

QUEST COUNCIL MINUTES

Monday, February 7, 2022

Council Members present: David Bernard, Stephanie Butler, Wayne Cotter, Mary Ann Donnelly, Bob Gottfried, Arlynn Greenbaum, Karen Levin, Nan McNamara, Penelope Pi-Sunyer, Donna Ramer, Ruth Ward and Michael Wellner.

Council Members absent: None

Council held its monthly meeting at 25 Broadway with some members participating via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by Quest President Ruth Ward at 2:45 pm.

Spring Schedule and Summer Encores Program for 2022

The Spring catalog was emailed to all members and a hard copy is available at 25 Broadway. Mary Ann Donnelly reported that the Curriculum Committee met to discuss the fall semester. The Summer Encores Committee is on track.

Coffee Update

In the past, \$2,400 was budgeted for coffee. Pam Gemelli and Michael Wellner recently placed an order of \$658.11 for coffee supplies (coffee, cups, lids, new urns, – the two new brewing devices were free), the first in quite a long time. Due to COVID, this expense was not included in this year's budget. At our March meeting, Ruth will ask Council's approval of this expense.

Depending upon the status of COVID, we are looking to having luncheons at 25 Broadway for members on March 10 and April 14. To avoid the problem of not enough food encountered last time, members will be asked to RSVP for these luncheons. Lois Cardillo, Chair of the Social Committee, will coordinate with Ruth.

As to the cost of the lunches, the fall 2021 luncheon cost was under \$600. The two spring luncheons, each of which will have a cap of 40 Quest members, are expected to cost under \$800 each. At our March meeting, Ruth will ask Council's approval of this expense as well. The total of the coffee and luncheon expenses will come to under \$2,400.

Spring 2022 Year-End Luncheon Update

Michael Wellner reported that we usually have our luncheon on the Thursday after the last day of class. In the past, we have used Battery Park Gardens. The Committee discussed having our luncheon on a Friday and suggested a location in midtown instead. Council members thought a Friday worked better because those presenters scheduled for the last day of class would not have to reschedule their date. A midtown location also allows more members to attend.

Ruth made a motion for Council to vote on having the luncheon on Friday and Wayne seconded the motion.

Council unanimously agreed to hold the luncheon on the Friday after classes end and it will be in midtown.

Fall 2022 Calendar

The fall semester will start September 6, 2022 and end December 15, 2022. Council discussed if we should close the entire week of Thanksgiving. Vice President Wayne Cotter and Michael Wellner thought it would be a good idea to break for that entire week to give the Technology Committee a much-needed break. In the past, our attendance wasn't very high during that week.

Council unanimously approved closing for the entire week of Thanksgiving.

The fall dates are listed below.

9/5/22	Monday, Labor Day, no classes
9/6/22	Tuesday, first day of fall semester classes
10/5/22	Wednesday, Yom Kippur, no classes
10/10/22	Monday, Columbus Day, no classes
11/9/22	Wednesday, Quest General Meeting, 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm (Hybrid)
11/21/22 – 11/24/22	Monday-Thursday, week of Thanksgiving, no classes
12/15/22	Thursday, last day of classes

Fall 2022 Schedule for Guest Speakers

9/14/22

9/28/22

10/12/22

10/26/22

11/30/22

12/14/22

Technology Committee Report

Vice President Wayne Cotter reported that the audio went very well in Room 27 and one class was already held there. Wayne mentioned the policy of recording classes and suggested it be discussed when Nan McNamara discussed the Long-Range Planning Committee. Nan, Chair of the Long-Range Planning Committee suggested that the issue of class recordings is complicated and that this discussion be postponed until the March Council meeting.

During the spring semester, the Technology Committee will continue to record classes as stated in the prior minutes.

At our January Council meeting, there were three courses in question as to whether or not they would be recorded. Wayne spoke to the lead coordinators of those courses as follows:

- The Rise and Fall of the British Empire will not be recorded
- Reading the Rabbis will not be recorded
- Shakespeare will not be recorded

The following courses will be recorded:

- Indie Films (this is a Zoom-only course)
- Law and Order (in Room 15-17)
- Movers and Shakers (in Room 27)

Long-Range Planning Committee for 2022

Nan recommended we defer the discussion of the Long-Range Planning Committee to March. Council agreed to think about the issues that we would like included and reviewed as part of the Long-Range Planning Committee. In the interim, the Committee will revisit their objectives and strategy.

Parliamentary Rules

Wayne Cotter suggested Council should introduce some basic parliamentary procedures for conducting meetings now that the bylaws no longer reference Roberts' Rules of Order. He will send some suggested basic recommendations to Council prior to its March meeting.

Council Approval of Steve Rubin as Caring Committee Chair

Donna Ramer made a motion to approve Steve Rubin as Chair of the Caring Committee and Mary Ann Donnelly seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by Council.

Membership Update

Donna reported that there are 214 paid members and seven founding members.

