

## **QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES**

### **Tuesday, October 13, 2020**

**Members present:** David Bernard, Stephanie Butler, Wayne Cotter, Pam Gemelli, Bob Gottfried, Arlynn Greenbaum, Karen Levin, Frieda Lipp, Penelope Pi-Sunyer, Ruth Ward and Michael Wellner.

**Members absent:** None

*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 4:00 pm.*

#### **Funding Quest Scholarships for CWE in 2021**

A motion was made to increase the amount of \$3,500 for CWE scholarships to \$4,000. Council unanimously approved the allocation of \$4,000 for CWE student scholarships for 2021. The Peter Cott/Kenneth Leedom bequest includes the funding of \$5,000 annually for student scholarships.

#### **Tuition for the Spring Semester**

Council unanimously agreed that Quest classes will continue to be held online for the Spring semester. Council unanimously approved charging \$150 for the Spring semester (this includes the summer session). This cost applies to both returning members and Zoom members.

## **Liability Insurance Policy**

Quest has a liability insurance policy that covers Quest members while we are at 25 Broadway. Since we are not currently on site, Quest Treasurer Stephanie Butler recommended that we cancel the policy until we are back at 25 Broadway. The premium is \$3,000 annually and can be renewed at any time within 30 days' notice to the insurance carrier. Council unanimously agreed to cancel this policy.

CCNY and CWE are named as additional insureds on this policy. Bob Gottfried will notify Dean Mercado and Davi Saroop so that they are aware of the policy's cancellation.

## **Quest Membership List**

The Membership Committee maintains a complete list of all Quest members (including Zoom members). Several members requested that the list be distributed to a member upon request. If a member does not want their information shared, they can opt out by notifying Quest President Bob Gottfried by October 21, 2020.

Council agreed that effective October 21, 2020, a member can request a copy of the list from Nan McNamara, Membership Chair, and/or Donna Ramer, who actually maintains the list. The list will include only name, address, phone number and email address, and will be sent to those requesting it via email.

To date, there are a total of 293 members. This includes 33 new Zoom members.

## **Discussion on Proposal to Waive or Reduce Tuition Due to a Financial Hardship**

Our existing policy says that a current member who has a financial hardship can request a waiver or reduction in tuition by contacting the President, Vice President and Treasurer. If two of the three officers agree there is a financial hardship, it will be approved. The member can pay a reduced amount of tuition or no tuition for a certain period of time. This policy applies to regular members, not Zoom members.

There was discussion about recruiting new members who may be interested in Quest but have financial issues and cannot afford our membership fee. Quest does not currently have a policy that would address such cases. Council agreed that they would like to consider this in the future but that new members should pay at least a nominal amount.

It was decided to table this until we are back at 25 Broadway and can handle new members on an individualized basis.

## **Update on Online Learning Program and Replays**

Wayne Cotter updated the Council that all Zoom “Webinars” are being recorded. Most discussion groups are not being recorded. The current plan is to have all Webinars from the Fall semester available in December so that members could view them during the months of December and January. This plan provides a library of Webinars that can be accessed during this two-month period.

Council can discuss at a later date if we want Quest Webinars to be archived and available following the summer 2021 semester.

### **A) Concerns Discussed by the Curriculum Committee for Summer 2021**

As a member of the Curriculum Committee, David Bernard presented feedback that having these recordings available for two months might have a negative impact in terms of their ability to choose courses for the Summer session.

Summer is advertised as the “Best of Quest” and is used to attract new members as well as to give existing members the opportunity to see presentations that they missed. Council said we should still have the “Best Presentations” available during the Summer but they would be delivered “LIVE” by the presenter (either via Zoom or in person).

Bob Gottfried confirmed we don’t want to use a recording for the Summer session. Quest will continue to have live Zoom Webinars in the summer or live presentations if we are back at 25 Broadway in the summer. Members often change their original presentations for the summer. It was suggested that David Bernard explain this to the Curriculum Committee.

A question was raised as to how the Curriculum Committee is getting feedback regarding the selection of courses. David Bernard said he believed they are getting feedback from the coordinators as well as the members. In the past, there were

ballot boxes at 25 Broadway that asked for recommendations. A “virtual” ballot box can now be used asking for recommendations. Council suggested that the Curriculum Committee email Quest members asking them to submit the names of the courses they considered the “Best of Quest.”

