

Minutes of the May 6, 2013 Meeting of the UCLA Communications Board

Board members present: Eric Agar, Lauren Ball, Elizabeth Choong, Jennifer Frehn, Steve Greim, Sofia Haq, Josh Levine, Erik Peña, Tammy Rubin, Michael Sondheimer, George White, Arvli Ward

Board members absent: Nancy Calderon

Board members leaving early: Elizabeth Choong, Michael Sondheimer

Guests: Jose Hernandez (Bruin Life Editor in chief), Tesssa Nath (Ha'Am Editor in chief/ and candidate), Alison Bader (BruinLife Editor in chief candidate), Amy Trivers (Fem Editor in chief candidate), Bryan Platz (OutWrite Editor in chief candidate), Cameron Rowland (UCLARadio General Manager candidate)

I. Call to order (Peña)

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

II. Approval of the agenda (Peña)

Sondheimer moved to approve the agenda. Frehn seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

III. Approval of March minutes (Peña)

Sondheimer moved to approve the March minutes. Rubin seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

IV. Executive Committee Report (Peña)

Peña said he and Agar attended the GSA forum and gave a short presentation on who the Communications Board was, how GSA could help, and recruiting members for next year. He said he felt the meeting was successful. He said there would be an ASUCLA Entities meeting on Friday, May 17, and he encouraged all Communications Board members to attend.

Peña said he would emailing the board members Ward's performance evaluation form by the end of the week with instructions

V. Operations Committee Report (Frehn)

Frehn said the committee had a very successful meeting on April 22. She said that among the media reports were reports that La Gente had published and that printing quality had improved. Ha'Am editor Tessa Nath reported that they had obtained a grant from the president of the Jewish Journal to pay their staff members. Ha'Am's editors were using a system based on the best articles in order to encourage the staff. Nath also reported that Ha'Am was ordering promotional materials to increase awareness of the magazine on campus. OutWrite is sponsoring a contest using Instagram to increase readership and awareness on campus. Al-Talib is in transition because there would be a lot of staff graduating. The Daily Bruin won 24 awards

from the California Collegiate Media Association and eight awards from the Society of Professional Journalists. BruinLife Yearbook was nominated for a prestigious Pacemaker Award and was accepting applications for BruinLife Senior of the Year, profiles of which are published in the yearbook.

VI. Finance Committee Report (Agar)

Agar said the Finance Committee met twice with Ward and discussed the 2013-14 Communications Board Budget and Five-year Plan on April 18 and April 25. They also discussed planning for the upcoming budget presentation to the ASUCLA Finance Committee.

VII. Media Director's Report (Ward)

Ward said he would discuss the March financial statements.

Discussion Items

VIII. March 2013 Communications Board Financial Statements (Ward)

Ward said he had not had a chance to go over the financial statements with the Finance Committee yet, so he gave a brief summary.

Ward said the statements were showing some progress in terms of getting closer to the budget goals. March revenue was \$129,000, which was \$10,000 better than budget. Yearbook, kiosk, fee income, and insert income were over budget. Local Display, Digital Display, Digital Services, and Color Income were under budget. March expense was \$164,000, which was about \$15,000 over budget. There were savings in Printing and Depreciation while Travel and Wages were over budget. Ward said he believed these were due to timing issues because overall these categories were under budget. Net Revenue was a loss of \$35,000 while budgeted Net Revenue was a loss of \$30,000. Last year March, Net Revenue was <\$38,000>, so there was some improvement. Year-to-date Net Revenue was <\$151,000> against budgeted Net Revenue of \$9,000, which means that the Communications Board is <\$160,000> behind plan, and <\$100,000> worse than last year.

Cash reserves stood at \$55,000 as of the release of the statements and were at about \$75,000 as of the meeting date. Ward reported there was a cash flow issue recently with paying the yearbook printer because our check for student fees was significantly delayed.

April Forecast

Ward said April revenue should be about \$159,000, and budgeted revenue was \$163,000.

New Business/Action Items

IX. 2013-14 Communications Board Budget (Agar)

Ward said that planned Net Revenue in the 2013-2014 Communications Board Budget and Five-year Plan was \$0. Overall Revenue was budgeted to drop 2½ percent from FY2012-13 with Daily Bruin Revenue budgeted to decline 13 percent. The Daily Bruin had been suffering declines at a rate of 12½ percent over the last five years, but this year print display steeply declined 22 percent so this was something the Finance Committee considered at length. Daily Bruin Local Display advertising was budgeted to decline 22 percent and National advertising to decline one percent. Web media was scheduled to increase by 20 percent and mobile 30 percent. Ward said predicting how print sales would do was difficult but critical. The department's efforts in training and supporting sales staff ran into falling demand. Agar said the budgeted mobile increase appears high in percentage, but it will not produce significantly more dollars. With the decrease in professional services spending there would not be many new mobile developments to sell. This also applied to web. Kiosk revenue was nearly topped out because of limited inventory on the kiosks.

