

QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: April 8, 2025

Council held its monthly meeting at 25 Broadway in Room 7-39. President Donna Ramer called the meeting to order at 2:50 p.m.

Council Members Present: Karen Cullen, Mary Ann Donnelly (via Zoom), Peter Fleischman, Paul Golomb, Vince Grosso, Nan McNamara, Donna Ramer, Tamara Weinberg, and Judy Winn.

Council Members Absent: Bob Gottfried and Ilene Winkler

I. General Administration

- Donna distributed the revised Fall 2025 Schedule, containing only minor edits from the schedule approved at last month's meeting, and an agenda for the April 30 General membership meeting.

II. Treasurer's Report: Peter Fleischman

- Peter distributed and reviewed his 4-8-25 Treasurer's Report, including updates on tuition payments, Quest's balance sheet, and the year-to-date variance between actual and budgeted income and expense.
- Expenses are still coming in under budget. Peter attributed this, in part, to good expense control, citing the December luncheon as an example. Some significant expenses, i.e., the year-end dinner, have not yet occurred.
- Judy asked about the capacity at the restaurant where the year-end dinner is being held. The dinner is sold out, and Donna noted that the capacity is limited by the layout of the restaurant.
- Peter said that he will be talking with the Audit committee about the cash flow process in place now that Quest no longer runs tuition payments through CWE.

III. Curriculum: Paul Golomb

- Paul reported that the brainstorming session for new courses and the committee's follow-up yielded good results. There were also a number of unsolicited courses that came forward. The Fall 2025 curriculum is set with 30 courses, plus workshops.
- The Fall catalogue is in the final proofing stage. The front cover is a photograph taken by Debbie Honorof. Paul thanked Debbie for her work on the catalogue and Frank Montaturo for his catalogue of photos, including photos from his and Tamara's photography class.
- Debbie Honorof created a QR code that will be included in the fall catalogue, and in all Quest marketing materials going forward. Clicking on the code takes the viewer to the membership page on the Quest website.

IV. Membership: Tamara Weinberg

- Tamara reported that Quest currently has 268 active members. She said that 22 new members joined last fall and 23 new members joined this spring. Five additional people have expressed interest in joining Quest.
- Summer Fees for Non-members: Mary Ann reported that the Membership committee is recommending that Quest's summer Encores program continue to be free this year and going forward for the following reasons:
 - Offering a free summer Encores program can be an effective marketing tool: even if a person does not plan to join Quest themselves, it is possible that the person would recommend Quest to others.
 - Attendance at the summer sessions is typically much lighter than in the fall and spring semesters, so it is a win-win to allow potential members to attend for free in the summer. A free summer program not only creates goodwill but boosts attendance for presenters.
 - Summer-only members will be required to register and have temporary IDs (without photos) on yellow lanyards.
- Donna made a motion, seconded by Tamara, to waive fees for the 2025 summer Encores program, as they have been for the last two summers. After discussion, Council unanimously approved the motion.
- Donna made a motion, seconded by Karen, to waive fees for summer Encores programs going forward. After discussion, Council unanimously approved the motion.
- Membership Renewal Fees: New deadlines and Late Fee: Tamara then reported that the Membership committee recommended that the due date for the annual membership fees for the 2025-2026 Academic Year be May 15 and any current member failing to renew their membership by that date be charged a \$25 late fee. (Prepaid membership fees will be refunded if a member informs the Membership Committee by the start of the semester that they have changed their mind and do not intend to return to Quest.)
- After discussion (see below), on behalf of the Membership committee Tamara made a motion, seconded by Vince, that the due date for the annual membership fee for the 2025-2026 Academic Year be June 30, that a \$25 late fee be assessed against members who do not pay the annual membership fee by June 30, and that members who do not pay the annual membership fee and late fee by September 1 be required to reapply for membership if they wish to continue their Quest membership. After discussion, the Council unanimously approved the motion.
- Tamara cited the following reasons for the committee's recommendations:

