

**NC State Student Media Board of Directors
October 2021 meeting minutes**

Tuesday, October 12, 2021 • 7 p.m.
*Witherspoon 356 (African American Cultural
Center Conference Room.)*

Members present: Sarah Gagner, Nate Shorter, Dean Phillips, Christa Gala, Tyler Dukes, Jake Seaton, Robbie Williams, Andrea Alford, Jonny Zemola, Don Bui, Camilla Keil, Charles Smalls, Jaylan Harrington, Maddie Jennette, McKenzy Heavlin, Patrick Neal

Absent: Abi Hearn, Madissen Keys, Fatima Baloch

Others present: Jamie Lynn Gilbert, Ellen Meder, Martha Collins, Zanna Swann, Ray Black III

CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS AND ELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS

In the absence of a chair Patrick Neal called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. with a quorum present. After the members introduced themselves, Patrick noted that the Poole College of Management student seat was vacant and asked those present to refer any non-Student Media PCOM student to him if they were interested in representing PCOM on the board.

Nate Shorter offered to serve as board chair for 2021-2022 and Sarah Gagner offered to serve as vice-chair; both were approved unanimously. Camilla Keil was appointed recording secretary for the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 2021 MEETING MINUTES

Dean Phillips moved that the minutes from the board's March 2, 2021 meeting be approved, with Tyler Dukes providing a second; the board voted unanimously to approve them. Those minutes were included in the meeting package and are made part of these minutes by reference.

**BUDGET REVIEW (FY2020-2021), OVERVIEW (FY2021-2022) AND UPDATE
(SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2021)**

Jamie Lynn Gilbert reviewed how Student Media ended the 2020-2021 fiscal year, gave an overview of the current (FY2021-2022) budget, and updated the board on revenues and expenditures for each group through Oct. 1.

Jamie said Student Media ended the most recent fiscal year almost \$50,000 in the black despite budgeting to go some \$93,000 in the red. Specifically:

- Agromeck had a good year, fiscally speaking. Printing was \$2,000 less than budgeted and they only spent half of their leadership development budget. They only budgeted \$9,000 in non-fee income after very conservative estimates from Rick Loper, but ended up with about \$12,600. That broke down to about \$3,000 in senior portrait commissions from

LifeTouch, \$9,200 from ad sales and \$400 in book sales through the e-store. Agromeck spent about \$40,800 (87% of budget) and had income of \$51,100 (110% of budget - which includes student fee allocation) to end \$10,300 in the black.

- Nubian Message also had a fiscally good year. Printing costs were obviously very low, along with leadership development. Sales were very strong, totaling \$3,400. The goal was \$1,500 in print/social/online advertising and \$2,000 for Nubian's share of kiosk ads, so they did very well despite the fact that the rollout of the kiosks was delayed a year due to the pandemic. Nubian spent about \$12,700 (57%) and had \$22,400 in income (98%) to end about \$9,700 in the black.
- Roundabout also had a fiscally good year. Printing and personnel costs were minimal without a print product. They spent \$5,900 (31%) and had \$38,300 in income (137%) to end the year \$32,400 in the black.
- Technician followed the good-year pattern. Printing and leadership development costs were very low. Sales were pretty good, meeting 79% of a \$52,000 goal. Technician spent \$108,400 (88%) and had \$147,300 in income (95%), ending \$38,900 in the black.
- WKNC did not have a fiscally good year. Spending was down in leadership development and current services (musician payments). Non-fee income was only \$20,500, which was not quite half the goal due to no income from Double Barrel Benefit, Cat's Cradle or Live Nation. WKNC spent \$78,500 (91%) and had \$66,600 in income (77%) to end \$11,900 in the red.
- General Administration rounded out the group with \$557,700 in spending (92%) and \$523,500 in income (104%) at \$34,200 in the red (but \$67,700 better than we budgeted for).
- Overall, we budgeted to go \$93,375 in the red and we ended the year \$48,734.87 in the black.
- Finally, Jamie reported that the Student Media Enhancement Fund ended the year above \$3,000 and Technician Century Fund has broken \$41,100.

