

# Fulcrum Publishing Society Board of Directors Agenda

Sunday, Oct. 4, 2009 10:30 a.m.

Location: Déjà vu Lounge, University of Ottawa

## ATTENDANCE:

- Nick Taylor-Vaisey (president, voting member)
- Scott Bedard (vice-president, voting member)
- Andrew Wing (chair, voting member)
- William Stephenson (voting member)
- Ben Myers (voting member)
- Maureen Hasinoff (voting member)
- Travis Boisvenue (voting member)
- Matthew Day (voting member)
- Emma Godmere (editor-in-chief, *ex-officio member*)
- Frank Appleyard (business manager, *ex-officio member*)
- Ted Horton (SFUO representative, *ex-officio member*)

## ABSENT:

- Andrea Khanjin (voting member)

1. Opening of the Meeting
  - 1.1. **WING** calls meeting to order at 10:34 a.m.
2. Approval of the Agenda
  - 2.1. **HASINOFF** adds 15.1 (removal of a board member)
  - 2.2. **TAYLOR-VAISEY** removes 9 (budget)
  - 2.3. **BEDARD** adds 15.2 (Melanie Wood statue)
  - 2.4. **BEDARD/HASINOFF**: Motion to approve agenda
    - 2.4.1. Carried
3. Approval of the Minutes of the Sept. 13, 2009 Board of Directors Meeting
  - 3.1. **TAYLOR-VAISEY/STEPHENSON**: Motion to approve
    - 3.1.1. Carried
4. Approval of the Minutes of the Sept. 17, 2009 Board of Directors Meeting
  - 4.1. **BEDARD/TAYLOR-VAISEY**: Motion to approve
    - 4.1.1. Carried
5. Nominations, deliberation (in-camera) and appointment of Director to Fill Board Vacancy
  - 5.1. **BOISVENUE** presents himself to the board
  - 5.2. **APPLEYARD** asks: Why become a director?

- 5.3. **BOISVENUE** replies: “Extension of my arc at the *Fulcrum*”; recent graduate of the school who still wants to contribute to the newspaper
  - 5.4. **TAYLOR-VAISEY** asks: Any priorities for the year?
  - 5.5. **BOISVENUE** replies: Nothing specific; Likes the direction in which board has gone
  - 5.6. **WING/BEDARD**: Motion to move in-camera to consider **BOISVENUE**’s application
    - 5.6.1. Carried
  - 5.7. **WING/HASINOFF**: Motion to move out of camera
    - 5.7.1. Carried
  - 5.8. FPS Board welcomes **BOISVENUE** as director
6. Report from the Business Manager
- 6.1. **TAYLOR-VAISEY** says he has been in touch with Ontario campus plus managers and notes that all papers have suffered in advertising revenue. There are papers that are worse than us.
  - 6.2. **MYERS** asks: You talked about some budget cuts with Emma and Amanda, where is it being taken from?
    - 6.2.1. **APPLEYARD** replies: It’s not reflected in the budget because the budget for the year has already been passed. The money came from employee appreciation, printing (\$6000), etc.
  - 6.3. **MYERS** asks: What’s the worst-case scenario with advertising? How much could we lose?
    - 6.3.1. **APPLEYARD** replies: Deedee thinks we can get \$105,000 from local advertising, Frank says about \$30 000 in national.
  - 6.4. **MYERS** asks: What’s the nature of the employment news agreement?
    - 6.4.1. **APPLEYARD** replies: They provide us with racks, and they put their papers on the second level, under ours. They said they were happy to update our logo, and rebrand the racks. A friendly agreement. There will be signing of an agreement soon.
  - 6.5. **BEDARD** asks: how short will we be for Nash?
    - 6.5.1. **APPLEYARD** replies: We’ll be about 50 per cent short.
  - 6.6. **HASINOFF** wants Frank to give board a list of the people he’s already tried contacting. Also, could we put more boxes on campus if we can’t find more off-campus locations that the city will be happy with.
    - 6.6.1. **APPLEYARD** replies: No, we want to expand off-campus. That expansion would be a better use of resources.
  - 6.7. **WING** proposes email brainstorming so more options can come up for fundraising.
    - 6.7.1. Short discussion on what people paid for NASH last year, and what we may expect for delegates to pay this year.

