

QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES

Monday, June 1, 2020

Members present: Steve Allen, Stephanie Butler, Wayne Cotter, Betty Farber, Marian Friedmann, Pam Gemelli, Phil Gisser, Bob Gottfried, Jennifer Jolly, Karen Levin, Frieda Lipp, Carolyn McGuire, Ruth Ward and Michael Wellner

Members absent: None

Note: Council previously requested that all unopposed candidates attend Quest Council meetings on an informal, nonvoting basis until they are officially voted into office. Therefore, Stephanie Butler, Treasurer-Elect, Karen Levin, Secretary-Elect, and Ruth Ward, Vice-President-Elect, were present for this meeting.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic shutdown, this monthly meeting was held via Zoom call. The meeting was called to order by Quest President Bob Gottfried at 2:30 p.m.

Summer Guest Speaker

Council unanimously approved payment of \$500 for Summer Guest Speaker.

Q Review Proposal

Wayne Cotter, former editor of *Q Review*, made the following motion on behalf of the *Q Review* editors:

“Q Review shall be published annually in both hard copy and electronic forms. Should Council, at some future time, determine that Q Review no longer be published in a hard copy format, Council must inform Q Review's Editor-in-Chief of that decision no later than July 1 of the year prior to the year in which the next volume of Q Review is to be published.”

The motion, which was seconded by Bob Gottfried, passed unanimously.

Quest Bylaws Session

Since as many as six new members will be joining Council following the election, Council will soon hold a special bylaws meeting so its 11 members can familiarize themselves with Quest's bylaws and identify needed updates. Wayne Cotter will coordinate the meeting and outgoing Treasurer (and bylaws expert) Steve Allen will participate to answer questions and provide insight,

Summer Schedule

The summer schedule was distributed to Quest Membership. It includes the Summer Encores Program, a Guest Speaker and a play presented by Roy Clary.

Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC) Update

The first presentation by the candidates was held on June 1, and the second on June 3. Gloria Peropat, the Nominations and Elections Chair will email an Information Document to Quest

membership with instructions on how to vote. Voting will be held electronically June 8th, 9th, and 10th.

Nina Dioletis will tally the ballots for anyone whose last name falls between “A” & “M,” and Caroline Thompson will tally those for anyone whose last name falls between “N” & “Z.” To ensure the accuracy of the ballot count, Caroline Thompson and Nina Dioletis will exchange their ballot files and count each other’s work. Caroline and Nina will send the results to Bob Gottfried who will notify the candidates and the membership of the election outcome.

Parliamentarian

Ruth Ward has volunteered to serve for one year in a new position (in addition to VP) as the Quest Parliamentarian. When that term has expired the Council will seek another member to follow Ruth in that position.

Electronic Archives

Beth Callender will work with Steve Allen to keep both the archives and the Quest website up to date. Both the Council Minutes and the Treasury Report are posted on the website. Steve Allen recommended holding a Zoom session for all Council members to review the archives and Council agreed.

Membership Committee

Michael Wellner, outgoing Chair of the Membership Committee, proposed that prospective members interested in joining Quest for the summer session be charged \$50 instead of the usual

\$100. This reflects the fact that the summer session will be held on-line and will be an “Electronic Membership.”

If Quest doesn't return to 25 Broadway in the fall, and additional prospective members are interested in joining for the fall semester, they will be interviewed via Zoom and charged \$150 for the on-line fall semester. It was also agreed to request a temporary waiver of the current membership cap (currently 270).

The motion, which was seconded by Marian Friedmann, passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

- Quest's finances have not changed in any significant aspect from the quarterly written report submitted at the May Council meeting. Quest's finances continue in a healthy state. Our annual revenues from membership fees cover our annual expenses and we have a robust reserve that has primarily been built from charitable contributions that is available for emergencies. This past year has seen outstanding growth in our reserves, due to the enormously generous bequest of \$487,000 from Ken Leedom, and strong operating results due to our growth in membership fees.

- Annual revenue from membership dues will be about \$141,000 this year, about \$7,500 more than currently projected expenses of about \$133,500.
- Quest reserves of about \$800,000 consist of about \$260,000 in our banking accounts, \$500,000 in US Treasury Notes and certificates of deposit deposits in our brokerage account at JPMorgan Chase, and \$40,000 in our account at CWE in excess of budgeted expenses.

New Business

A) Zoom Access to Non-Member Invitees

Council discussed allowing access to the following invitees:

- People considering joining Quest.
- People joining for the summer session.
- People who would pay a fee to be “remote” members.

Council unanimously agreed to let invitees sample Quest Zoom sessions for free. For example, someone could access 2 weeks during the summer session or 2 weeks during the fall session.

B) Zoom Functionality

Council discussed alternative ways to use Zoom. Some classes (e. g., the Short Stories Class) are considered “Discussion” classes because they recommend reading in advance for discussion.

Discussion classes tend to fill the classroom. Other classes (e. g., the Acting Class) are considered “Workshop” classes because participants work from one session to the next to achieve a specific goal. Because regular attendance is strongly recommended, these classes are typically smaller in size.

If a class becomes too large for discussion purposes, Zoom has “Break-out Rooms” that can be used. This offers flexibility for the class to be split into smaller groups to discuss and then get back to the larger group.

Council decided to explore using “Break-out Rooms” to accommodate specific situations. The Lead Coordinator of a course interested in using this feature of Zoom will work with the Online Learning Committee.

Note: Bob Gottfried mentioned there is no decision yet about returning to 25 Broadway in the fall. If Governor Cuomo decides schools can reopen and CCNY reopens, Council will need to discuss how classes will be held if Quest membership decides to return and if members will travel by public transportation.

The Council’s next scheduled meeting is Monday, July 6.

The meeting was adjourned by Bob Gottfried at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Levin

Secretary - Elect