

Texas Student Media
Board of Operating Trustees Meeting
October 23, 2015 at 1:00 p.m.
Jesse H. Jones Communication Center, Building A
Lady Bird Johnson Room (CMA 5.136)
2504A Whitis Avenue, Austin, Texas 78712

Voting Members Present: Jan Ross Piedad, William Smith, Pauline Berens, McKay Proctor, Heidi Toprac, Todd Ross Nienkerk, Robert Quigley, Jeff Cohen

Voting Members Absent: Forrest Wolfe, Arjun Mocherla, Matt Eastin

Non-Voting Members Present : Gerald Johnson, Claire Smith, Jack Mitts, Blake Gentry, Christian Young, Christy Zhang, Joshua Brenner, Shannon Geison, Peter Flynn

Non-Voting Members Absent: Andrew Serice

Guests Present: Frank Serpas, Peter Chen

Meeting Opening

The Texas Student Media Board of Operating Trustees meeting on October 23, 2015 was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Pauline Berens.

Approval of the minutes of the September 25, 2015 meeting of the TSM Board of Operating Trustees

Todd Ross Nienkerk observed faulty wording concerning pro-bono consulting services he offered to the Daily Texan for planning its website overhaul. Todd amended the minutes to reflect the true nature of the services. Robert Quigley moved to approve the minutes as amended. Pauline Berens seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Committee report

The Executive committee did not reach quorum and, therefore, had no report.

Election Committee report

The Election Committee proposed changes to the election code centering on the Daily Texan Editor in Chief. Heidi Toprac expressed a desire to broaden the requirements to increase the number of candidates that could run. She cited the qualifications under section 2.17 of the handbook as too exclusionary, narrowing the field of possible

candidates who can run for the position. She proposed specifically altering the wording of section 2.17.a.4 to allow for work in opinion at publications of equal merit to the Texan to count toward requirements.

Claire Smith expressed her opposition to the change. Robert Quigley questioned if a broadening of the qualification was necessary or if the Board could exercise its authority to waive requirements on a case-by-case basis to solve the problem. Claire Smith expressed approval at that notion.

Pauline Berens added that another change the Election Committee would like see would be altering the requirements to require at least one full semester with the Texan as opposed to one semester in progress. She also expressed a desire to make the wording of section 2.17.a.6 tighter to exclude non-current and non-permanent staff members from signing in support of a prospective candidate.

Gerald Johnson said that the board should only be able to waive one requirement at a time, but that waiving requirements would be an effective way to ensure a qualified field of candidates as long as those candidates knew to appeal to the board.

The Board agreed to return to these ideas later in the meeting to make the necessary changes.

Trust & Handbook Committee report

The Trust & Handbook Committee has only taken preliminary steps toward changes. A report was promised for next meeting.

Discussion and possible action regarding potential changes to the TSM handbook

Heidi Toprac moved to insert the requirement that the signatory staff members be "Current and Permanent" to Section 2.17.a.6 of the TSM handbook; that for Section 2.17.b the introductory prepositional phrase be eliminated, the phrase "one of the following" be inserted. Robert Quigley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Jack Mitts note that there was a flaw in the wording of the handbook regarding the active term of the managing editor that he would like to see addressed. Heidi Toprac recommended he turn his concerns to the Trust and Handbook committee.

Activity reports from the TSM Director and student managers

Gerald Johnson provided the TSM Director's activity report, exalting the pleasures of being fully staffed. Gerald said equipment purchases continued to come in. He expressed pleasure at the amount of revenue the second annual Master the Possibilities pull-out brought in. He said that ITS is almost finished cleaning up the Daily Texan and Travesty sites. The Texan is also officially delivering all its ads on its website through Google.

Blake Gentry delivered the KVRX station manager activity report. He said that though Saturday time slots are proving difficult to fill, recruitment has gone well. The station released a recruitment video that has had an impact on bringing in new people. The first in a series of concerts to be hosted at Empire control room occurred the Thursday after the meeting. Blake said that the station was attempting to be certified through the music discovery application Cymbal.