With regard to the current budget, Jamie said it was similar in most respects to last year's budget but did note the following:

- The unit's overall non-fee income projection for the year is \$16,700 less than last year; about \$14,000 of that was in Technician revenue to account for campaign advertising dollars that wouldn't recur in 2021-2022.
- The leadership development budget is back up to historic levels in anticipation of conference travel returning for the year (though the CMA/ACP and CBI both canceled their in-person conferences for the fall).
- Student Media received a minor windfall when administrative service fees were assessed at the normal 10% level and not 15% as had been anticipated previously. Jamie explained that Student Media and other units in the Department of Academic and Student Affairs had been assessed the extra 5% last year to help DASA avoid laying off any staff in Housing, and had been told to expect it again this year, but in the end it was reduced back down to the normal 10% level. Jamie noted that part of that money would be used to buy a four-wheel utility vehicle for use in servicing the kiosks, publication deliveries and other Student Media-related tasks. Patrick said he ordered the vehicle in July but was told at that time not to expect it for at least four months; he said given persistent supply-chain

issues, the earliest he expected to take delivery was November, though he said it was far more likely going to be the after the start of the calendar year.

Finally, Jamie updated the board on where the groups stood budgetarily as of September/October, noting the following:

- Overall, the 10% DASA administrative shared services fees have been charged. All told, we paid \$69,300 across all our groups.
- Agromeck's non-fee income is at a little more than \$2,100 (24%) from a commission check from Lifetouch and some e-store sales. In all, 400 copies of the 2021 Agromeck were purchased. The full price was \$24,635 which was what we budgeted. A total of 171 ring protection rebates for a total of \$4,275 were sold and Agromeck's bill was reduced accordingly. There was also a \$17,715 credit that would equal about 200 books sold. In the end the final printing price was \$2,930, which is about \$7,000 under what was budgeted.
- Nubian Message has a \$150 deposit, so money is starting to come in. Expenditures are good.
- Roundabout's income is up to \$17,200 from its welcome to campus issue, for 59% of the total goal. About \$40,000 in ads were sold for the 2021 welcome to campus issue, with \$23,792 deposited in the 2020-2021 fiscal year. The total ad goal (welcome to campus + regular issues + kiosk share) is only \$29,000, so Roundabout should easily reach its non-fee income goal. So much Roundabout ad revenue has caused a slight issue with payroll. There was about \$2,000 in commission paid on ad sales, which is \$500 over budget and obviously doesn't factor in any commission sales for regular issues or any summer 2022 commission that may need to be paid in FY2122 (if the student is graduating in May, for example). Since the total personnel budget is \$3,500, it is now at 67%. At this point, Jamie said she would expect Roundabout to exhaust its \$3,500 payroll budget before the end of the fiscal year, but also noted that she budgeted most groups to only spend 80% of payroll so until Roundabout approaches the full 100% (which would be \$4,370) she said she was not concerned.
- Technician revenue is at \$2,400, but sales are coming in for the fall print publications so this should catch up soon.
- WKNC's non-fee income is about \$6,600, which is 18% of the total at 25% through the fiscal year.
- The Student Media Enhancement Fund is up to almost \$3,200. The Technician's Century Fund had another \$600 in donations, bringing that total to \$41,700.

CONSIDERATION OF ROUNDABOUT EDITOR-IN-CHIEF CANDIDATE

Patrick said that after putting out several calls for editors, Charles Smalls (who also works at WKNC) applied, was interviewed by the Roundabout advisory board and earned that board's unanimous recommendation. Patrick said that after the September meeting was cancelled, he and Martha Collins advised Charles to move forward with hiring his team and otherwise assume all the duties of the EIC. Robbie Williams moved that Charles formally be named editor, with Dean seconding. The motion was approved unanimously.

STATE OF STUDENT MEDIA 2021-2022

Patrick gave his State of Student Media message; his written remarks are included here as part of these minutes.

Following the remarks, Jaylan Harrington asked for clarification on why payroll spending was considered differently than other types of spending. Patrick said that payroll funds were treated differently administratively and that increases amounted to a “one-way ratchet” that would be difficult to ever bring back down once increased. Patrick added that the board may want to re-evaluate student staff pay at some point, as the current standard pay of \$8 per hour was rapidly getting outstripped by employers both off and on campus.

APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURES FROM STUDENT MEDIA ENHANCEMENT FUND

Patrick said that after a successful Day of Giving, the Student Media Enhancement Fund had a balance of some \$3,200, a large enough sum to deserve some decision protocol with regard to expenditures made from it. Patrick said the simplest policy would be for the board to approve every SMEF expenditure. In the past, Patrick said SMEF funds had been spent on food for staff events where making such purchases with student fee funds was impermissible, and that there were far fewer restrictions on SMEF dollars than student fee dollars. Tyler asked for some specific guidelines with regard to what unrestricted funds could and could not buy versus fee dollars, and then made a motion that all SMEF purchases require board approval moving forward. Dean seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING ANNUAL STUDENT MEDIA AWARD FOR GENERAL EXCELLENCE

Patrick said that over the summer that he, the professional staff and others had talked about establishing an award for general excellence at Student Media, and proffered a set of proposed guidelines for the board’s consideration. Those guidelines were included in the original meeting package and are included as part of these minutes by reference. Jamie emphasized that “any Student Media student” nominated would have to have paperwork on file to be officially considered a Student Media student.

Patrick then read a resolution naming the award for charter board member Dean Phillips in recognition of his distinguished career as a broadcaster, consultant, educator and author, as well as his long service to the Student Media Board. Tyler moved to approve the resolution, Robbie Williams seconded, and the resolution was approved unanimously. The signed resolution is included here as part of these minutes.

REQUEST FOR SMEF EXPENDITURE - \$250/YEAR

Patrick asked the board to authorize an expenditure of \$250 per year to fund the annual cash award from the Dean Phillips Award for General Excellence. Jake Seaton moved to approve the expenditure, Tyler seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

MONTHLY STUDENT MEDIA SENIOR LEADER GATHERINGS/SMEF FUND REQUEST

Martha told the board that this year's senior leaders had started meeting informally once a month to get together, eat, and otherwise have a chance to hear what was going on at all of the outlets. Martha said that it seemed that the student leaders had enjoyed the gatherings, and the senior leaders agreed. Martha asked the board to authorize an expenditure of \$50 per gathering to cover food. Jonny Zemola moved to approve the expenditure, Jaylan Harrington seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

STUDENT MEDIA POLICY REVISION WORKING COMMITTEE

Jamie said that many Student Media policies were woefully outdated and in many instances bore no resemblance to current reality. That being the case, Jamie said she was looking to form a small working group that could meet a handful of times to undertake a line-by-line review of the policies. Both Tyler and Maddie Jennette said they would be willing to help. Otherwise, Jamie encouraged all of the senior leaders to send word out to their groups letting their members know about this opportunity to shape Student Media's policies for the future.

QUINQUENNIAL PROGRAM REVIEW

Patrick and Jamie reminded the board that Student Media's program review was coming up Nov. 18-19. They encouraged the board to participate and asked the senior leaders to encourage their respective staffs to participate as well. Patrick said that while program reviews like this were supposed to be done every five years, he said Student Media hadn't undertaken one in his nearly 10 years at NC State, and other members of the professional staff with more seniority said there hadn't been one in the five-to-six years before that. Patrick said Student Media had been fortunate to get two outstanding outside reviewers: Rachele Kanigel from San Francisco State, the author of *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide*; and Greg Weston, the general manager of WPTS in Pittsburgh and a past president of College Broadcasters Inc. Patrick said Student Media was also fortunate to have Stan North Martin, a former director of Student Media who now works at OIT, as their on-campus review team member. Patrick and Jamie said that for the review to be successful, the reviewers needed to hear from as many different stakeholders and partners as possible, and encouraged everyone to be as open and as candid as possible when they did visit with the reviewers. A copy of the program review itinerary was included with the meeting package and is made part of these meetings by reference.

HARAMBEE/WITHERSPOON 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Patrick reminded the senior leaders of the upcoming Harambee/Witherspoon 30-year celebration on Friday, Oct. 29 from 3-6 p.m. While the event is being spearheaded by the African American Cultural Center, Patrick said it was fitting that Student Media also have a visible role, as the AACC and Student Media were the two groups in the building that had been there since it opened 30 years ago. Patrick said he expected it to be something of an extra open house for Student Media, with an information table downstairs and people manning the offices upstairs to greet any visitors. He said WKNC had also agreed to loan its PA gear to the effort.