Ruth mentioned a new membership form (this is not an application) and Nan addressed this. The form is given to people who have expressed an interest in Quest, have scheduled a visit, sat in on a class and are ready to join. In addition to name, contact and emergency contact information, the form includes questions regarding their academic background, interests, hobbies as well as work and volunteer experience. Michael and Wayne feel these questions are important and help to foster a sense of community.

Arlynn Greenbaum said that *QNEWS* used to write a feature on new members. Donna will email Barbara Gelber to suggest we do this again in a future issue of *QNEWS*.

Wayne made a motion that Council approve the new form and Arlynn seconded the motion. There were ten electronic votes to approve the new form and one electronic vote in abstention.

Electronic Archives Information Update

Quest Treasurer Stephanie Butler reported that this will be discussed at a future meeting.

New Insurance Policy

David Bernard reported our application was submitted and we will have more details at the next meeting.

Discussion Groups

David mentioned that several members approached him informally to talk about Quest policies and practices including

our current hybrid/Zoom approach, class recordings and the nature of our community. David suggested we create focus groups for further discussion as an opportunity for members to talk and give us feedback. Council members can be part of the discussion.

Donna suggested this would be an informal gathering rather than a formal focus group. If we decide to move forward, we may want to formalize it and have some structure.

Arlynn suggested we try it once to give people a chance to be heard as a way to foster community.

Ruth asked David to write up what Council would like to do, and come back to Council to discuss. David envisions this as an informal discussion with a small group of members. A sub-committee was formed with David, Arlynn, Donna and Penelope who will meet to create a suggested plan of action and report back in March.

Nominating and Elections Committee (NEC) for Spring 2022 Re-Election of New Council Members

Bob Gottfried reported that Mary Beth Yakoubian is the Chair of the NEC Committee. The committee met twice and is in the process of identifying four candidates to run for three open Council positions.

David Bernard, Wayne Cotter, Arlynn Greenbaum and Karen Levin will run again for a two-year term. Stephanie Butler and Penelope Pi-Sunyer will not run again.

Legitimacy of Proxy Votes

Nan raised the following question: In clarifying whether proxy votes are permitted, is there a difference between a proxy vote submitted in writing directly to the Council, i.e., “My proxy vote, on the question of X, is in favor.” rather than “I am giving my proxy vote to Y without specifying whether it’s for or against vote?”

Bob Gottfried explained that prior to the last amendment of the Quest bylaws review, Quest ran its voting in accordance with Roberts’ Rules of Order. Bob referenced Roberts’ Rules of Order as saying that “proxy voting is prohibited unless specifically provided for by the charter of bylaws.” The Quest bylaws don’t address proxy voting.

Wayne mentioned that as a result of the last amendment to the bylaws, Quest eliminated the Roberts’ Rules of Order.

Donna asked for a definition of a proxy and Bob said a proxy is any vote that is not made in person or electronically is a proxy vote and is not permitted unless it is specified in the bylaws. Nan read the Google definition of a proxy as follows: “If you are unable to vote in person, you can ask someone to vote on your behalf. This is called a proxy vote.”

Ruth suggested we think about proxy voting further. Wayne suggested that Council think about the following:

- Does Council want to prohibit proxy voting?
- If yes, should proxy voting be prohibited for all Council meetings or for all but emergency Council meetings?

If Council decides to allow proxy voting, we will need to amend the bylaws and membership will need to approve this amendment.

Wayne made a motion for Council to table this item to the March meeting and Karen seconded the motion.

Council unanimously agreed to table this item for the March 9 meeting.

Treasurer's Report for January 2022

Quest Treasurer Stephanie Butler reported that our finances continue to be in a healthy state. We budgeted income for \$130,000 and we received \$123,000. Although we are short by \$7,000, we should make this up later in the year.

We budgeted our expenses to be \$127,500 and we actually spent \$68,767 to date so we are much lower than anticipated.

New Business

Memo to Council

A Quest member submitted a letter to Council that addressed how COVID has changed everyone's life. As a result, we are now faced with making various decisions including whether or not to attend Quest in person or via Zoom. The member asked Council to take the following into consideration:

- Can more information be listed in NWAQ?
Include whether or not the presenter will be in person or at home. This will allow members to make an informed decision as to whether or not they want to attend in person or via Zoom.
Wayne responded that NWAQ does try to include this information but it's not always available from the presenter at the time NWAQ is emailed. If it is added at a later date, a revision is needed. As the COVID crisis eases and more presenters present at 25 Broadway, Wayne expects this information to be included in the NWAQ.
- Can more classes be recorded in Room 15-17?
Decisions to record are made by the lead coordinator of the course. In the spring semester, most courses in 15-17 will not be recorded.

The Council's next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, March 9 at 2:45 pm. It will be held at 25 Broadway in the auditorium or using the auditorium link.

The meeting was adjourned by Ruth Ward at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Levin

Secretary