Christian Young delivered the TSTV station manager activity report. He expressed excitement at new production equipment that came online and also at the station's move to high definition programming.

Joshua Brenner delivered the Travesty Editor-in-Chief activity report. He expressed concern that no one had complained about the Travesty yet. He said the Travesty might transition to looking more like a magazine.

Christy Zhang delivered the Cactus Editor-in-Chief activity report. She expressed excitement that people can now buy the yearbook. She also said that group photos were being taken for organizations. Jeff Cohen asked her what the direction of yearbooks in general was. Christy said that it was difficult to sell people on something they will not use immediately. Todd Ross Nienkerk said that she should look in to making the book a narrative of what happened that year.

Claire Smith delivered the Daily Texan Editor-in-Chief report. She said that Texan Talks had moved to a more intimate venue. She said that the Texan was tabling on campus on Tuesdays, which gave it more of a physical presence. The board then discussed Claire's handling of a pro-gun advocacy group that attempted to publish an Op-ed in the Texan.

Peter Chen expressed approval of the way Claire Smith had handled such issues in her tenure thus far.

Jack Mitts delivered the Daily Texan Managing editor Activity report. He noted that the Texan had continued to grow into new media, citing snapchat and its podcasts as prime examples. Jeff Cohen asked if the Texan had found that different types of stories did well on certain platforms. Jack said that the Texan is working on nailing down what works.

Robert Quigley asked if the Texan was over its angst about its website. Jack Mitts said that things are currently stable, but that the Texan would love to see an upgrade. The board debated various avenues for improvement, then Todd Ross Nienkerk offered a pro bono consultation workshop to work out what the website could be. The board set a deadline for the spring for the Texan to have its improvements planned.

Jack continued his report by saying that the Friends of the Daily Texan lunch went well, citing Claire Smith's speech as a highlight.

Jan Ross Piedad said that she had been selected for the Archer Fellows program in the spring and would have to leave the board.

Robert Quigley moved to adjourn. Todd Ross Nienkerk seconded. The meeting adjourned at 2:48 pm.

2.17 What qualifications must the Editor-in-Chief meet?

- (a) An applicant must—
 - (1) be an enrolled U.T. Austin student;
 - (2) have completed at least 12 hours at U.T. Austin with a minimum grade point average of 2.0 (for undergraduates) or at least 9 hours at U.T. Austin with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (for graduate students);
 - (3) pass a media law and libel test administered by the Editorial Adviser prior to taking position;
 - (4) have worked, or will have worked when their term begins, at least one semester as a permanent staff member of *The Daily Texan* in opinion;
 - (5) have worked, or will have worked when their term begins, at least one semester as a permanent or issue staff member of *The Daily Texan* outside opinion;
 - (6) have obtained signatures from at least five **current permanent staff members of *The Daily Texan*** supporting the candidate for Editor-in-Chief.
- (b) ~~If no qualified candidate for Editor in Chief has filed by the deadline, The Board may certify one or more candidates by waiving some or all one of requirements 4, 5, and or 6 by an affirmative vote of two-thirds majority of the voting members present.~~
- (c) The Editor-in-Chief shall be elected by the student body in the spring semester for a term of one year. The term shall begin on June 1 and end on May 31. The outgoing Editor-in-Chief will train the incoming Editor-in-Chief in the basic operations and policies of TSM as regards annual budgets, payrolls, purchasing, inventory of U.T. Austin property, and *The Daily Texan* policies and procedures. This training will take place over a week of leadership overlap during which the outgoing and the incoming Editors-in-Chief are working together with the goal of transitioning leadership knowledge. This week may take place the last week of the outgoing leader's term or the first week of the incoming leader's term and must be coordinated with the Director.

2.18 What general provisions must an applicant follow?

- (a) Any person who has served a regular full term (June 1 through May 31) as Editor-in-Chief shall be ineligible for a second term.
- (b) Any member of *The Daily Texan* staff ~~that~~ **who** applies to run for Editor-in-Chief must take a leave of absence without pay from the date of certification through the