### **Business Manager Report – October 2009**

“I’m beginning to think this almost all-female ed board is a little obsessed with cock.”  
 -Ben Myers, FPS Director

Ah yes. October. The leaves are turning. Midterms are approaching. And hysterical quotes are making their way back into the Business Manager’s report. It is a truly magical time. Or, a truly crazy time. It probably depends on whether you work at the *Fulcrum* or not.

I have tackled a lot in the weeks since we last met, and I am happy to say that I feel like a lot has been accomplished. Allow me to tell you a little bit about it.

### **Financials**

As of Oct. 2 we have \$69,301 in our chequing account. The lower-than-normal balance is essentially due to the larger payroll expenses incurred through paying a full staff starting the beginning of September. However, this is still far more than the Fulcrum needs in its operating reserves, and we are still in excellent shape as far as cash flow is concerned. The balance of our savings account remains unchanged at \$20,053.15. We still haven't made a cent off of this account. Not sure why. I've heard rumours of an economic slowdown or something like that.

I am also pleased to announce that Huong, the FPS' bookkeeper, came in on Sept. 30 and found our books to be in excellent shape. She had no concerns, and everything was signed off on accordingly. I will admit that this was pretty great news for me.

### **Collections**

Not too much to report here. I am still working on the Bookstore and a couple of other advertisers from last year. I am confident that none will need to be written off as bad debt, but rather need an inordinate amount of my attention to get their payment in hand. Payment for this year is going well. All but a handful of our outstanding contracts are still within the 30-day window for payment, and thus are not cause for concern. As these windows expire over the coming weeks I will be making contact with advertisers as collecting on our accounts receivable will be incredibly important this year.

### **Credit Application**

The application process for the Fulcrum's corporate credit card was started on Oct. 2. I would assume that the application will be submitted by Oct. 9, and we should know within 2-3 days if our application is approved. Ron Pilon, our incredible financial advisor at TD, has been great about going through the piles of paperwork required to apply for a credit card. He has told me that we will almost certainly be approved, as we are applying for a credit card by offering collateral. I am hopeful that we will have this card within 2-3 weeks, which would be marvelous.

### **National Advertising / Budget Fallout**

I would be lying if I said that our national advertising revenue has been anything but disappointing. We netted slightly over \$4,000 in revenue in September, which is incredibly low. Put simply, we are making nowhere near what we have in past years, nor what we expected to make even in a down year.

This is not entirely unusual. The Fulcrum is certainly not alone in seeing reduced returns from Campus Plus this year. There is probably not a paper in the organization that is receiving what they expected. It is a very difficult year to be in the advertising business, and we are feeling that pinch. While C+ is optimistic that things will turn around eventually, I believe that it will be a few months before we may experience positive growth. Canadian economists were stunned last week upon news that GDP growth in Canada was flat in July, which doesn't bode well for the rest of the year. As such, I am not so optimistic, but am rather attempting to be pragmatic.

In that vein, after recognizing the potential for a revenue shortfall early in the going, I have been able to adjust our predicted spending patterns for the year. After consulting with Emma and Amanda I have been able to claw back the budget by over \$12,000. This will ensure that if our national advertising revenue continues to be stagnant, we will still be in a good position to end the year in the black. I am appreciative of the understanding of Emma and Amanda to the realities of this position, and their willingness to trim budgeted spending to ensure the Fulcrum's wellbeing.

I strongly doubt that we can count on this year bringing in any sort of significant surplus, and I believe it will come down to the wire as to whether the Fulcrum will end the year in the black. However, through being proactive and trimming spending in several areas I am optimistic that we will be able to survive the worst that this recession can throw at us, and the Fulcrum will make it out in good shape.

### **FPS-SFUO Agreement**

As you are likely aware the last couple weeks saw a great deal accomplished with the SFUO-FPS agreement. I drafted and signed the agreement as approved by the board and have submitted it to the SFUO for approval.

After talking to Seamus Wolfe, I am optimistic that by the end of the week we will have the agreement either signed or being revised for signing.

As I indicated in the email thread, I believe that we got a fair deal in this agreement. Securing \$1,500 in guaranteed funding in exchange for a full-page ad is a fair trade for this organization. Further, securing the SFUO's advertising commitment every year will allow for consistent budgeting within the SFUO. All told, I am looking forward to a long, mutually-beneficial relationship with the SFUO, and thank them for their work on negotiating this agreement.

### **Audit**

I am disappointed to say that I have no news on this front since our last meeting. A couple of emails to our auditor have gone unreturned. I believe that the process is complete, and will be pushing to have the results of the audit presented at the November board meeting, as frankly anything later is unacceptable. I shall keep the board apprised of any developments on this front.

