

QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: February 9, 2026

Council held its monthly meeting at 25 Broadway in Room 7-24. President Donna Ramer called the meeting to order at 2:45 p.m.

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

Council Members Absent: Victor Brener, Bob Gottfried, Judy Winn

I. General Administration: Donna Ramer

- **Fall 2026 Schedule:** Donna distributed a proposed schedule for Quest's Fall 2026 semester and made a motion, seconded by Vince, to approve the schedule as written, subject to necessary revisions. Council unanimously approved the motion.
- **Use of Brooklyn Room 7-24:** Room 7-24 is part of Brooklyn College's lease, not CWE's lease, and for liability and other legal reasons Quest's use of the room and its furnishings is limited to Quest Council meetings. Permission to use the room for any other purpose will be granted for extenuating reasons only and must be approved by Donna and CWE, who will negotiate any one-time use.
- **Motion: Guest performers for Beethoven course:** The Curriculum Committee has asked that the Beethoven course be permitted to invite guest performers in four of its classes this semester. The fees for these performers will total \$800. (Donna pointed out that the Quest bylaws provide that courses may invite one guest speaker per semester to receive a small honorarium.) Several Council members commented that having these performers will be a unique opportunity for the membership. Council discussed whether granting this request would establish a precedent and whether the attendance at the Beethoven classes justified the expense. Donna made a motion, seconded by Vince, to approve a one-time-only exception to the rule and permit the Beethoven course to invite guest performers in four of its classes this semester for a total cost of \$800. Council approved the motion 6-1, with one abstention.
- **QReview:** Donna said that the 2026 *QReview* will be available for members to pick up in the office beginning the week of Feb 16. As with prior years, contributors will be entitled to three copies, and all other members will be entitled to one copy.

II. Treasurer's Report: Peter Fleischman

- Peter distributed and reviewed his 2-2-26 Treasurer's Report. (The numbers in the written report were prepared for the originally scheduled February 2 Council meeting, and he updated a few numbers.) As of 2-9-26, Quest collected \$143,795 for this year's tuition, which exceeds the \$143,550 in membership fees that Quest budgeted for the entire fiscal year.

- Peter reviewed the process for preparing the 2025-2026 fiscal year budget, pointed out that, as with previous years, budgeted expenses exceed budgeted revenues, this year by \$30,000, and that Quest's ample reserves were sufficient to cover any deficit.

III. Secretary's Report-Update on Winter Break Activities: Karen Cullen

- Motions
 - By email dated January 13, 2026 Donna submitted to Council the following motion: The 2026 Election to fill upcoming vacant Council positions will be held between 12:00 noon on Friday, April 3 through 6:00 p.m. eastern Sunday, April 5, 2026. By email, Council approved the updated motion unanimously.
 - By email dated January 19, 2026 Donna submitted to Council a motion to approve the Technology Committee's request that the following Spring 2026 classes be recorded: It Ain't Just Rock 'N' Roll; Profiles In Courage; Give My Regards To Broadway; Great Directors, Producers, Actors; Supreme Court; History Of New York City; Artists And Their Work; Quester's Choice I and II; Cinema Quest: Current & Classic; Science & Scientists; American Upheavals; Distinguished Guest Lecture Series; Earth: History; and Eras In American History. By email, Council unanimously approved the motion.
- Document Management Committee: Over the winter break the Document Management Committee, chaired by Steve Allen, continued to organize and update the Quest Archives that have been posted to a Quest account on Google Drive. The Committee expects that eventually certain folders and documents in the Archives will be available for review and search by the membership. Toward that end, Karen and fellow Committee member Carol Blaine, assisted by Tamara Weinberg, have drafted for the Committee's review and discussion User and Search Guidelines. Donna, also a Committee member, explained that the review of confidential documents will be limited to those with a "need to know." Peter suggested that the Committee use separate folders to distinguish between permission levels. Karen distributed a draft of a Description of Subfolders in Quest Archives.
- Karen distributed a revised list of Committee Chairs, Members and Liaisons.

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

- Tamara reported that the NEC will announce within the month the slate for the three open officer positions (Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary) and three at-large council seats within a week or so. The NEC will be scheduling lunchtime "Meet the Candidate" meetings in compliance with the bylaws before the elections which will be held in April.

