

QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: April 6, 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, Victor Brener, Karen Cullen, Peter Fleischman, Bob Gottfried (via Zoom), Vince Grosso, Stu Parker, Donna Ramer, Ruth Ward, Tamara Weinberg (via Zoom).

Council Members Absent: Judy Winn

Guest Present: Steve Allen, Chair Document Management Committee

I. General Administration: Donna Ramer

- Quest's Administrative Assistant Raquel Rivera has accepted a position with CWE and her last day at Quest will be April 9 (now April 29). Along with incoming Vice President Tracey Lee, Donna has started interviewing for a new Administrative Assistant. Until the position is filled, Raquel will be able to provide Quest with one hour (9-10 am) four days a week. Her duties will be limited to specific tasks determined by Donna. After the meeting Donna advised that Raquel's last day will be April 30.
- On Quest's behalf Estelle Selzer and Maureen Berman will attend the annual Southern Regional Conference for Lifelong Learning in July.

II. Treasurer's Report: Peter Fleischman

- Peter distributed and reviewed his 4-6-26 Treasurer's Report. As of 4-2-26 Quest has collected \$147,095 for this year's tuition, exceeding budgeted revenue by \$3,545. As of 4-2-26, actual expenses to-date (with almost 3 months remaining) were significantly below full year expected/budgeted expenses.
- Donna will soon be asking all chairs for their budgets for FY 2026-2027 and she, Peter, and the new Treasurer will prepare a draft annual budget for the Council's review at its June meeting.
- Council discussed various expenses in the Budget vs Actual report.

III. Document Management: Steve Allen, Chair Document Management Committee

- Steve reported on the history and status of Quest's electronic archives. To enhance Quest's ability to preserve and search its important documents, in 2016 Steve started migrating Quest's business and governance documents, such as weekly schedules and Council minutes, to DropBox, an electronic platform. He maintained this electronic database until Fall 2024 when the Document Management Committee started. In Spring 2025 the Committee migrated the

archives to Google Drive, a platform which allows Quest to maintain a file structure more easily with different permission levels for those members who will be allowed to edit files and those members who will have read-only access.

- Steve briefly described the folders and documents on Google Drive, including current and historical legal, foundation, and financial documents, Council minutes, class schedules, QNews, and QReview.
- The committee is developing a schedule for giving user access and training to all Council members and some key standing committee members. The plan is for this process to be completed by the end of calendar year 2026.
- Steve gave a shout-out to Michael Russo who recently added search functions to the Quest website.

IV. Course Guest Speaker Stipends: Donna Ramer

- Donna raised for discussion whether Council should adopt guidelines and procedures for approving course guest speaker stipends. (This does not apply to Distinguished Guest Lecture, which has a separate budget.) By way of background, Donna noted that Bylaw II(D) provides that each Lead Coordinator may invite one guest speaker per semester, and that any additional guest speakers require the approval of the Curriculum Committee. Bylaw II(D) also provides that all courses shall be conducted in accordance with Quest's policy of peer learning. The bylaws are silent on whether course guest speakers may receive stipends for their services. Peter said that historically few guest speakers have received stipends, but that to date in this fiscal year stipends totaling \$3,950 have been paid to 15 guest speakers, exceeding the \$1,500 budgeted for course guest speakers in the budget approved by Council for FY 2025-2026.
- Council discussed the quality of several guest speakers this year, whether its endorsement of course speaker stipends, particularly by increasing this budget, will increase the number of guest speakers, and whether an increased use of guest speakers was consistent with Quest's mission of peer-to-peer learning. Council further discussed whether Quest's budget can accommodate this increase, and, if the Council decides in its discretion to allocate money for course guest speakers in the next fiscal year, the particulars of how stipends should be approved and the amount of individual and total stipends.
- By email dated April 8, 2026, Donna submitted the following motion, seconded by Karen:
 - Council adopts the following policy to establish protocols for the disbursement of funds that may be allocated to outside guest presenters in Quest's annual budget, consistent with Quest's mission of peer learning. Beginning in FY 2026–2027, the Curriculum Committee will manage the budget for invited outside presenters. Before each academic year, the Council will set the total budget and a per-presenter maximum, and will establish general guidelines with the Curriculum Committee. Using these guidelines, the Committee will determine which courses and lunchtime programs may use these funds and in what amounts. All funding requests must be submitted in writing before each semester and prior

to any financial commitment to a guest presenter. This motion does not apply to the Distinguished Guest Lecture course, which has a separate budget. By email, Council approved the motion unanimously.

V. Annual Committee Reports: Karen Cullen

- Karen distributed and gave a brief overview of the Annual Committee Reports for 2025-2026. The reports, mandated by the bylaws, provide summaries of the committee's activities and accomplishments over the past year, report on efforts to recruit new members, and bring to Council's attention the ongoing issues and challenges the committees face.
- Donna asked that all Council liaisons communicate with their committees and report back to Council in May on any additional thoughts and issues that they would like Council to consider with respect to their committees.

VI. Technology: Victor Brener

- Victor reported that Quest's Wi-Fi system became crucial this past March when the cable providing Wi-Fi service to 25 Broadway was severed by an outside construction crew. Since Quest had its own Wi-Fi system in place, the Technology Committee was able to seamlessly shift from CCNY's Wi-Fi to Quest's T-Mobile Wi-Fi to access the Internet during presentations.

VII. Membership: Ruth Ward

- Quest has 283 active members; one prospective member is in the pipeline. The Membership Committee (MC) is now interviewing prospective members for the fall.
- The MC's expected schedule through August:
 - April 20: 2026-2027 membership renewal information to be emailed to current members.
 - April 22: Meeting of MC and Marketing & Communications Committee.
 - June 1: Membership Renewal fees and Leave of Absence requests due.
 - June 2 and 4: registration for Summer Encores (June 2-July 30).
 - August 10: deadline for late Membership Renewal with \$25 late fee.
 - August 27: Open House for prospective members.
 - August 27: packets for New Members.
- Committee Chairs: Donna will have a proposed list of Committee chairs at the May meeting. In June she will send a notice to members announcing the list of committee chairs and descriptions of each committee so members may contact a chair if they are interested in being considered as a member of that chair's committee. Chairs need to send their membership rosters to the Secretary by July 31.

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

- Donna and other Council members congratulated Tamara and the NEC on a job well done. The NEC is conducting a debriefing with all proposed candidates and the Technology Committee to find out what worked and what can be improved in the candidate forums and election process.

IX. Scheduling Committee: Tamara Weinberg

- The scheduling for the fall is done and the catalogue has been sent to the printers. There will be 37 classes; one time slot will have three classes.

The next Council meeting will be at 25 Broadway on Monday, May 4, 2026, at 2:45 p.m.

Donna adjourned the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Cullen, Secretary

Documents distributed at meeting: Agenda, 4-6-26 Treasurer's Report, Quest Electronic Archive notes, Honoraria Motion background, Annual Committee Reports 2025-2026, and List of Committee Chairs, Members, and Liaisons, 4-1-26.