### **National Conference Fundraising**

This section isn't going to yield much in the way of good news I'm afraid. On the heels of the generous \$3,000 donation from the VP academic's office last month, I recently received news that Community Life Service is donating \$100 to the Fulcrum's attendance at the National Conference. Given the \$7-800 annual donations we have seen from CLS in past years, this number is certainly disappointing.

To date we have \$3,100 in confirmed fundraising. Should the SFUO-FPS agreement be ratified soon, that number will increase accordingly. I am also confident that Alumni Relations will come through with some form of donation, however at this point I am reluctant to count on any sort of fundraising revenue.

This is all to say that I am now more discouraged than at last month's meeting. We are nowhere near approaching our fundraising goal, and I believe that our goal cannot realistically be reached this year. The net result of this is will be that the Fulcrum can send

fewer delegates to Nash, or that any delegates will be compelled to pay significantly more to attend. In my eyes neither option is particularly appealing.

I am hoping that the board will be willing to assist me in identifying potential donors, or helping in the process of approaching donors. This is an unusual year, and I believe it will take a concerted effort from all of us to work to mitigate the effects of a down year in fundraising, and help to send as many volunteers and staff as possible to Nash. If this were any other year I would hope the board would consider committing FPS funds to sending delegates. However, this is not looking like an appropriate year to consider that option. As such, I would like to ask board members and editorial staff for their assistance in fundraising for this conference, as I believe it is something deserving of the effort.

On the upside, Marc Duval of CLS has agreed to pay for the cost of an official U of O “Fulcrum” sign on the outside of our building. The cost is normally \$200, however Duval agreed to pay for the full cost. I am going to recommend that this sign also recognize OPIRG as tenants of the building. I am looking forward to seeing this sign installed, and providing a more formal recognition of the Fulcrum’s presence.

### **Distribution Boxes**

As (I hope) you’ve noticed, there are now 4 gorgeous Fulcrum boxes on campus, and students now “Can Haz Fulcrum” as they walk between classes. Getting these boxes distributed was a minor miracle, and I am just happy to have them out.

And now for the major miracle.

The City of Ottawa rejected 3 of our proposed locations for off-campus boxes due to too many newspaper boxes already being at the locations. After stopping by the permit office to seek advice, I was told that we can either submit 3 new locations and have them assessed by by-law inspectors before receiving permits for all boxes. Or, we can request a refund on the 3 denied locations and simply distribute the 8 approved boxes at their locations and keep 3 in storage until next year.

I haven’t taken any action on these options. My preference is to select new locations and maximize our off-campus presence and not waste the \$900 spent on three unused boxes. However, at this point my desire to simply get the boxes out on the street is growing. Of course, the City could not issue permits for the 8 that have been approved now, and issue the other 3 later. That would be too easy.

Ultimately, whichever course of action is taken, the off-campus boxes will be distributed within a couple of weeks.

The bureaucracy continues.

### **On-Campus Racks**

In a good news section of this report, Employment News staffer Derek Saunders came by unexpectedly to deliver a set of Plexiglas sheets to be installed in each of our jointly-branded racks. These will help to keep the better display the issues and hopefully improve the appearance of our racks. A few weeks ago I simply inquired if he knew a Plexiglas manufacturer, so for him to come by with a full set was incredibly kind.

Amanda and I completed our assessment of the distribution network a few weeks ago, and have just purchased stickers to update the branding on all of racks. Keep an eye out for the new-look racks in the coming week.

As for our Employment News joint racks, I am hopeful that we will get word on updated branding within the next couple of weeks. This would bring a much-needed update to our racks, and be in line with the current Fulcrum brand.

## **ABC**

This conference has truly dominated my time in the past few weeks. However, I will be brief and say that ABC is shaping up to be one of the most successful regional conferences in CUP's recent memory. Confirmed speakers include David McKie, Aaron Wherry, Derek Puddicombe, Amanda Putz, Dave Tait, and a handful of other renowned Ottawa journalists. As a direct result of assembling such a great lineup, I am confident that we will come close to 100 delegates including volunteers and staff from the Charlatan and Algonquin Times. This is unprecedented for an ORCUPbeq conference, and will establish ABC as a leading regional conference. The feedback from other papers has been incredible, and it looks like we have put together something that papers are truly interested in attending.

Additionally, a CUP Alumni event on the Friday night will add another draw to this conference, and will certainly be a highlight of the event.

