

QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: September 8, 2025

Council held its monthly meeting at 25 Broadway in Room 7-39. President Donna Ramer called the meeting to order at 2:45 p.m.

Council Members Present: Bob Belfort (via Zoom), Karen Cullen, Peter Fleischman (via Zoom), Bob Gottfried, Stu Parker, Donna Ramer, Ruth Ward, Tamara Weinberg, and Judy Winn.

Council Members Absent: Victor Brener and Vince Grosso

I. General Administration: Donna Ramer

- Donna distributed the agenda for the meeting and the 9-8-25 Treasurer's Report.
- Administrative Motions:
 - Donna reported that over the summer she had submitted to Council, at the request of the Technology committee, a motion to approve the recording of the following Fall 2025 courses: Distinguished Guest Lecture Series, American Upheavals, Artists & Their Work, Give My Regards to Broadway, Eras in American History, Cinema Quest, History of NYC, Supreme Court, Architecture, and Profiles in Courage. By emails dated July 29 and 30, 2025, Council unanimously approved the motion.
 - Donna submitted and summarized the Spring 2026 Schedule. Bob Gottfried suggested a different date for the year-end luncheon and Donna said the Schedule could be revised if necessary. Donna then made a motion, seconded by Stu, to approve the submitted Schedule. After discussion, Council unanimously approved the motion.
 - She also advised that the annual Memorial Service will follow the General Membership Meeting on November 19.

II. Conflict of Interest forms and administrative documents: Karen Cullen

- Karen reported that she forwarded the signed Conflict of Interest forms covering the June 1, 2025 – May 31, 2026 academic year to the head of the Audit Committee and posted them to the Quest archives.
- She distributed and explained the contents of the following documents which she emailed to Council members a few days ago: Current Council Members History, Committee Chairs 2018-2026, Committee Chairs and Members 2025-2026, and List of Motions Introduced at Quest Council from 2020 to the Present.

III. Treasurer's Report: Peter Fleischman

Peter reviewed his 9-9-25 Treasurer's Report.

- As of August 31, 2025, Quest collected \$127,325 for this year's tuition.
- Quest's current balance of approximately \$1,000,000 is at the highest for the year and will come down as expenses are paid.
- There is no change to the budget, approved in June, which projects \$178,550 in revenue and \$209,850 in expenses.
- In Council's discussion following the Treasurer's report, Donna noted that Quest had again negotiated an annual rent of \$40,000, \$5,000 less than the budgeted \$45,000. Peter said he will deliver the rent check to CWE by the end of the week. In response to questions regarding the break-out of Actual Expenses regarding the Southern Regional Lifelong Learning Conference, Peter said that he will combine the fee and travel expenses into one line item going forward.

IV. Curriculum: Judy Winn

- Judy reported that Curriculum Committee Chair Debbi Honorof has requested that the committee be able to post to the Quest website regularly scheduled lunchtime activities, including Noontime Melodies, Dejeuner Francais, Se Habla Espanol, Quest Book Club, Creative Nonfiction Book Club, and Chair Meditation.
- After discussing Quest's current practices regarding the approval and scheduling of noontime activities, Judy made a motion, seconded by Ruth, to approve the Curriculum Committee's posting of regularly scheduled lunchtime activities to the Quest website. After discussion, Council approved the motion unanimously. Judy will advise Debbie that the committee should coordinate with Quest webmaster Michael Russo on the postings.

V. Membership: Ruth Ward

- Ruth reported that Quest currently has 238 active members, including seven Summer Encores attendees and three new members from last year.
- Seven members are on Leaves of Absence.
- Twenty-four prospective members attended this year's Summer Encores program.
- Forty-one prospective members attended the Information Session held in August. Most reported that they had heard of Quest through the online newsletter Broadsheet, Google searches, or friends/neighbors/colleagues.
- Forty-five people (17% of Quest's membership) did not renew their membership. This is on par with normal annual attrition.

VI. Report on Quest's Attendance at the Southern Regional LL Conference: Tamara Weinberg

- Tamara reported that she and Tracey Lee attended this year's Southern Regional Conference for Learning in Retirement in Atlanta in July and referred to their written Observations and Recommendations that were emailed to the Council a few days ago. Donna said that she would have the report posted to Quest's webpage and archives and send the report directly to all Quest members.
- Tamara noted that most of the attendees at the conference were members of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), versus independent peer-to-peer learning organizations such as Quest.
- She and Tracey suggested in their report that it would be useful for Quest to follow up with those independent organizations and to limit Quest's attendance at the Southern Regional Conference to every other year. Stu said that given the modest cost (approximately \$2,000) of two Quest members attending the conference, the Council should keep open the possibility of Quest representatives attending the conference every year. Donna said that certain members had already expressed an interest in attending next year.
- The Council members discussed the suggestion in Tamara and Tracey's report that Quest create a forum for members to learn about or join community service organizations. A few Council members noted that there was a lunchtime activity about a year ago that focused on volunteer opportunities in the NYC area and suggested that Quest repeat and/or enhance similar activities going forward. Tamara and Judy suggested that Quest reach out to and make connections with one or more service organizations to facilitate the involvement of interested Quest members. Donna identified New York Cares as one such service organization and will look at New York Cares and similar service organizations and consider getting one or more of them to make a presentation at lunchtime.

VII. Marketing and Communications: Donna Ramer

- The Marketing and Communications committee is focusing its advertising efforts on digital platforms, such as The Broadsheet, West Side Rag, and Amsterdam News. Following summer advertisements regarding the August information session, Quest received over 500 unique visits to its website, and it is believed that over 12,000 people saw Quest's advertisement in the Amsterdam News.
- It is also continuing its search for sponsorship opportunities, such as Quest's sponsorship of Shorewalkers last year.
- The committee will be meeting next week to discuss 2025-2026 marketing activities, including ways to encourage Quest members to post our website link and a short statement about Quest on their respective social media sites; and sending more regular communications to Quest's subscriber list.

VIII. Technology: Tamara Weinberg

- Ten Quest members attended Tamra's new PowerPoint class.
- The committee has assigned a tech representative to each class this fall.
- Karen asked if it was possible to upgrade the screens/projectors in Room 15-17 and Room 27. Ruth and Judy said they had not noticed any problems with the screens in those rooms, and others responded that the appearance of art, maps, and other detailed slides on the screens was significantly worse than the appearance on the online monitors mounted on the sides of the rooms. Donna noted that CWE had recently replaced the projectors in both rooms and that the appearance of slides on the screens may have improved.
- Tamara said it might be feasible to replace the screens in Rooms 15-17 and 27 with movable monitors. There were questions about the size and cost of any such monitors. Donna stressed that any change would need to be discussed with and approved by CWE. Tamara will research options.

The next Council meeting will be at 25 Broadway on Monday, October 6, 2025, at 2:45 p.m.

Donna adjourned the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Cullen, Secretary

Documents distributed at meeting: Agenda, 9-8-25 Treasurer's Report, Spring 2026 Schedule, Current Council Members History, Committee Chairs 2018-2026, Committee Chairs and Members 2025-2026, List of Motions Introduced at Quest Council from 2020 to the Present, August 2025 Observations and Recommendations on 2025 Southern Regional Conference for Learning in Retirement.