

QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES
Monday, April 5, 2021

Council Members present: David Bernard, Stephanie Butler, Wayne Cotter, Pam Gemelli, Bob Gottfried, Arlynn Greenbaum, Karen Levin, Frieda Lipp, Penelope Pi-Sunyer, Ruth Ward and Michael Wellner.

Council Members absent: None

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic shutdown, this monthly meeting was held via Zoom call. The meeting was called to order by Quest President Bob Gottfried at 4:00 pm.

Approval of Joyce West to Continue as Chair of Curriculum Committee

Quest President Bob Gottfried requested Council's approval of Joyce West continuing as Chair of the Curriculum Committee for one additional year.

Council unanimously approved this request.

Approval of the Bylaws Revisions for Membership

Bob sent the final text of the bylaws revisions to Council and requested Council's approval so they can be submitted to membership. Quest bylaws require distribution at least two weeks prior to the date for voting. Members will be able to vote on the bylaws starting April 29, 2021 and ending May 2, 2021.

Council unanimously approved the final text and Bob will email the bylaws.

Fall 2021 Plan Committee

Bob mentioned this is an advisory committee that met to discuss how Quest will operate in the fall. Bob, Wayne, Ruth and Michael represent Council on the committee.

Ruth explained the committee discussed if Quest should have a hybrid option, a Zoom only option or all in person as well as the technology needs. There is a possibility that the lunchroom may be used as another room.

On April 13, there will be a meeting with Robert Hernandez of CWE and several members of the Online Learning Committee. Robert will explain what CWE will make available to us, the costs associated with the equipment needed and the rooms available. CWE is purchasing the cameras for the rooms and Quest is purchasing the audio equipment and special screens.

Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC)

Bob confirmed there are no self-nominated candidates that have applied for positions on Council. Since no one applied for the position of President or Vice President, Ruth Ward is our President-Elect and Wayne Cotter is our Vice President-Elect.

Eight candidates have decided to run for Council. There will be two candidate forums (Monday, April 26 and Wednesday, April

28) so that each candidate can talk about their qualifications and also answer questions from members.

Voting will start April 29, 2021 and end May 2, 2021. The ballots will be counted on May 3, 2021. New Council members will be invited to join the Council meeting on Monday, May 10, 2021.

Report from the Curriculum Committee

David Bernard reported for the Curriculum Committee that as of now, 38 courses are planned for the fall. He also said that Joyce West informed her committee that there will be 3 rooms available - 2 rooms with Zoom capability and one room for in person only.

Michael confirmed the number of courses for the spring is actually 31 (excluding the lunchroom programs).

Bob will join the Scheduling Committee for the balance of this year as well as for the fall semester. The Scheduling Committee determines the schedule of classes.

Special General Meeting on April 16, 2021

At this meeting, membership will provide input on how they would like to see Quest operate in the fall. Wayne will poll members with questions and results will be available immediately.

A schedule of fall classes will be communicated after the meeting.

Questions for the Special General Meeting

Bob explained that this election is critical with respect to Quest's policy on moving forward. He feels everyone should know the issues and emailed a list of questions to Council to review. Membership will need to vote on each question and Wayne will poll the results. Council needs to approve the questions being asked at the General Meeting.

In June, the new Council will meet and use the results to decide the plan for the fall.

Council raised concerns about voting when so many items (e.g., scheduling, costs, attendance and tuition) are undecided. For example, if Quest continues with Zoom once COVID is over, we would like to know if members want to continue with Zoom.

Since we don't have a lot of time to make decisions, David raised questions regarding scheduling. Bob mentioned there should be coordination between the Curriculum Committee, the Scheduling Committee and the Online Learning Committee.

Wayne brought up the issue of how many people would attend in person. If a higher percentage decide not to return, we may need to re-evaluate our plan for the fall.

Arlynn asked when we would know about costs for the Zoom rooms. Once the meeting with Robert Hernandez takes place, we will have more information.

Frieda and Penelope felt it was too soon to make a determination about returning to 25 Broadway.

Stephanie mentioned that a poll is not a commitment. If it's not possible to meet in person, Quest will continue with Zoom only.

Bob will encourage everyone to attend the meeting since it is the only opportunity for members to respond to the questions.

After much discussion, Council unanimously approved submitting these questions to members for voting.

Transition Plan to New Council

Since Council needs to know more about the number of classes, scheduling and our technology needs, definitive information will be confirmed at a later date when we hear from CWE and the Online Learning Committee. The new Council will address this information.

Bob will remain on Council as ex-Officio for one additional year. He can participate but is not able to vote.

Questions for the Candidates

Bob recommended sending questions to the candidates running for Council regarding the current topics that impact Quest. Council approved his recommendation and Bob will draft questions for Council's review and approval.

After the meeting on April 16, Bob will email the final questions to the candidates about issues that will need to be addressed by the new Council.

Treasurer's Report for April 2021

Quest Treasurer Stephanie Butler presented the report.

Revenues

- Our budget is \$41,550. There were no significant changes since last month.
- Our actual revenue is \$43,675. We received 34 checks in the fall (from Zoom members) and 257 checks in the spring (from full members and Zoom members). This represents a total of 291 checks.

Expenses

- We are on target for expenses. Our budget for annual expenses is \$43,273. To date, we have spent \$33,803.

