

QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES

Monday, June 7, 2021

Council Members present: David Bernard, Stephanie Butler, Wayne Cotter, Mary Ann Donnelly, Bob Gottfried, Arlynn Greenbaum, Karen Levin, Nan McNamara, Penelope Pi-Sunyer, Donna Ramer, Ruth Ward and Michael Wellner.

Council 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 Ruth Ward at 4:00 pm.

Introduction of New Council Members

Quest President Ruth Ward officially welcomed new Council members Mary Ann Donnelly, Nan McNamara, Donna Ramer and Michael Wellner.

Approval of Ad hoc Lunchtime Activities Committee

Council unanimously approved the new Lunchtime Activities Committee. This is an ad hoc committee created to coordinate and promote activities during lunchtime. It has a one-year term and will be revisited next year. Sheryl Harawitz is the Committee Chair and Stephanie Butler is the Council liaison.

Historical Information Regarding Term Limits for Special Committees

Per the bylaws, Council is required to track the term limits for the Auditing, Curriculum, Membership and Scheduling Committees. With respect to the terms for these committee chairs, they may not serve more than three consecutive years and committee members may not serve for more than four consecutive years.

Quest Secretary Karen Levin reviewed the history for these committees beginning with the 2017 - 2018 academic year through the current year of 2021 - 2022.

Approval of Waiver for David Judlowitz

Council unanimously approved a one-year extension for David Judlowitz, Chair of the Auditing Committee, who has served 4 years.

David Bernard asked if Council has a formal transition planning program in place for new committee chairs once his or her term ends. Currently, there is no formal transition plan in place. It should be noted that under Quest's bylaws, committee chairs are selected by the President with the approval of Council.

Approval of Committee Chairs and Council Liaisons for 2021-2022

Quest has 18 standing committees. Each committee has a committee chair and a Council liaison. The liaison is responsible for keeping Council updated on committee projects.

Council unanimously approved the committee chairs and the Council liaison for each committee.

In August, Ruth will notify Quest membership of all Committee Chairs, committee members and liaisons. This information is also posted on the website.

The ad hoc Zoom Committee will now be known as the Technology Committee. Many of the members on the Technology Committee were already on the Zoom Committee and it made sense to merge these committees.

Council unanimously approved the disbanding of the ad hoc Bylaws Committee.

Council discussed whether we need to have a bylaws summary prepared to reflect the changes to the bylaws. Council decided it was not necessary to have a summary version of the bylaws.

Discussion And Approval of the 2021 – 2022 Operating Budget

Quest Treasurer Stephanie Butler presented the budget for the next year. As part of her preparation for the budget, Stephanie spoke to each Committee Chair to see what their expenses would be.

Stephanie discussed the budget changes as follows:

- Q Review will have some increases regarding mailing costs due to COVID

- Quest Catalog will have some production increases due to layouts and printing
- QNEWS costs increased due to layouts. We produced 8 electronic issues and 2 print issues
- Insurance, contributions, coffee and bonuses had no increases
- Marketing & Communications will have an increase to cover the costs of developing a viable transition plan for Quest's Webmaster.
- Museums trips increased because two trips were provided at no cost to Quest (due to COVID). Going forward, all museum trips will need to be paid for.
- Social events (these include onsite events, offsite events and expenses related to the Caring Committee) decreased.

Stephanie reviewed our expenses at 25 Broadway.

- Office expenses increased due to tax filing work, other corporate filing fees and miscellaneous fees
- Honoraria increased due to two extra days of class
- No capital expenses are anticipated
- Rent is anticipated at \$50,000 (this reflects a reduction of \$20,000)
- \$12,000 to cover the partial salary and benefits for an Office Manager
- Surplus of \$2,500 built into the budget

Anticipated revenue from dues is anticipated to be \$65,500 (based on 248 members).

Michael Wellner prepared a budget analysis that Council reviewed. It included a projection of 266 members. This is based on old members renewing, current Zoom members, members returning from leave, founding members and new members.

At our May 10, meeting, Council agreed to collect dues for the fall semester. Ruth recommended charging \$275 for the fall semester. If we are short, we can raise tuition for the spring.

Arlynn Greenbaum asked if we plan to hire an Office Manager. If we do, it may be for the spring semester.

Wayne Cotter raised the issue of Quest spending \$30,000 for Zoom equipment. He explained this will be taken from our reserves. He also suggested that Stephanie go back to 2012 to track the reserves history and prepare a spreadsheet. There was additional discussion regarding this. Bob Gottfried didn't feel it was necessary to go back to track reserves. Ruth would like to see this detailed information about reserves.

Council unanimously agreed to approve the operating budget.

Summer Tuition

Council unanimously agreed to continue charging \$100 for the summer semester only.

Fall Tuition

It was decided there will be one membership category instead of one fee for regular members and a different fee for Zoom members. Council unanimously agreed to charge all members the same fee of \$275 for the fall. (Note: In July, Council will discuss a reduced fee for members outside of New York – see section below).

Registration Information for Fall 2021

Nan confirmed that she needs full member information by the third week in June. The Membership Committee will contact the different categories of members and explain how they can re-enroll.

Fall tuition for returning full members will be due on August 15. Current Zoom members will be invited to visit and talk to the committee when classes resume in mid-September. They will be first in line to become new "full" members and will pay their fall tuition when they join officially in September.

Reservation System for Fall Semester 2021

Ruth recommended we postpone this decision until we hear back from CWE regarding any changes in CDC guidance. Arlynn Greenbaum said her committee would let guest speakers know we anticipate being live assuming things continue in a positive way.

Council agreed to address this at the July meeting.

Further Discussion of Fee Structure

Michael Wellner proposed a reduced fee for members who live out of the New York geographic area. Nan mentioned there are about 40 Zoom members with 12 of them living out of the geographic area. However, Council decided to postpone discussion of this issue until the July meeting.

Membership Cap

Ruth recommended we postpone this decision until August when we have a better idea of enrollees.

Council agreed to discuss this at the July meeting.

Use of QuestCommunity as a Platform for Political Opinions

Wayne spoke for the Marketing & Communications Committee (M & C) which has oversight responsibility for Quest googlegroups. M & C does not agree with the proposal to create a separate googlegroup for opinions about politics and other social issues. They said they would take responsibility for drafting a statement of social media policy, subject to Council review. Wayne forwarded a draft statement from M & C addressing this issue and Council reviewed the language. The language will be revised.

It was discussed and agreed that everyone should be courteous and respectful of all views. Donna Ramer also stated that members should not hit "Reply All" and should use the "bcc"

option instead. Additionally, members can always use the “Delete” button or unsubscribe from QuestCommunity.

Council decided that they would like M & C to produce a statement for Council to review.

Wayne made a motion that we not establish a separate Quest googlegroup for personal political opinions. Council agreed to this.

Ruth will email all members to notify them that a new googlegroup will not be created.

The Council’s next scheduled meeting is Monday, July, 6 at 4:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned by Ruth Ward at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Levin

Secretary