David Bernard asked about recording our Guest Speaker Lectures as well as the Memorial Lecture so that those presentations would be available at any time. Wayne Cotter confirmed the online Guest Lectures have been and will continue to be recorded. All these recordings will be available for viewing by members in December and January, unless a guest speaker objects. The Guest Speakers Committee will follow up on this.

### **B) Request from the Curriculum Committee Regarding Small Group Discussions for Winter Break**

David Bernard had an additional request from the Curriculum Committee regarding interactive group discussions. The Curriculum Committee would like these to be offered during the months of December 2020 and January 2021 when Quest is on winter break. Similar interactive discussions were held during the summer 2020 break but were “private” group discussions and not offered to all Quest membership.

Council noted that the Quest By-laws specifically require that all courses or discussion classes must be open to the entire membership. Additionally, the Online Learning Committee is not available to assist with winter-break sessions.

## **Update on the By-Laws Revision Committee**

The first meeting of the By-Laws Committee will be held November 13, 2020 at which time the Committee will elect a Chairperson.

## **Prior Council Resolution Regarding the Peter Cott/Kenneth Leedom Memorial Guest Lecture**

Quest offers two Memorial Guest Lectures per year. Arlynn Greenbaum reviewed the prior Council resolution approving the topics that were stipulated by the Council. Theater, poetry and the arts were specified.

We discussed including other speakers for the Memorial Guest Lecture and not having any restrictions on the topics that we request. Council unanimously agreed to amend the language so that the Guest Speakers Committee can choose speakers without any restrictions.

Arlynn Greenbaum distributed to Council the list of speakers planned for the Spring 2021 semester.

## **New Language Regarding Membership on the Quest Website**

Council agreed to changing the language that now appears on our website **FROM:**

**“Our membership includes retired and semi-retired business people, teachers, musicians, college professors, doctors, lawyers, engineers, editors, homemakers, reporters, dentists,**

**actors, psychologists, librarians, artists and many more with diverse backgrounds.” TO:**

***“Our membership includes intellectually curious people from all walks of life.”***

### **Treasurer’s Report for October 2020**

- Quest’s finances have not changed in any significant aspect from the quarterly written report submitted at the April Council meeting. Quest’s finances continue in a healthy state. We have assets of approximately \$782,577.
- The fall 2020 semester dues for online classes were \$150. However, those Quest members who paid full dues in 2019-20 received a \$150 credit for missed spring classes due to the pandemic. Quest then applied this \$150 credit to the \$150 fall dues. Therefore, no Quest member who paid full 2019-20 dues was billed for any additional dues for the fall semester.
- We have received checks in the amount of \$150 each from 33 new fall semester zoom members for a total of \$4,950 and one check for a full membership for a returning member in the partial year amount of \$175 - making the total income to date for the fall semester of \$5,125.
- Projected expenses for the spring semester total \$25,621 and additional fall semester expenses are \$9,115, making

our total anticipated expenses through the end of the fiscal year \$34,736

- We have reinvested 4 CD's at First Republic Bank for a 6-month period at a 0.3% interest rate in the amount of \$52,926.72 each.

A proposed budget illustrating projected expenses for the Spring 2021 semester was reviewed.

## **New Business**

### **Tuition Bills for Spring 2021**

Quest Treasurer Stephanie Butler asked about sending out tuition bills. Quest President Bob Gottfried will email membership in December to notify them to send their tuition checks to Stephanie.

### **Leave of Absence Policy**

The policy has not changed. If a member requests a leave of absence of one year or less, it will automatically be granted. For example, if you decide not to be a member in the Spring semester of 2021, you can come back in the Fall of 2021.

Leaves of absence greater than one year, must be approved by Council.

This policy applies to full members of Quest. It does not apply to Zoom members. Bob Gottfried will reference this policy in his email regarding the tuition bill.



The Council's next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, November 10 at 4:00 pm.

*The meeting was adjourned by Bob Gottfried at 5:45 pm.*

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Levin

Secretary