value proposition. Ward said that it was necessary to create effective and affordable advertising products for local businesses, which meant mobile advertising since that is where readership was growing.

Ward said that he had been invited to speak at the fall CMA/ACP (College Media Advisers/Associated Collegiate Press) conference and had presented these ideas.

White said that he and Ward had discussed the establishment of a student chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals. White said he wanted to lend his knowledge to help build an active fundraising activity that might be the source of some new revenue for the organization.

Haq asked if Ward had considered getting in touch with past Student Media participants who might be asked to donate to the organization. She said she did an internship with UCLA External Affairs where she worked on contacting past student government alumni to make donations. Ward said he had some meetings with Jacqueline Gilliam last year since this is something the department would like to pursue with the Development office's help.

IX. Communications Board – ASUCLA BOD meeting

Peña said the focus of the meeting between Communications Board and ASUCLA BOD members should be to understand how the organizations might be able to improve revenues together. The meeting should be 90 minutes. He said he would meet with Bob Williams along with the BOD finance chair David Zeke again on November 5 to put together the agenda for the summit.

White said during the meeting Ward should give the BOD more of a sense of the college media landscape. White said we were on the cutting edge of technology, more than any other college media. Greim said it would be important for attending board members to share the information because BOD has already heard it from Ward. He said the board members should explain the plans, and show that they believe it in them.

X. Adjourn (Peña)

White moved to adjourn the meeting. Ball seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent. The meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Submitted by Doria Deen