

QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES

Monday, November 1, 2021

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

Council Members absent: Bob Gottfried

Our monthly in-person meeting was held at 25 Broadway with some members participating via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by Quest President Ruth Ward at 2:45 pm.

Summer Encores Program for 2022

Mary Ann Donnelly reported that all recommendations should be emailed to Art Spar at

QuestEncores2022@googlegroups.com.

25th Anniversary Luncheon Update

Michael Wellner said we currently have between 160 and 170 members attending the luncheon. There will be 17 tables with 10 people at most tables. An email will be sent to all members regarding the menu options available.

Technology Committee Hybrid Update

Vice President Wayne Cotter noted that we experienced some technical problems during the first six weeks of the fall semester. Our technology team is working extremely hard presenting 14 to

15 hybrid presentations per week (this represents about 4 per day). The team has requested additional help in order to continue offering so many hybrid sessions.

There are some pending issues for the spring semester including the fact that we are seeing fewer people in attendance at 25 Broadway than we initially hoped for. We recognize the pandemic situation and fully understand that many members are reluctant to travel to Quest. Some Questers feel that the spirit of our organization has changed because not as many members are at 25 Broadway.

The tech team has some suggestions that may include reducing the number of hybrid classes. Many people are attending via Zoom and do not turn on their camera which limits active participation.

Council discussed a policy of “Hybrid Etiquette” for Quest members. This means that people should be presentable while attending on Zoom. Members should not be eating during a presentation or reading the newspaper.

President Ruth Ward would like to keep the hybrid option for our aging population.

Donna Ramer suggested sending a pre-General Meeting survey to address the hybrid option. This would allow members to think about questions and comments before the meeting. Vice

President Wayne Cotter said an email would be sent to all members regarding the purpose of the discussion.

As a result, Council decided that at our November 12 General Meeting, we will devote a half-hour discussion on how to improve our current hybrid approach. The discussion will be at the end of the meeting. Members will have the opportunity to discuss if they feel the hybrid option is working or if they have any suggestions regarding improvements.

Quest continues to be unique in offering in-person presentations as well as being fortunate to have a hybrid option. As far as we know, Quest is the only lifelong learning program currently offering such an extensive hybrid classroom experience. Most lifelong learning centers in the Metropolitan area are continuing to hold all their classes via Zoom.

Attendance at 25 Broadway

Michael Wellner reviewed some recent statistics regarding attendance since the fall semester started. He had some concerns about daily attendance. Currently, classes average in the teens and low twenties each day. Several classes have attendance in the twenties and thirties. Other classes have less than ten in attendance. Zoom attendance averages in the twenties. Prior to the pandemic, there were about 70 to 90 Questers attending classes in person.

Membership Update

Nan McNamara and Donna Ramer discussed the number of members who have renewed and sent in a check. There are 237 fully paid members. This includes our founding members and one new member.

Nan McNamara suggested that Council discuss what to charge for the spring semester. It was proposed that we charge \$275 for the spring and summer semesters combined. If someone would like to join for the summer semester only, it will be \$100.

Checks for the spring semester will be mailed to Donna Ramer in the first week of December. Donna will communicate the appropriate information via email.

Council unanimously agreed to this.

Electronic Archives Information on the Quest Website

It was suggested that a subcommittee be set up to review this. Steve Allen volunteered to be on this subcommittee and Quest Treasurer Stephanie Butler agreed to serve on the committee. The two of them will choose a third member, possibly a non-Council member.

New Editor for QNEWS

Barbara Gelber has been doing an excellent job since Carolyn McGuire stepped down.

Council unanimously approved Barbara Gelber as the new editor with Carolyn McGuire as Editor Emeritus. Michael Wellner and Margaret Woodward are also on the **QNEWS** committee.

Treasurer's Report for October 2021

Quest Treasurer Stephanie Butler reported that our finances continue to be in a healthy state.

The annual budget is \$130,000, half of which is \$65,000. We have actually collected \$63,700.

Expenses

We budgeted for \$127,500 for expenses, half of which is \$63,750. We have spent \$56,781. We saved \$10,000 on our rent and have done better on the expense side in every category with the exception of office expenses, where we have spent \$800 more than anticipated, mostly due to an air purifier that cost \$430.

The Council's next scheduled meeting is Monday, December 6, at 2:45 pm. We will meet at 25 Broadway.

The meeting was adjourned by Ruth Ward at 4:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Levin

Secretary