REPORT ADDENDA

Organization board reports for both September and October 2021 were included in the meeting package and are made part of these minutes by reference. Additional items offered by the senior leaders were as follows:

- Don Bui said that the Agromeck staff had gotten back their most recent proofs from Balfour and were editing them for resubmission. He said they had also spoken with Balfour to move their second deadline back by one week due to some photo issues. Finally, he said Agromeck would be tabling at the grad fair Wednesday and Thursday to promote the book, senior portraits and ring protection plans.
- Robbie asked Jonny for clarification about the new “specialized roles” outlined in his board report and how much time those new roles were going to take away from sales. Jonny said he had decreased the senior staffers’ client lists to allow them to perform their new roles, though he said they would still play a big part in the sales process, particularly with regard to more active clients. Otherwise, in response to a question from Jamie, it was clarified that the Housing Guide would be a Student Media-branded piece and that all expenses and revenues connected to the project would be run through the General Administration account.
- Andrea Alford said Nubian Message was still looking for a photo editor, hopefully one from the current photography pool. Otherwise, they said they were heavily emphasizing training for their new writers so that they and their managing editor didn’t have to re-work pieces extensively on deadline.
- Camilla encouraged everyone to come out to Windhover’s fall Open Mic Night at the Caldwell Lounge on Thursday at 7 p.m.
- Charles said Roundabout was reviewing applications for various positions and that interviews were ongoing. He said he expected to be able to have news about new hires by the board’s November meeting.
- Maddie said that of the 21 students in the current DJ training class, all but one have taken their exams and passed, and were now signing up for shifts. Otherwise, she briefed the board on a 24-hour event WKNC held to celebrate National College Radio Day, with the highlight being a three-hour DJ set from Chancellor Randy Woodson.

ADJOURN

There being no need for an executive session, Tyler moved to adjourn with Jonny seconding. The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Ladies and gentlemen we have a loaded agenda and I value everyone's time, so I'm going to try to be brief here, but I do think it's important that we take a moment in this first meeting of the year as a time to take stock of where we are and where we want to go moving forward.

I want to first talk about COVID, how it's affected us, and what that means for us all moving forward, and then I want to say a few words about our budget.

Last year's leaders really deserve everyone's gratitude for how well they pulled their organizations through the lowest points of the pandemic. This time last year I was openly skeptical about how some of our groups were going to pull things off given that so many things they normally covered were canceled, but they really rose to the occasion and found a way to not only keep their organizations together but to thrive in many ways. I will always remember that group as the one that brought us through what might have been a historically dismal academic year.

Of course, the virus is still with us. All you have to do is look around this room to know we're not out of the woods yet. But unlike last year, when COVID was "the story," this year COVID is "a story." Operationally, we are more or less back to normal; both newspapers are back on their regular print schedules, the radio station's DJ scheduling is back to normal, and all our other groups appear to be moving full steam ahead. So far this year the main casualty has been travel and professional development, as both the CMA/ACP and the College Broadcasters group have scrubbed their in-person conventions and will be going digital for the second year in a row. This really is a shame, because conference travel is one of the most impactful things we offer, both for the individual student travelers and the groups that benefit from the ideas and knowledge they bring home. I have given our student leaders my word that if public health circumstances allow, we are going to do our best to attend the CMA's meeting in New York this spring.

The one area we're not back to normal is in membership, as the virus was a body blow to our overall participation numbers. Without students on campus we were able to add very little "new blood" and saw a year-over-year decline of 40% overall (210 members in 2020-2021 versus a near-record 350 members in 2019-2020). While those 350 members in 2019-2020 were a near-record, last year marked the first time Student Media had seen fewer than 300 participating students since 2015-2016.

So any of the students or staff at the table will tell you that I've been like a broken record this year saying "ABC" which is short for "Always Be 'Crooting." And so far this year I'm happy to say that hasn't been very hard to do. We are after all just now seeing both our first-year and our second-year students on campus this semester, so there are plenty of

fish in the sea, and those fish are hungry to get out and do something to make up for a lost year. We've already seen 261 unique students participating in Student Media so far this year, so we're already 51 students ahead of all of 2020-2021. If we can continue to meet that demand and recruit well the rest of this semester and into spring, all our groups should be up to their full fighting strength by the end of the year.

