

QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: September 15, 2026

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: Bob Belfort, Victor Brenner, Steve Chicoine (via Zoom), Karen Cullen, Vince Grosso, Tracey Lee, Donna Ramer, Ellen Rittberg, Lynn Vairo, Ruth Ward

Council Members Absent: Stu Parker

I. General Administration: Donna Ramer

- Spring 2027 Schedule: Donna submitted and briefly summarized the draft Spring 2027 Schedule. Council discussed the pros and cons of canceling classes one morning or afternoon for one 90-minute meet-the-candidates session in lieu of four lunchtime sessions as has been the practice. Donna will discuss the issue with the Curriculum Committee and report to Council at the October meeting. Donna made a **motion**, seconded by Karen, to approve the Spring 2027 Schedule as submitted. After discussion, the motion passed with one abstention.
- Sponsor CCNY Student Film Festival: Quest is a first-time sponsor of, and will be providing three \$200 prizes for, CCNY's Student Film Festival; winners of the contest will be announced in the Auditorium on Wednesday, September 16.
- LOA Extended for member: Quest member Renee Woloshin has requested an extension for a second Leave of Absence year. Quest Bylaws provide that requests for LOAs longer than one year may be granted at the Council's discretion for extenuating circumstances (e.g. health issues). Donna made a **motion**, seconded by Ellen, to approve Renee's LOA for a second year. After discussion, the motion passed.
- Extension of Website Management Agreement: BoundBy, the website management and maintenance company that services Quest's website on a quarterly basis for a quarterly fee of \$125, totaling \$500 per year, has requested an extension of its agreement with Quest and has suggested that the agreement be upgraded to include additional storage capacity and monthly service for a monthly fee of \$125, totaling \$1,500 per year. Council decided to defer consideration of BoundBy's request until Council's next meeting to give Council time to collect and assess information needed to evaluate the request. Donna will contact Quest's Chair of Marketing & Communications (Maureen Berman) and Webmaster (Michael Russo) to request they provide the appropriate information for Council's review.
- Bylaws Committee: Quest's bylaws provide that the President with the consent of the Council shall appoint a Bylaws Revision Committee to review the bylaws and make recommendations for changes to the bylaws, at least once every three years. The committee makes a written report to the council with its recommendations for changes. The Council then considers the committee's recommendations and votes on proposing amendment to be

submitted to the membership for ratification. Donna reported that Babette Ceccotti has agreed to serve as chair for the 2027 Bylaws Revision Committee. Committee members are Andy Bata, Wayne Cotter, Tracey Lee, and Lynn Vairo.

II. Treasurer's Report: Steve Chicoine

Steve distributed and reviewed the Quest Treasurer's Report 9-15-26.

- To date Quest has collected \$137,125 in membership payment for this fiscal year. Last year we had collected \$129,550 at this point. The budgeted amount for membership fees for this year is \$150,000, which we can meet with 24 more new members. (See Membership Committee report below, which reports the strong likelihood that we will be getting at least 24 new members soon.)
- The balance sheet shows Cash and Checking Account balances of \$55,792.85, and an investment account balance of \$976,677.02, for total assets of \$1,032,469.87. Quest has \$0 Liabilities.
- On the Expense side, Quest has spent \$48,786.74 to date in the fiscal year, which includes the payment of \$40,000 in rent to CCNY. Income from membership fees exceeds expenses by \$88,338.26 at this time.
- Zelle Issue: Membership Committee Chair Lynne Vairo raised a recent issue with Zelle payments experienced by four new members. The members' various banks have not permitted the payment of their \$550 membership fee by Zelle. Steve will work with Lynne and Donna to resolve the situation. Some Council members suggested that going forward the use of a QR code might facilitate the process.
- Bank Signatories Update: Steve reported that, although the process was more complicated than expected because Chase Bank and JP Morgan Securities both insisted on separate resolutions, Quest did submit those resolutions and he, as Treasurer, and Donna, as President, are the new signatories on Quest's bank and investment accounts. Donna thanked Steve and Karen for their efforts in accomplishing this task.