There are 2 weeks before the conference starts and while most of the planning is done, things such as delegate guides, delegate badges, t-shirts, and lunch catering arrangements need to be looked after.

In short, I believe that we have put together one of the most impressive regional conferences—one fitting the Fulcrum's reputation.

## **In Closing**

I would just like it to be noted that two of the phone lines at the Fulcrum weren't working for a few days. The day after calling Computing and Communications at the U of O to request a repair, these lines were back up and running. I simply wanted to note that never in the history of the Fulcrum has C&C been so prompt to fix an issue with our phone lines. I was anticipating a 3-month battle, and am ecstatic that one was not needed.

Take that Ross.

## **7. Report from the Editor-in-Chief**

7.1. **MYERS** asks: What do you attribute the great turnout for applicants?

7.1.1. **GODMERE** replies: We had ads for hiring in the first couple of issues, and v and v has been doing a great job, and a lot of work during Frosh week.

7.2. **BEDARD** asks: Why the resignations?

7.2.1. **GODMERE** replies: No hard feelings. Just a matter of workload. On-campus distributor thinks its too much work, Associate News is starting up a job with the government, and won't have time for the Fulcrum.

## **Editor-in-Chief report**

**Oct. 4, 2009**

Seven issues under our belts (if you include the summer issues). It's kind of incredible. I know our editorial board has been working very hard and I think we've been seeing some great results. September went by so quickly... I just know it's going to be December before we know it.

### I've jinxed myself when it comes to hiring

I'll start with the good news: over the last few weeks, we successfully hired a staff writer (Katie DeClerq), a staff photographer (Alex Smyth), a staff proofreader (Mercedes Mueller), an ombudsboy (Ryan Durran), and an ombudsgirl (Melissa Borduas). All new staff will be jumping right into their roles for this next production. The amount of interest we got was incredible—we received over 20 applications for two positions in particular.

I'll now continue on to the not-so-good news: apparently, when I said "hiring seems to be neverending," I jinxed myself. Unfortunately, our associate news editor and on-campus distributor resigned late last week (both did give two weeks notice, I should note, and the resignations are definitely on friendly terms), so I've launched into a hiring process immediately (officially opened on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and will officially close on the 16<sup>th</sup>, as per policy). I have sent an email out to the mailing list and posted the info on the announcements section of our website. We will also be printing 2 house ads in the Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> issues. As quickly as I have launched into this, we may still be facing empty positions for the Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup> issue, but no matter what, we'll manage.

### Web presence

As I mentioned to the Online Media Committee, Amira's been doing a great job at updating our website with our print content weekly, and we've successfully run two breaking news stories so far. That said, there's always more we can be doing. I've brought up the idea of web-exclusive content to our editors and unfortunately we haven't seen great interest at this point, but we are planning to have a lengthy discussion re: online presence at the next ed board meeting (figure out ed board goals, desires, visions, etc.). I've been updating the Facebook and Twitter pages regularly with general Fulcrum updates, and now that the lovely Di Daniels has her own Twitter page, too, we're getting our online presence known for sure. There is, however, always more work to be done and hopefully over the course of the next few months both boards will have a clearer idea of what we'd like to see and work towards.

### ORPUCbeq

ORPUCbeq planning is going exceptionally well. We've got gorgeous posters up and sent to papers, we have the speakers' schedule nearly filled, and we have attendance confirmation from several papers at this point (even though only CUP staff have registered so far). We're estimating we may hit 100 delegates at this point. Frank and I are really excited, especially since our delegate fees are cheaper and our logo is more badass than those of any other fall regional CUP conferences. We're really making headway with everything at this point and I have total confidence that we'll be able to pull this off beautifully.

### I think that's everything

So after the insanity that these next few weeks promise to deliver, I'll be out of town from the evening of Thursday, Oct. 22 to the evening of Sunday, Oct. 25. Still accessible via BlackBerry, as always.

8. Report from the Advertising Representative
  - 8.1. **TAYLOR-VAISEY/HASINOFF**: Motion to receive report
    - 8.1.1. Carried

### **Advertising Representative's Report – Oct 2009**

Hey Everybody! Hope everyone is enjoying the semester so far. We had a less than wonderful September. The sales total so far is \$50,871.25. Last year we were in a much better position, although in my last board report I stated that I don't expect sales to be as high as last year. I am happy that although it is clear we're being hit with people's small budgets, we're not doing altogether that poorly.

