

QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: May 4, 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 (via Zoom), Tamara Weinberg, Judy Winn.

Newly Elected Council Members Present as Guests: Steve Chicoine, Tracey Lee, Ellen Rittberg Lynn Vairo.

I. General Administration: Donna Ramer

- Donna distributed the meeting's agenda and welcomed the newly elected Council members present as guests—Steve Chicoine, Tracey Lee, Ellen Rittberg, and Lynn Vairo--and said she was sorry to see leave outgoing Council members Peter Fleischman, Bob Gottfried, Judy Winn, and Tamara Weinberg. Karen reminded Council members that she would send them a Conflict-of-Interest form before the June Council meeting. Each member will need to sign and return the form.
- Lifelong Learning: On Quest's behalf Estelle Selzer and Maureen Berman will attend the annual Southern Regional Conference for Lifelong Learning in July. CUNY's Director of Academic Initiatives & Strategic Innovation is submitting a presentation proposal and, if accepted, will present on CUNY's lifelong learning programs with Maureen doing the part about Quest. CUNY now has a task force on lifelong learning of which Donna was asked and has joined.
- Committee Chairs: Donna distributed a list of the proposed Committee Chairs for the 2026-2027 calendar year and highlighted the following chair changes: Auditing-Peter Fleischman; CultureQuest-Estelle Selzer; Emergency Response-Ruth Ward; Membership-Lynn Vairo and Bob Gottfried; New Members-Tracey Lee and Laurie Spiegel; and Technology-Wayne Cotter and Tamara Weinberg. Donna made a motion, seconded by Vince, to approve the submitted list of Committee Chairs for 2026-2027. After discussion, Council unanimously approved the motion. These positions officially begin June 1.
- Committee Counsel Liaisons: Donna then distributed a list of the Committee Counsel Liaisons for 2026-2027. She asked that each liaison reach out to the chairs of their assigned committees and open a dialogue as to any issues the committees wish to bring to Council's attention so that each committee "has a seat at the table." These positions officially begin June 1.

II. Treasurer's Report: Peter Fleischman

- Peter distributed and reviewed his 5-4-26 Treasurer's Report. As of 5-3-26 Quest has collected

\$41,800 toward next year's (FY2026-2027) membership fees, and Peter noted that all renewal fees are due by May 31. Quest's balance sheet, comprised of its checking account, the CWE holdback, and its JP Morgan investment accounts, totals \$1,053,468.

- Peter reviewed the comparison of YTD 2026 actual income and expenses to the FY 2026 budget and the proposed FY 2027 budget. He noted that Quest over-budgeted FY2026 (the current fiscal year), and as a result, our projected loss of \$30,000 has turned into a projected gain of about \$30,000, which includes investment income of about \$35,000. This means that for FY 2026 our expenses will likely come very close to our total membership fees. A significant part of the over-budgeting was due to a few expenses postponed until this coming fiscal year.
- Council discussed several items in the Treasurer's Report, including, with respect to the FY 2027 budget, the projected operating deficit, the extent to which projected investment income may or may not cover that deficit, and the areas in which projected committee expenses can be reduced. Peter will prepare a final proposed 2026-2027 budget for the Council's review in June.

III. Technology: Victor Brener

- Victor advised that there has been a delay in getting the new tech equipment approved earlier this year by Council, in part because of CCNY's delay in getting certain approvals for the updates needed for Auditorium new headsets and mics.

IV. Membership: Ruth Ward

- Quest has 282 active members with 10 people approved but not yet onboarded and approximately 8 prospective members in the pipeline. The Committee will defer onboarding new members until the fall when it will have a better idea of how many open spots there will be under the 285-membership cap. The Membership Committee (MC) is now interviewing prospective members for the fall.
- To date, 86 Quests members have paid their membership fee for 2026-2027. Lynn will send members a reminder email.

V. New Business: Tamara Winberg and Karen Cullen

- Tamara said that a few members have asked her if the minutes of Council meetings could record Council members' individual votes on motions. She believed these members were motivated for a desire for accountability and transparency. Karen reported that she had researched the issue, including a review of Robert's Rules of Order and the NYS Not-For-Profit Law, and determined that absent special circumstances (such as a ballot or roll-call vote) individual votes by board/council members are not recorded in minute meetings. Best practices report simply that a motion was passed or not passed. A member can request to have their negative vote recorded in the minutes—deemed a "dissenting" vote under NYS Nor-For Profit law.

- Karen said her research indicated that the reason for not recording individual vote tallies is the concern that individual vote tallies discourage open discussion and candid disagreement, can be misleading because a “no” vote does not always equal full opposition (it could be procedural, partial disagreement, etc.), and they create unnecessary sensitivity. Particularly for nonprofit and volunteer organizations, reasons not to record individual votes include collegiality (avoiding publicly documenting divisions unless necessary), reputation concerns (with respect to sensitive issues like funding, personnel, etc.), and volunteer dynamics (less formality and more emphasis on consensus).
- Donna opened the matter for discussion. There was a consensus among Council members and the Council-elect guests that individual vote tallies could stifle discussion, create division, and adversely affect voting. Many members noted that in all of their past experiences on volunteer boards individual vote tallies were never used. Judy noted that the matter had been raised and rejected by Council a few years ago. Others noted that member can always ask to have their vote recorded on a specific motion.

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

Donna adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Cullen, Secretary

Documents distributed at meeting: Agenda, Quest Committee Chairs 2026-2027, Quest Committee Council Liaisons 2026-2027, 5-4-26 Treasurer's Report