Stephanie reviewed our finances with the Audit Committee and it was decided to roll over 4 Certificates of Deposit (“CDs”) held by First Republic in the aggregate amount of about \$212,000. The original CDs paid 0.3%. They were replaced by CDs paying 0.25%. Because they are short term, the difference in value is about \$25. We checked rates with 4 banks and on line with many lending institutions before the Audit Committee and Stephanie agreed to the roll over.

New Business

Memorandum from the Chairs of the Online Learning Committee

Wayne Cotter, Bob Reiss and Ruth Ward sent a memo to Council regarding their concerns with respect to having a hybrid operation for the fall 2021 class schedule.

Ruth and Wayne presented the Committee's main concerns:

- The limitations of technical support
- The classroom capacity limitations
- Allowing for two-classroom operation
- An overflow room with a screen and a podium

Council discussed the memo in detail and it was decided to share an updated memo with membership by attaching it to the minutes. The Online Learning Committee will also send the updated memo to the Scheduling Committee and Curriculum Committee.

Please see the attached memo for complete details.

Fall Catalog

David Bernard mentioned that the Curriculum Committee would like a hard copy of the fall catalog printed in addition to the online version. Council confirmed this will be done.

General Meeting on April 23, 2021

This meeting will be held to discuss new classes, give committee reports and present the Treasurer's report.

Q Review Mailing

Quest gave a \$200 gift card to Wayne and Susanne Cotter in appreciation of their mailing out the Q Review to all members over the past two years.

The Council's next scheduled meeting is Monday, May, 10 at 4:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned by Bob Gottfried at 5:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Levin

Secretary

Attachment – Memorandum dated April 7, 2021, from the Chairs of the Online Learning Committee (see below).

April 7, 2021

To: The Curriculum and Scheduling Committees

This memorandum outlines some Zoom Committee concerns about Quest's fall schedule of classes.

Our concerns stem from the following uncertainties:

- We don't know how many members will be attending at 25 Broadway on any given fall day.
- We don't know how many "Zoom Rooms" will be fully operational in the fall.
- We don't know exactly how these Zoom rooms will function.
- We don't know the extent of in-person technical assistance required for each hybrid class.

In view of these concerns, we believe a conservative approach is appropriate in adopting a class schedule. By conservative we mean in colloquial parlance "Let's not bite off more than we can chew."

Limitations of Technical Support

The Zoom Committee is concerned that scheduling more than two hybrid classes in any morning or afternoon session would exceed the committee's ability to provide adequate technical support. Our current "Zoom Only" program requires major Zoom Committee participation for webinars, but not for meetings. One thing is certain: *More technical support and expertise will be needed to conduct both hybrid meetings and hybrid webinars in the fall.*

Classroom Capacity Limitations

Some Quest members have expressed concerns that we may attract more members to a Quest class at 25 Broadway than the classrooms will be permitted to hold. One possible solution offered is a requirement that every Quest member register in advance for live presentations. We believe such an approach would be a bureaucratic and logistical nightmare.

A more realistic approach to this problem, we believe, is to hold one Zoom classroom in reserve. Thus, if attendance at a class exceeds classroom capacity, the overflow can be accommodated in the reserve classroom. This “overflow” classroom would allow attendees to view the session but not actively participate.

Thus, we recommend only two of the three Zoom classrooms provided by CWE be scheduled for classes in the fall. This would mean that any small in-person classes would not be scheduled in the fall for that third Zoom classroom. *However, CWE recently indicated that the lunchroom would be available for small classes (10-12 people) which could help ease the problem.*

Allowing for Two-Classroom Operation

To help reduce the number of classes at 25 Broadway, we have the following suggestions that could be communicated to class coordinators:

- They can run their class as Zoom only on Fridays.
- They can “share” a slot with another class. For example, one course could use four dates on the schedule and another course can use the remaining three. For coordinators having trouble rounding up fall presenters, this may be a viable approach.
- They can defer their class until the spring 2022 semester.

Friday Zoom Classes

We understand there are currently three “Zoom Only” classes scheduled. Why not put them on Fridays, reserving one period a month for museum tours?

Also, it seems inconvenient to schedule both in-person and Zoom Only classes on the same day. Do people have to rush home from a morning in-person class if they wish to attend an afternoon Zoom Only class?

Conclusion

Following a discussion of these issues with Council during its April 5 meeting, a general consensus was reached on the following:

(1) Quest should not require members to pre-register if they intend to attend a session at 25 Broadway;

(2) It is recommended that no more than two hybrid classes be scheduled for each morning and afternoon session during the fall semester;

(3) It is recommended that the third Zoom room be used as an “overflow room” for the fall semester; and

(4) To help reduce the number of fall courses (a) “Zoom Only” class coordinators could be asked to hold classes on Fridays and (b) lead coordinators of other classes could be asked to share slots with another course or defer the start of their courses,

The fall semester will present many challenges for the curriculum, scheduling and zoom committees. As such, please keep in mind that changes recommended above *will only apply to the fall 2021 semester.*

The Zoom committee also recognizes the myriad factors that must be considered in arranging class schedules, but we ask that the above recommendations be seriously considered when scheduling classes for the fall.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bob Reiss
Ruth Ward
Wayne Cotter

(Online Learning Committee Co-Chairs)