

## **Minutes of the October 6, 2014 Meeting of the UCLA Communications Board**

Board members present: Hossain Albgal, Elaheh Alizadehbirjandi, Jesse Coronado, Addrita Das, Mukti Desai, Steve Greim, Andre Jones, Justin Kumar, Josh Levine, Keren Mahgerefteh, Jener Sakiri, Arvli Ward

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

Guest: Andrew Erickson (Daily Bruin Editor in Chief)

I. Call to order (Albgal)

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

II. Approval of the agenda (Albgal)

Mahgerefteh moved to approve the agenda. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

III. Approval of September minutes (Albgal)

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

IV. Executive Committee report (Albgal)

The committee has not meet yet so there was no report.

V. Operations Committee report (Kumar)

The committee has not meet yet so there was no report.

VI. Finance Committee report

The committee has not meet yet so there was no report.

VII. Media Director's report (Ward)

*Report from Daily Bruin editor in chief*

Albgal asked Andrew Erickson to let the board know how the Daily Bruin expected the board to best support and serve them. Erickson invited board members to stop by his office to talk to him or his staff anytime they were available. He said he wanted to make sure that the Daily Bruin was a resource for the board. He welcomed any questions from the board, but there were none.

*Strategic framework*

Ward said he would deliver his report to address the strategic framework in which the board has been working. Ward said that the board continues to work to right size the organization, to seek partners with which it can share its mission and mission costs, to build new publishing relevance and audience, and empower our students by teaching them to take more political and management leadership in the future.

### *BruinLife Yearbook/Friesens Partnership*

Ward said negotiations with Friesens were now winding down. Ward said that Friesens would send a check for \$15,000 to the book's operational expenses. Kumar said that some members of the ASUCLA Finance Committee meetings opposed the deal with Friesens. Levine said by the end of the meeting they seemed to have better understood the deal terms. Ward said that BruinLife would not give up editorial control and that the deal covered the marketing of the book. Levine said the board should communicate to the ASUCLA Finance Committee throughout the year as the relationship develops. Coronado said that the ASUCLA Finance Committee was concerned that there was no out clause in the contract and added that the board had addressed this when the Friesens representative made his presentation to the board.

### *Communications Studies partnership*

Ward said that the partnership with Communications Studies to support our editorial adviser position became operational recently. Abbe Goldman, who won the 2004 Pulitzer Prize winner for National Reporting and has taught in Student Media workshops for about 12 years, began working 20 hours per week on Oct. 1. Comm Studies provides her salary and benefits. During the winter Goldman will begin teaching a class in Comm Studies and will reduce advising hours in Student Media. Ward said the relationship with Comm Studies and Department Chair Tim Groeling should have other benefits including a connection to the university's development department.

Student Media also recently finalized an engagement letter with the Los Angeles law firm of OMelvany and Myers for pro bono editorial legal support.

### *Recent media successes: Daily Bruin and Bruin Life*

Ward said both the Daily Bruin and BruinLife yearbook have been nominated for 2013 Associated Collegiate Press Pacemaker Awards, an award that recognizes the best student media and student journalists each year. The awards will be announced in late October.

### *Mobile*

Ward said that the mobile audience continues to grow. Installs of native mobile apps released by Bruin Mobile now totaled more than 120,000 installs, which was about 25,000 more installs than last year. Ward said Bruin Mobile was producing mobile apps for new clients including Occidental College and Western Oregon University. Bruin Mobile continues to receive calls from other colleges.

### *New graduate assistant*

Ward said that a part-time "graduate assistant" for the newsmagazines had been hired at 17 hours per week to augment the department's advising structure. Ward said that budget had about \$30,000 set aside to fund a media adviser and since Communications Studies is paying for the media adviser position, some needs could

be addressed by using the money to support Abbe Goldman. Helga Salinas, a former La Gente editor in chief and Columbia Journalism School graduate who just finished internships at Univision and NPR was hired. Ward said that if the department didn't have adequate revenues, the position could be curtailed.

### **Discussion Items**

#### **VIII. July/August 2014 Communications Board Financial Statements (Ward)**

Ward suggested that board members focus on four questions: (1) How much money did we make (for the period in discussion) and how close to plan are we? (2) How much did we spend and how close to plan are we? (3) What is the net revenue after expenses? and how close to plan are we? and (4) How much cash do we have in our reserves?

August revenue was \$48,438 while budgeted revenue was \$43,142 for a positive variance of \$5,296. Sales improved from over last August when revenue was \$42,938. Actual expense was \$90,420 while budgeted expense was \$92,027 for a positive variance of \$1,607. Last August expense was \$128,088 so expenses were down about 29 percent over last year.

Ward said that savings were created in August professional services, which was budgeted at \$7,500 while actual expense was about \$3,000. Sakiri asked Ward what Professional Services entailed. Ward said it covered the hiring of outside parties and companies and journalists who do a number of jobs for us jobs for the department like support our servers and our business systems to teaching in our workshop training.

Student Media office wages were \$5,400 over budget but \$33,000 less than last year as a result of hours for graduate assistants. Greim asked if the overspending in Student Media Office wages would be permanent. Ward said the wages for the graduate assistants weren't budgeted in the summer months but the hours were necessary and that he hoped to finish on plan by the end of the year.

August net revenue was a loss of \$41,981 while the budgeted net loss was \$48,885 for a positive variance of \$6,904. Net loss was cut in half from the \$85,150 loss last year.

Cash at the end of August was \$109,000, Ward said. The cash balance as of the meeting date was \$180,000. Greim reminded the board that the Communications Board owed ASUCLA \$200,000 for the line of credit received last spring and that the positive change in cash was due to a large prepayment for ads that have yet to run. Sakiri asked how much has been paid back on the line of credit and if the board paid interest. Ward said none has been paid back, and that interest payments were about \$300 per month.

Coronado said he would like to see real-time financial information. Ward said because of the accounting schedule, financial statements would be about a month behind. Ward said he would try to give real time information at each meeting.

### **New Business/Action Items**

IX. Confirmation of Communications Board editor in chief appointments (Ward)  
Ward recommended that all spring appointments for editors in chief and general manager be confirmed. He said there were no editors for Pacific Ties and BruinLife yearbook, having received no applications last year. Ward said that the board should address that issue during the next meeting after discussing it in the Operations Committee meeting. Mahgereteh moved to confirm all editor in chief appointments. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed by a hand vote of 11-0 with no abstentions.

X. Adjourn (Albgal)  
Coronado moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 p.m. Kumar seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Submitted by Doria Deen