

QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES

Tuesday, July 6, 2021

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

Council Members absent: Nan McNamara

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.

Council Liaisons – Self-Introduction to Committee Chairs

Council reviewed the list of liaisons and Ruth Ward asked that each liaison contact the appropriate Committee Chair.

Calendar for Fall 2021

- Monday, September 13, 2021 - Classes begin
- Thursday, September 16, 2021 – No classes (Yom Kippur)
- Friday, November 12, 2021 – Annual Meeting at 2 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 24 and Thursday, November 25, 2021 – No classes
- Thursday, December 16, 2021 – Classes end

Calendar for Spring 2022

- Monday, January 31, 2022 - Classes begin
- Monday, February 21, 2022 - No classes (President's Day)

- Monday, April 18 – Thursday, April 21, 2022 – Spring Break (no classes)
- Friday, April 29, 2022 – Annual Meeting at 2 p.m.
- Thursday, May 12, 2022 – Classes end

Council confirmed the previously approved calendar for the fall of 2021 and unanimously approved the calendar for the spring of 2022.

Membership Enrollment

After much discussion, Council confirmed that we will have a one-tier membership for the fall semester. Council voted unanimously to direct the Membership Committee to interview prospective members for the fall 2021 semester via Zoom, if that is their preference. The cost for the fall semester will be \$275.

To date, 92 people have renewed their full membership.

Social Media Policy Statement

At the June 7 meeting, Council decided not to have a separate Google Group to discuss political issues.

At today's meeting, Council unanimously approved the following policy statement.

Quest is first and foremost a community of members who come together to share ideas and learn from one another. At Quest we encourage the free exchange of ideas and opinions. However, in the interest of maintaining our spirit of

community, criticism should always be expressed in a respectful manner. We encourage members to focus their criticism on the content of a discussion and to avoid criticism of the person making the point.

When responding to an existing email, think about whether you are offering a new thought that should be shared with everyone, or if you are just expressing agreement or disagreement. If you want to show support for an idea or a difference of opinion, consider writing to the member individually rather than sharing it with the entire Quest community using reply-to-all. Most Quest members will appreciate fewer emails and less cluttered inboxes.

If you are uncomfortable with any QuestCommunity email, it is easy to delete it. While you always have the option of unsubscribing to QuestCommunity, we hope that most members will want to continue hearing from the large number of diverse voices that comprise our valued community.

Council suggested that the policy statement be posted on the Quest website and also included in the new member packet.

25th Anniversary Tote Bags

Council approved the purchase of 300 tote bags to give out at the Quest 25th Anniversary Lunch. The cost to design and produce the tote bags will be paid from our reserves. All members will receive a tote bag. We will also give a tote bag to our primary contacts at CCNY and CWE.

A motion was made to authorize Michael Wellner to research the cost of the tote bags. Council confirmed the previous Council's March 2020 approval of the purchase from our reserves.

Quest Debit/Credit Card

In the past, Quest members used a personal credit card to purchase items for Quest. Quest Treasurer Stephanie Butler reimbursed those members. Council discussed having a "company" credit card. If we did this, there would be a modest cashback to Quest.

Stephanie addressed this and said it would be more difficult for her to control from a financial perspective.

A motion was made to continue to use personal credit cards for all purchases. The majority of Council agreed to continue using personal credit cards.

Alternative Voting System

A Quest member offered a suggestion to revise Quest's method of nominating and electing candidates for Council. The suggestion was thoroughly discussed and Council unanimously determined that no revisions were necessary to the current procedures as outlined in Article VII (Nominations and Elections) of Quest's bylaws.

Diversity Committee Name Change

David Bernard suggested changing the name of the Diversity Committee to the “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee.” Many organizations recognize that the term “diversity” doesn’t capture the full meaning of various issues that are now being discussed. This updated wording is now used to refer to all people regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, skills and expertise.

Bob Gottfried mentioned that we might have to amend the bylaws to reflect any change in the name of a committee. David Bernard spoke to Steve Allen who agreed that the bylaws would need to be amended and then shared with Quest members to vote on.

Council decided that the committee can refer to themselves unofficially as the “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee.” The website will need to be changed as well. David Bernard will notify Quest Webmaster Michael Russo so he can change the name.

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 asked if CWE had given us any new information about the CDC protocols. On July 19, Ruth will be meeting with Davi Saroop, Administrative Services Coordinator of the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies at CCNY’s Center for Worker Education and will address this.

Council agreed to address this at the August 2 meeting.

Membership Cap

Discussion of this issue was also postponed until our August 2 meeting.

Treasurer's Report for the end of the July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 Fiscal Year

Quest Treasurer Stephanie Butler presented the Treasurer's Report for next year.

- This report is based on final end of June account statements for all of Quest's deposit and brokerage accounts.
- Quest's finances continue to be in a healthy state. Annual revenues from significantly reduced membership fees were \$2,468 short of covering our annual expenses, but we have robust reserves upon which we are able to draw on in the event of emergencies. This past year, we have used reserves due to the COVID emergency.
- Annual membership dues from full and Zoom members, aggregated \$43,875 a year, about \$2,468 less than expenses of \$46,343. The deficit of \$2,468 resulted from certain unanticipated expenses and certain anticipated expenses which proved to be unnecessary. In both cases, these were due to coping with the COVID climate through which we were forced to negotiate.

A loss of \$1,693 had been anticipated in the budget, so we

are \$775 short.

New Business

Quest Vice President Wayne Cotter mentioned that the Tech Committee will meet with Robert Hernandez from CWE on July 13, 2021 to schedule a test of the new equipment. There will be a second test scheduled on July 20, 2021. The new equipment has arrived with the exception of the mixer.

The Council's next scheduled meeting is Monday, August, 2 at 4:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned by Ruth Ward at 5:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Levin

Secretary