Now let me speak a moment about the budget, because that's of course a big part of us getting back to full capacity and hitting on all cylinders. As Jamie explained earlier, we actually planned to go in the red last year, and that was true even before COVID, because we knew we had a healthy surplus cash balance and needed to spend it down a bit. As it turned out, we ended the year almost \$50,000 in the black, which isn't that hard to do when you stop printing newspapers, don't go anywhere and hire a lot fewer people than you planned for the year. At the end of the last fiscal year, our required reserve was about \$145,000 and we ended up with a little over \$220,000 over and above that.

Now obviously it's better to have too much money in the bank than too little, but that doesn't make it good. Having a big pile of money is not the object of this game. That's not why the Business Office sells ads and underwriting. That's not why the Student Activity Fee Committee sends us money each year. That money is meant to support our organizations.

With that in mind, I wanted to tell you all at the outset that you may see some of our groups go a little over-budget in some categories this year, and if that happens you shouldn't be alarmed. This should be a good year to make some equipment purchases, or get some work done in our offices, or spend a few extra dollars taking a full complement of students to national conventions in the spring. The exception here is payroll, because that really is a different kind of spending, but in other areas some modest overages really shouldn't be the end of the world. Jamie will of course let us all know how we're all doing along and along and help rein us in as necessary.

Our student leaders this year are excellent, from top-to-bottom as good a group as I've seen in my 10 years here. Those excellent leaders all have excellent advisers, an excellent board of directors and excellent resources. All we need now are people. Let's get them in here, train them up and turn them loose. Not only will it help us this year, when it's time for our leaders to step off the stage and hand the keys to someone else, they can do so knowing that their organizations will all be in good hands.

This concludes my remarks, but I wanted to leave a little time for any questions.

Proposed Guidelines for an Award for General Excellence

- This award will be open to any Student Media student except for the top editors/managers of each group, as they will be voting on who wins it each year (see below).
- Students can nominate themselves, and any Student Media student (including the senior leaders) can nominate anyone else they wish to nominate. We will have a nomination form where each nominator will have a chance to explain why they think the nominee should get the award. Nominators will be strongly encouraged to include examples of the nominees' work whenever possible and appropriate.
- I will send all valid nominations to the full board, and each board member – including all ex officio members except myself – will get one vote. If no nominee garners a majority of the vote, the board will re-vote on the two nominees receiving the most votes in the first round.
- The call for nominations will go out the first day of each spring semester and due by the March board meeting date. The winner will be announced at the April meeting each year.
- The honoree each year will receive a \$250 award from the Student Media Enhancement Fund, and their names will be placed on a perpetual plaque to be hung in a place of honor on the third floor. They will also receive special recognition at our year-end celebration events in years when such events are held.

**BOARD RESOLUTION REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE
DEAN PHILLIPS AWARD FOR GENERAL EXCELLENCE**

WHEREAS Dean Phillips was a charter member of the Student Media Board of Directors after it was restructured into its current form in 2007; and

WHEREAS Dean has distinguished himself as a broadcaster, a consultant, an educator and an author in a career spanning nearly 50 years; and

WHEREAS Dean has mentored and helped launch the careers of countless students over the course of two decades as a Senior Lecturer and internship coordinator with the NC State Department of Communication; and

WHEREAS Dean continues that mentorship even after retirement as Senior Lecturer Emeritus with the Department of Communication, a member of the NC State Student Media Board of Directors, and its Broadcast Advisory Board;

BE IT RESOLVED that the NC State Student Media Board of Directors formally acknowledges and extends its profound appreciation to Dean Phillips for his contributions to this Board, to NC State University and the fields of journalism and communication generally; and

BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER that the board seeks to honor Dean's energy, passion, humor and belief in the power of words and images through the establishment of the Dean Phillips Award for General Excellence beginning with the 2021-2022 academic year.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 12th day of October, 2021.

BY: 
(Print): Nathan Shorter

2021-2022 Chair, NC State Board of Directors

ATTEST: 
(Print): Camilla Keil

Recording Secretary for the Board