V. Membership: Ruth Ward

- Ruth reported that Quest has 270 active members; that number will rise to 274 when four new members onboard this week.

- The Membership Committee recommended June 1 as the deadline for members as of that date to renew their membership, with a late fee of \$25 for failing to renew by that date. The Committee also recommended that members who do not pay their membership and late fees by August 10 will have their renewal subject to availability under the membership cap. Ruth advised that the June 1 and August 10 deadlines allow Quest to better plan for the upcoming semester and the Committee to determine how many member openings will be available in the fall.
- Motion: Peter made a motion, seconded by Stu, to approve 1) June 1, 2026 as the deadline for the annual membership fee for the 2025-2026 Academic Year, 2) a \$25 late fee for membership fees paid after June 1, and 3) that renewal applications for members who do not pay the annual membership fee and late fee by August 10, 2026 will be subject to availability under the Quest membership cap. After discussion, Council unanimously approved the motion.

VI. Technology Committee: Tamara Weinberg

- The Technology Committee requested that Council adopt a policy mandating the use of microphones in the classrooms if requested by a class participant. Tamara explained that the Technology Committee representatives in classes have been put in uncomfortable positions when there have been disagreements in a class on whether to use microphones. Bob Belfort and other Council members suggested that a mandate should not be necessary if the need for microphones was explained to the membership. After discussion, the Council agreed that Donna and Debbie Honoroff, chair of the Curriculum Committee, should discuss with class coordinators the need to be aware of and accommodate the hearing needs of Quest members to enhance Quest's mission of fostering lifelong learning and that presenters and class participants should use microphones if requested by any class participant unless doing so would be unduly burdensome.
- On behalf of the Technology Committee Steve Chicoine, a Committee member, submitted a proposal that Quest purchase four headset microphones and transmitters, plus associated batteries and chargers and a four-channel receiver, for an estimated cost of \$6,700. By way of background, Tamara explained that CWE is planning to upgrade the audio in the auditorium with an all-digital system, including a touchscreen control panel, new ceiling microphones, in-ceiling speakers, and four handheld microphones.
- In his proposal, Steve explained that Quest currently has difficulties adequately miking presenters, as any movement away from the podium microphone on their part interferes with amplification. Amplification limited to the current handheld microphones also causes difficulties for theatrical productions and Guest Lecture conversations. Council discussed the budgetary impact of the proposed purchase, whether the Committee had looked at comparable products, whether it was necessary to buy four instead of two headsets, and if it was possible to test the headsets on a trial basis.
- The Committee believes that Quest will benefit from CWE's planned upgrades and overall improvement to the sound system in the auditorium and that Quest's purchase of the

microphone headsets will complement CWE's upgrades and significantly improve the experience of presenters in the auditorium.

- Motion: Ruth made a motion, seconded by Tamara, to approve the Committee's proposal that Quest purchase a set of four headset microphones and transmitters, plus associated batteries and chargers and a four-channel receiver, for an estimated cost of \$6,700. The Council unanimously approved the motion.

The next Council meeting will be at 25 Broadway on Monday, March 2, 2026, at 2:45 p.m.

Donna adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Cullen, Secretary

Documents distributed at meeting: Agenda, 2-2-26 Treasurer's Report, draft of Quest Fall 2026 Schedule, Description of Folders in Quest Archives, and Committee, Chairs, Members, Liaisons 2025-2026

QUEST FALL 2026 SCHEDULE

Notes

Monday A Week = 5 classes

Monday B Week = 6 classes

Guest Lectures = 6

Wk#	A or B	Week of	Notes
1	A	Sept 7 (3-day week)	Tues-Thurs; Labor Day, Mon, 9/7
2	B	Sept 14	
3	A	Sept 21 (3-day week)	Closed Monday, 9/21 Yom Kippur
4	B	Sept 28	
5	A	Oct 5	
6	B	Oct 12 (3-day week)	Closed Mon, 10/13 Columbus/Indigenous People Day
7	A	Oct 19	
8	B	Oct 26	
9	A	Nov 2	
10	B	Nov 9	Wed, 11/11 Fall General Business Mtg
11	A	Nov 16	
		Nov 23	Closed Thanksgiving week/winter break
12	B	Nov 30	
13	A	Dec 7	
14	B	Dec 14	Last week of classes
		Fri, Dec 18	Holiday luncheon