

QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES

Monday, December 6, 2021

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

Council Members absent: Stephanie Butler, Arlynn Greenbaum and Nan McNamara

Our monthly in-person meeting was held at 25 Broadway with Bob Gottfried 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 15 sessions are planned (as of now) for the summer semester beginning June 7 through July 28. There may be some discussion courses included as well. Additional recommendations should be emailed to Art Spar at QuestEncores2022@googlegroups.com.

Spring Semester for 2022

Mary Ann Donnelly noted that the catalog was emailed to all members. A hard copy will be available before the end of the fall semester.

25th Anniversary Luncheon

Michael Wellner said the luncheon was a huge success with 160 attendees. Dean Mercado and Robert Hernandez attended from CWE. President Vince Boudreau and Senior Advisor Dee Dee Mozeleski attended from CCNY.

Spring 2022 Year-End Luncheon

Michael Wellner reported that members suggested Tavern on the Green (too expensive), Battery Gardens II and Bryant Park. The same sub-committee that worked on the 25th Anniversary Luncheon will research these places as well as others. The luncheon will be held on the Friday after classes end.

Complementary End-of-the-Year Lunch at 25 Broadway

Quest will have a complementary lunch on Tuesday, December 14 from noon to 1:00 pm in the Quest lunchroom. Social Committee Chairs Lois Cardillo and Marcia Friedland will set out sandwiches (both meat-filled and vegetarian) as well as cookies from Katz's Delicatessen. Coffee and wine will be served.

Technology Committee Report and Hiring of Felix Pina

Vice President Wayne Cotter announced that we hired Felix Pina to provide additional help in order to continue offering so many hybrid sessions. Felix currently works for CWE as the assistant to Robert Hernandez who is the IT Manager for CWE. He is very familiar with Quest and the equipment that we purchased for our hybrid program. Felix will work for Quest on Mondays and Thursdays and will set up materials for the presenter, check the

microphones and be a trouble-shooter. A member of our Technology Committee will continue to be present.

Proposal for Minor Changes to the Quest Bylaws

Vice President Wayne Cotter noted minor changes need to be made to the bylaws from time to time, such as typos. Wayne suggested that perhaps he, as Council Parliamentarian, could keep track of such changes and they could be adapted into the bylaws when the bylaws are next reviewed and updated in 2024. Alternatively, such changes could be noted in the Council minutes and adapted in the bylaws when they are updated in 2024.

Donna Ramer mentioned that she also has some suggested future changes to the bylaws. Council will discuss this matter further at our January 5th meeting.

Long-Term Planning Report

Vice President Wayne Cotter mentioned a Quest report that addressed long-range planning for Quest that was prepared by an ad-hoc committee and issued in January 2017. Wayne will email a copy of this report for Council's review. After reviewing and evaluating the report, Council will discuss at our next meeting whether a similar committee should be formed to produce a 2022 long-term planning report.

Pros and Cons of Hiring an Office Manager

Quest President Ruth Ward has been managing various administrative functions of the office since our return to 25

Broadway. Several members raised the issue of hiring an Office Manager for the spring semester.

Ruth feels it's not necessary to hire an Office Manager at this time. Volunteers are helping with the attendance sheets required by CWE as well as other functions.

If a member needs help with the color copier, she will help them. Otherwise, each presenter should make their own copies. If the CWE protocols change due to COVID and we need to go back to a Zoom-only environment, the Office Manager position will incur expenses for Quest if we need to pay them during this time.

Council agreed we would not hire an Office Manager and would revisit this each semester.

Membership Update

Donna Ramer noted there are 239 members, including our founding members. One member requested a leave of absence and there are 17 new members.

Thursday Attendance at 25 Broadway

Since our return to 25 Broadway, in-person attendance has been relatively low on Thursdays, based on recent statistics.

There was some discussion regarding whether – in light of such low attendance – it would be advisable to schedule all Thursday classes as Zoom-only with no in-person attendance at 25 Broadway. This was determined to be unrealistic for the

upcoming semester since the schedule for the spring is complete and it would be unfair to require all Thursday lead coordinators to convert their classes to Zoom-only at this late date.

However, to encourage more members to attend Thursday classes, Ruth agreed to discuss with the Short Story Coordinators whether their Thursday sessions could be given in a hybrid rather than a Zoom-only format, which should significantly increase Thursday attendance. It should be noted that the Short Story class subsequently agreed to shift to a hybrid format on a trial basis.

In order to encourage in-person attendance, Zoom-only courses generally should be discouraged unless a compelling reason exists for a given course to be presented in such a format.

Donna Ramer suggested we focus on how to bring members back to 25 Broadway.

Coffee Back at 25 Broadway

Congratulations to Pam Gemelli and her team for bringing back coffee and goodies to the Quest lunchroom! This promotes social interaction and camaraderie and has been very successful.

Electronic Archives Information on the Quest Website

Quest Treasurer Stephanie Butler will meet with Steve Allen over the break to review this.

New Insurance Policy

David Bernard, Stephanie Butler and Michael Wellner formed a subcommittee to review changing our insurance broker to provide better coverage. They have identified a new broker who is able to reduce our current premium and include better coverage.

Quest has insurance for general liability coverage as well as a policy that covers our Officers.

The majority of Council voted approval to move ahead with the new broker. One member abstained from voting.

Spring 2022 Re-Election of New Council Members

Vice President Wayne Cotter, Secretary Karen Levin, and Council Members Arlynn Greenbaum and David Bernard are running again for a new two-year term beginning June 2022 through May 2024. Quest Treasurer Stephanie Butler and Council Member Penelope Pi-Sunyer will not run again.

A Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC) will be formed to manage this.

Treasurer's Report for November 2021

Ruth Ward read the Treasurer's Report for Quest Treasurer Stephanie Butler. Our finances continue to be in a healthy state and we are on target to end the year close to our budget.

The major change since the previous Treasurer's Report is that Quest paid for the 25th Anniversary Luncheon. The funds were pre-approved by Council and were from our reserve funds and did not impact our operating funds.

The Council's next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, January 5, at 2:45 pm. It will be held via Zoom.

The meeting was adjourned by Ruth Ward at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Levin

Secretary