III. Secretary Update: Karen Cullen

- Conflict of Interest Forms: Karen has forwarded the signed Conflict of Interest forms covering the June 1, 2026 – May 31, 2027 academic year to Peter Fleishman, Chair of the Audit Committee, and posted them to the Quest archives.
- Committee Lists: Karen will be distributing by email to Council, as well as all Committee Chairs, the updated Committee Chairs, Members, and Liaisons 2026-2027 list, as well as the updated Master List of Quest Committee Chairs and Members, which contains additional historical information and separate sheets for each committee showing approximately 9 years' worth of chairs and members history for each committee.

- Summer Motions: Karen briefly described the four motions passed by Council since the last Council meeting in June. The following is a summary of those motions.
 - By email dated June 14, 2026, Donna made a motion to close Quest on June 18 because of the expected crowds and transportation issues related to the Knicks ticker-tape parade scheduled for that day. Council approved the motion.
 - By email dated June 24, 2026, Donna made a motion to confirm Bob Reiss as chair of the Ad Hoc Hearing Committee. Council approved the motion.
 - By email dated July 9, 2026, Donna made a motion to approve the attached J.P. Morgan resolution authorizing as Quest signatories for banking and investment transactions Treasurer Steve Chicoine and President Donna Ramer effective June 30, 2026. Council approved the motion.
 - By email dated August 10, 2026, and at the request of the Technology Committee, Donna made a motion to approve the recording of the following 15 Fall 2026 courses: A Week: It Ain't Just Rock 'N' Roll, Profiles in Courage, Supreme Court, Opera Uncorked, How Things Work, and Quester's Choice I; and B Week: Give My Regards to Broadway, Art of the World I, Science & Scientists, Distinguished Guest Lectures, Architecture: History, Design & Practice, Questers Choice II, Upheavals in American Society, Earth: What's on Top, and Human Biology. Council approved the motion.

IV. Technology: Steve Chicoine

- Four new members have joined the Technology Committee.
- The new laptop that Quest purchased for the Auditorium podium is not in use yet. Felix needs to work on it to ensure its compatibility with existing systems.
- The money Council allocated last year for four headset microphones and transmitters, plus associated batteries and chargers and a four-channel receiver not been spent because the equipment has not been purchased because CWE has not yet installed related auditorium equipment. Quest is waiting for CWE 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. The allocation was rolled-over into the current fiscal year.
- Technology co-chair Tamara Weinberg has asked for help, or at least Council's suggestions, for promoting the Power Point class. It has proved to be of great assistance to members, particularly new members, in putting together their presentations. The opening class last week was not well attended. Several Council members suggested an email to members via QuestBusiness 1) explaining the benefits of the class, 2) encouraging new members to attend, and 3) advising that help on Power Point should be provided in class and, except in extenuating circumstances, not expected outside of class since the purpose of the Power Point class is to provide a specific in-session time for this help. Consultation with the

Curriculum Committee might also help, particularly if that committee is going forward with a plan to pair experienced presenters with new presenters. Donna and Council gave a big shout out to Tamara and Tracey for all the work they have been doing to help members with their presentations.

V. Membership: Lynn Vairo

- The Summer Encores Program was a big success this summer. It brought in 15 new members so far.
- Quest currently has 261 members, with 30 in the pipeline and 15 on a Waiting List.
- 43 Questers did not renew their membership, about the same amount as in prior years.
- Seven members are on Leaves of Absences.

VI. New Business

- Donna distributed a flier for the 10-16-26 *Lifelong Learning Workshop sponsored by Quest, CCNY Graduate Center Lifelong Peer Learning Program, CSI Options for Lifelong Learners, and Brooklyn College Lifelong Learning*. The Program, offering breakfast and lunch, is an invitation-only event due to limited space. The program will include panel discussions, workshops on special lifelong learning topics, and great networking opportunities. Donna noted that Quest is sponsoring the lunch for the program.

The next Council meeting will be at 25 Broadway on Tuesday, October 13, 2026, at 2:45 p.m.

Donna adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Cullen, Secretary

Documents distributed at meeting: Agenda, 9-15-26 Treasurer's Report, Draft Spring 2027 Schedule, Flyer for 10-16-26 Lifelong Learning Workshop sponsored by Quest, CCNY Graduate Center Lifelong Peer Learning Program, CSI Options for Lifelong Learners, and Brooklyn College Lifelong Learning.