

Minutes of the March 2, 2015 Meeting of the UCLA Communications Board

Board members present: Elaheh Alizadehbirjandi, Addrita Das, Steve Greim, Justin Kumar, Josh Levine, Keren Mahgerefteh, Jener Sakiri, Arvli Ward

Board members late: Andre Jones, Jesse Coronado

Board members leaving early: Andre Jones

Board members absent: Hossain Albgal, Mohammad Ahmad, Cuauhtémoc Ortega, George White

Guest present: Andrew Erickson (Daily Bruin Editor in Chief)

I. Call to order (Kumar)

Kumar called the meeting to order at 5:39 p.m.

II. Approval of the agenda (Kumar)

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

III. Approval of February minutes (Kumar)

This item was tabled until the next meeting because they were sent out late.

IV. Executive Committee report (Albgal)

There was no report.

V. Operations Committee report (Kumar)

Kumar said the Operations Committee met on February 24 but did not have quorum. He reported that Lauren Uba from UCLA Radio asked for help in replacing the carpet in the radio station as well as installing sound proofing for the DJ studio and improving wifi performance. Ward said that the Student Union would improve the carpet, first by cleaning and then maybe replacing the carpet. Ward said that Student Media could look into installing wifi in the station to replace the university system. Greim said Studio 22 in the residence halls might be able to contribute sound proofing material. He said that Student Media should follow up with Vince Mitchell. Kumar said that Pacific Ties editor Karin Chan was having a difficult time navigating the resources that were at her disposal. He said she wanted a graphic designer to help design their logo, so they recommended Jose Hernandez, BruinLife marketing manager, to assist. Ward said he thought she had challenges in attracting staff and Hernandez would offer support in how to use software and machines. Ward said editors should not wait until the operations committee meetings to raise operational concerns and that they should contact Student Media staff when issues arise.

Kumar yielded the floor to Daily Bruin EIC Erickson to discuss the Daily Bruin's position on the reduction of print frequency. Erickson said cutting the paper's frequency would negatively affect sales and revenue. He said that the staff also took pride in printing five days a week and that he believed that the discipline it took to print daily builds leaders and character in a staff. He understood that the conversation would have to take place within the next five years but believed it was too early to reduce the Daily Bruin's frequency. Ward said the conversation would probably take place in the next 18 months. Ward said he believed that the ASUCLA BOD was not asking for the Daily Bruin to cut print frequency per se, but to look at various editorial models. Ward said that printing costs made sense of daily frequency, but unfortunately fewer readers want to read the Daily Bruin in print. Levine suggested to Erickson that instead of thinking about the transition in terms of number of years, he should think it more in terms of milestones that would suggest a time for change. Sakiri asked how the recruitment process would be affected if the Daily Bruin print was cut. He asked if the Daily Bruin would lose popularity, or would less people want to get involved. Erickson said he thought it would impact their credibility if they went solely digital.

VI. Finance Committee report (Sakiri)

Sakiri said the Finance Committee met on February 27 and they also met with the ASUCLA BOD Finance Committee February 20. The BOD Finance Committee will be recommending \$100,000 in deferments to the BOD at their next meeting. Sakiri said at the February 27 meeting, the Finance Committee discussed strategic planning which they planned to present to ASUCLA BOD Finance Committee.

Ward said ASUCLA's executive director took the matter of the class action settlement to Steve Olsen, UCLA's CFO, who said that the Communications Board could not accept the money. As a result, the money was parked in an investment account as a series of steps were taken to determine how much of the money the Communications Board might be entitled to. University Audit Services are looking at how Student Media personnel made the claim. Sakiri said the Communications Board would require a deferment in March of payments to ASUCLA without this cash.

Student Fee

Jones said that he and Das as members of the fee committee were working on the fee question. Das said the final date for qualifying for the ballot was April 8. Jones said there were important decisions for the Communications Board to make, including the dollar amount of the fee and if a strategy would require co-sponsors.

Levine said that we needed to come up with a selling point as to why the Communications Board should get fee support.

VII. Media Director's Report (Ward)

January Financial Statements

Sakiri said the financial statements are impacted by the reversal of the \$142,000 from the settlement. Ward said total revenue was \$98,591 against budgeted revenue of \$115,024 for a negative variance of \$16,433.

Actual expense was \$132,123 against budgeted expense of \$117,739 for a negative variance \$14,384. The most significant single-line negative variance was printing at \$12,432. Year-to-date revenue was \$626,400 while budgeted revenue was \$669,273 for \$42,873 shortfall to budget.

January YTD revenue was at \$719,301, which is \$92,901 down from last year. YTD expense was \$704,265, \$11,748 more than budgeted expense of \$692,517. Last year, expense was \$746,581.

January net revenue was a negative \$32,532. Budgeted net revenue was a loss of \$2,715 for a variance of \$29,817.

YTD net revenue was a loss of \$77,865. Budgeted net revenue was a loss of \$23,244, so there is a negative variance of \$54,621.

Cash reserves stood at \$278,000 (including cash from the class action settlement). Cash balance as of the meeting (excluding the \$142,000) was \$30,000.

February Estimates

February revenue was estimated to be \$119,000, just under the budget at \$120,322.

Associated Collegiate Press (ACP)

Ward said that the Daily Bruin received 11 first place awards and 17 second and third place awards in the California Collegiate Media Association competition at the Associated Student Press conference. Ward said he presented a session on mobile strategy.

Daily Bruin Website

Ward said the Daily Bruin successfully redesigned dailybruin.com.

New Business/Action Items

VIII. 2015-16 Communications Board Budget Assumptions (Ward)

Ward said that the most important assumption was at what rate would print advertising fall. Ward said the Finance Committee had arrived at 25%. Ward discussed the other items in the assumptions.

Coronado moved to approve the 2015-16 Communications Board assumptions. Levine seconded the motion. The motion passed by a hand vote of 8-0 with no abstentions.

IX. Student Media strategic planning (Kumar)

Kumar said ASUCLA's BOD asked our Finance Committee to present sustainable operational models for the future. Sakiri said the committee was developing various models, principally different department staff configurations.

X. Fixed Assets Capitalization Policy (Ward)

Ward said ASUCLA's current capitalization policy states that any purchases \$1,500 or greater can be capitalized. Since computers are much cheaper now, and they have a life span of over five years, the proposal is to capitalize them even though they are under \$1,500. ASUCLA Finance agreed to change this with the consent of the board. Ward proposed to the board that we reduce the amount of capitalization to \$500.

Sakiri moved to capitalize any assets purchases that were \$500 or greater.

Mahgerefteh seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

XI. Adjourn (Albgal)

Levine moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m. Coronado seconded the motion.

The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Submitted by Doria Deen