Something that is encouraging is that dollars are coming in (or are expected to come in) from unexpected places. CUPE is rebranding this year, and has already booked the back cover for the first issue in November. They are expecting to do a fairly hefty contract this year – we shall see. I finally sat down with Marie from the NAC – there is some exciting news: they are bringing Live Rush back, which is great. They are interested in revamping their arrangement with us and are drawing up a proposal as we speak. I have discussed the possibility of contra with them which would involve our logo on their banner potentially, which would be exciting. If we have any of these things come through it will help greatly in getting us back on track. The SFUO is spending quite a few dollars with us up until now, and I can only cross fingers that this will continue. Unfortunately, as is happening all too often this year, we will not be getting any back page ads from Malabar, but I have approached Spirit Halloween that just opened on Elgin, and another new Halloween store that just opened on Merivale. We have some new people, such as Pole Dancing Tanning and Fitness Studio – pretty self-explanatory if slightly uncreative, and some people who were not with us last year but present the year before, such as Revolution Rock. We also have a few people due to the Education Fair.

Well, I won't waste much more of your time. Sales aren't great but there are some things in the works that could help us recover and enough new long-term advertisers to keep us going. Now that it has calmed down after September, I will be able to pursue some leads and hopefully inch us along bit by bit till we make target. Wish me luck. Have a Happy BOD.

9. *Discussion*: Town Hall meeting
  - 9.1. **TAYLOR-VAISEY** proposes that the FPS host a town hall meeting
  - 9.2. **DAY** suggests an online mechanism to submit questions ahead of time
  - 9.3. **BEDARD** likes the idea of a town hall, but speaks against online forum; has concerns about the meeting being used inappropriately
  - 9.4. **BOISVENUE** asks: Who will be at the town hall on behalf of the FPS?
  - 9.5. **BEDARD** suggests focusing the meeting entirely on the FPS
  - 9.6. **TAYLOR-VAISEY** will send proposal to FPS board via email

10. *Discussion:* Policy Review Committee

- 10.1. **APPLEYARD** says that policy needs cleaning up: many places where it conflicts, is cumbersome, or out of date; proposes committee to look at it
- 10.2. **BEDARD/HASINOFF:** Motion to create a policy review committee with three board members, and with both the editor-in-chief and business manager to review and amend the guiding documents of the FPS and to report back at the January BOD meeting, and also to the editorial board
  - 10.2.1. Carried
- 10.3. **BEDARD, HASINOFF and TAYLOR-VAISEY** elected to the committee

11. *Discussion:* Joint meetings of the editorial board and board of directors

- 11.1. **TAYLOR-VAISEY** will invite editorial board to November meeting

12. *Discussion:* Fulcrum Clean-up Team

- 12.1. **APPLEYARD** says basement needs cleaning. He wants help.
- 12.2. Members of the board oblige.

13. *Discussion:* SPACES meeting

- 13.1. **TAYLOR-VAISEY** says that FPS representatives (himself and **APPLEYARD**) will attend meeting about student spaces with U of O president Allan Rock and vice-president resources Victor Simon
- 13.2. **APPLEYARD** says his priority is to ask about long-term plan for FPS, given that building at 631 King Edward will be demolished at some point
- 13.3. **HORTON** says he hopes the meeting will give everyone an idea of where each group stands. The only connection SPACES has to this meeting is that the meeting was sparked from it.

14. Report from the Online Media Committee

- 14.1. The committee will bring recommendations to the November meeting

15. Any Other Business

- 15.1. Removal of a director
  - 15.1.1. **KHANJIN** is removed as a director for missing at least two consecutive meetings without just cause
- 15.2. **BEDARD/TAYLOR-VAISEY:** Be it resolved that the FPS erect a statue in front of the fulcrum offices or in another suitable location in commemoration of Melanie Wood, EIC par excellence. BIFR that the FPS set aside pi dollars per fiscal year to this end and is willing to take donations. BIFR the statue for Melanie Wood be constructed in one of her iconic poses, selected in consultation with her. BIFR that the fund established shall be called the "Melanie wood commemorative statue fund".
  - 15.2.1. Carried
- 15.3. **APPLEYARD** notes that the residence drop for the Frosh issue didn't happen; mistake by rez director. Dee-Dee had him take out all of the flyers that ran in the issue and insert them into the mailboxes

15.4. Discussion of ex-officio seats and their ability to sit in on in-camera sessions tabled until November meeting

16. Adjournment

16.1. **WING** motion to adjourn at 12:23 p.m.

16.1.1. Carried