- The committee believes a May 15 renewal date allows Quest to better plan for the upcoming semester and determine how many member openings will be available in the fall. (Last year's renewal date was August 19.)
 - With a better handle on the number of members returning, the Membership Committee can interview and sign up new members during the summer to minimize the rush in the first month and avoid new members having to miss a few weeks of the new semester.
 - With a renewal date of May 15, committee members would not need to pick up and deposit checks as well as call, email, and text members throughout the summer to confirm they were renewing their membership.
 - The committee believes that most Quest members will understand the introduction of late fees if it is explained that when members delay paying membership fees, the delay places an undue burden on our member volunteers each year.
- Council members had several comments on the committee's recommendations. Donna asked if the committee would give any consideration to members who may be sick or have simply forgotten to pay. Judy and Nan thought the May 15 deadline was too early and recommended a June 1 or 30 deadline for this year. Donna suggested June 30 this year, and an earlier date next year.
 - Tamara said that, as a general practice, if a person does not pay his or her fees the committee removes the person from the Quest Community and Quest Business mailing lists.
 - Donna asked the committee to send her an outline of the specific procedures that will be followed implementing these fee deadlines and noted that she would discuss with Wayne Cotter, committee chair, how and when to best communicate this information to all members.

V. Nominating and Elections Committee (NEC): Tamara Weinberg

- Tamara reported that the NEC has prepared for the "Meet the Candidate" lunchtime forums during the week of April 21.
- The committee did not receive any petitions for additional nominations by the April 1st due date.

VI. Committee Reports: Karen Cullen

- Karen gave a brief overview of the annual committee reports on activities and membership that she emailed to Council earlier in the week. She gave a shout out to the following chairs who submitted particularly comprehensive reports: Maureen Berman-Marketing & Communications, Wayne Cotter-Membership and Technology, and Ruth Ward-QReview.
- The committee reports did not raise any problems, but Karen brought to the Council's attention a few issues included in the reports, including whether and how committees have made efforts to recruit new members.

VII. Committee Guidelines: Donna Ramer

- In response to discussions at the February and March 2025 Council meetings about term limits for chairs and members of the 14 Quest committees that do not have term limits mandated by the bylaws, Donna submitted the following proposed Committee Membership Guidelines:
 - **Annual Appointment of Committee Chairs:** Each year in April the President, assisted by the Secretary, will review the tenure of each committee chair to determine if a new chair is needed or there are extenuating circumstances to extend the tenure of the chair, basing the review on: i) the term limits of the four term-limited committees, ii) the 3-year limit recommended in the bylaws for chairs of the 14 non-term-limited committees, and iii) the need to replace an existing chair to better meet the needs of the committee.
 - **Council Approval of Committee Chairs:** Each year in May the President will submit to Council a proposed list of committee chairs, each with a 1-year term (as required in the bylaws), for the following academic year. At that time, the President will also appoint Council liaisons for each committee.
 - **Onboarding New Chairs:** Each year the president will meet with each new chair to discuss committee needs, the engagement of newer members to join their committee, and the roles/responsibilities of chairing their specific committee; to identify a co-chair or vice-chair as necessary; and to ensure that each chair is aware that the appointment is for one year as specified in the bylaws.
 - **Committee Updates:** Each September, November, March, and May, Council liaisons will contact their committee chairs and report to Council any updates on committee activities as well as determine changes in committee members, budgets, and other issues.
 - **Succession Planning:** Each chair will be encouraged to identify one or more committee members to step up as chair should the chair be unable to continue in the role.
- Council commented on and discussed the proposed guidelines. Karen raised a question on the timing of the President's submission of a proposed slate of committee chairs and the Council's vote on the slate. Judy said that the President was always free to have informal discussions with Council members regarding proposed committee chair and liaison appointments. Paul said that, with respect to the appointment of Council liaisons to committees, a Council member should be able to decline being liaison to a committee on which he/she is chair.
- Donna made a motion, seconded by Paul, that the Council informally accept the Committee Membership Guidelines, which the Council will review, fine-tune, and develop further in the fall. After discussion, Council unanimously approved the motion.
- Karen asked whether Council should address the question, raised in the March Council meeting, of whether there should be a cap on the number of committees a member can join. Council had a general discussion, including on whether this question was really a term limits issue, and agreed that the President should include this issue in her discussions with new chairs.

The next scheduled Council meeting will be at 25 Broadway on May 13, 2025, at 2:45 p.m.

Donna adjourned the meeting at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Cullen, Secretary

Documents distributed at meeting: Agenda, Quest Fall 2025 Schedule (v2), Spring 2025 General Membership Meeting Agenda, Treasurer's Report, Committee Membership Guidelines.