The 2013-2014 Communications Board Budget and Five-year Plan showed a 12 percent savings budgeted in overall expense. Mobile expenses were down 62 percent, Editorial Wages down 12 percent, printing down 6 percent, Professional Services were down 48 percent, Advertising Production Wages and benefits were down 75 percent because the Advertising Production manager position was eliminated. Cash reserves at the end of July should stand between \$60,000 and \$125,000 depending on.

Five-Year Plan

Ward said that long-range planning has focused on three areas over the last five years: New sources of revenue to replace print, reducing Controllable Expense by focusing on printing, and planning for the reduction of Allocated Expense, especially the reduction of staff salaries in such a way that would not undermine our mission. Ward said that the organization has created more than \$550,000 in new revenues and reduced printing by almost \$300,000. However, it wasn't enough and now the organization has to go to the last phase, which is the reduction Allocated Expense by reducing professional staff.

Ward said that when the FY2010-11 budget was passed, the board asked him to create a plan in the event of continued revenue declines. This plan laid out how Allocated Expense would be reduced under these circumstances. Ward said that he now was advocating a department size that fit within the dollars provided by fee support. Ward said it would be a three-person staff responsible for department operations, training and programs, and advertising and marketing. Ward said that this would ensure mission delivery in a stable way. Additional revenues from advertising would provide the controllable publishing expenses needed to support the media.

Ward said there were few other alternatives to reducing the organization's cost structure. Ward said he did not believe it was consistent with our mission to spend most of our revenue supporting professional salaries instead of the student mission.

Ward said his goals for the coming 12 to 24 months were to establish mobile, reorganize the staff, create a capital campaign to purchase new computers and cameras, strengthen the board by adding members with particular skills and background, and improve the state of the media offices. Ward said that later in the plan after this transition period, he would depart. The board would then have to figure out how Student Media should be managed.

Ball moved to enter executive session at 6:38 p.m. Sondheimer seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Levine moved to exit executive session at 7:39 p.m. Ball seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

White moved to approve the 2013-14 Communications Board Budget. Ball seconded the motion. The motion passed by a hand vote of 9-0 with no abstentions.

X. Bruin Life editor in chief selection (Ward)

Allison Bader, candidate

Agar moved to enter executive session at 7:44 p.m. Ball seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Rubin moved to exit executive session at 8:56 p.m. Frehn seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Ball moved to appoint Allison Bader as the 2013-14 Bruin Life editor in chief. Levine seconded the motion. The motion passed by a hand vote of 9-0 with no abstentions.

XI. Fem editor in chief selection (Ward)

Amy Trivers, candidate

Ball moved to approve Amy Trivers as the 2013-14 Fem editor in chief. Frehn seconded the motion. The motion passed by a hand vote of 9-0 with no abstentions.

XII. Ha'Am editor in chief selection (Ward)

Tessa Nath, candidate

Ball moved to approve Tessa Nath as the 2013-14 Ha'Am editor in chief. White seconded the motion. The motion passed by a hand vote of 9-0 with no abstentions.

XIII. OutWrite editor in chief selection (Ward)

Bryan Platz, candidate

Ball moved to approve Bryan Platz as the 2013-14 OutWrite editor in chief. White seconded the motion. The motion passed by a hand vote of 9-0 with no abstentions.

XIV. UCLA Radio general manager selection (Ward)

Cameron Rowland, candidate

Ball moved to approve Cameron Rowland as the 2013-14 UCLA Radio general manager. White seconded the motion. The motion passed by a hand vote of 9-0 with no abstention.

XV. Communications Board Media Awards

Peña said that he wanted to revive the Communications Board Media Awards. Peña asked Ward for a recommendations on changes to the awards policy. Ward said the Communications Board had the ability to give out three awards per publication for best writing, best design/graphics, and business. He said the publications no longer have business staff. Peña requested that the board allow him to suspend the awards policy so that he could have flexibility in creating award categories. Rubin moved to allow Peña to suspend the policy concerning the Communications Board Media Awards. Levine seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

New Business/Action Items

XVI. Adjourn (Peña)

White moved to adjourn the meeting. Ball seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent. The meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Submitted by Doria Deen