

**NC State Student Media Board of Directors
October 2020 meeting notes**

Tuesday, October 13, 2020 • 7 p.m.
Via teleconference

Members present: Sarah Hartsell, Sarah Gagner, Arianna Hinton, Tyler Dukes, Josh Hyatt, Cameron Motsinger, Cliff Maske, Rachael Davis, Elikem Dodor, Laura Mooney, Xenna Smith, Lucas Martin, Melanie Flowers, Patrick Neal

Absent: Abi Hearn, Robbie Williams, Tania Allen

Others present: Jamie Lynn Gilbert, Ellen Meder, Zanna Swann

CALL TO ORDER & APPOINTMENT OF BOARD SECRETARY

Patrick Neal informed board chair Sarah Hartsell that with only five voting members present, the board was one short of a quorum. Co-vice chair Laura Mooney agreed to take notes for the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 2020 MEETING

In the absence of a quorum, the approval of the previous meeting's minutes was set aside until the November meeting.

OCTOBER 2020 BUDGET UPDATE

Jamie Lynn Gilbert reviewed the October budget update, which was included in the meeting package and included in these minutes by reference. Of particular note:

- **Agromeck**
 - Agromeck's payroll stood at 11% at 25% through the year, which was good. Jamie noted that the final 2020 book printing was about \$8,000, making the decision to print 75 fewer copies than originally planned a wise one. The price per copy at 500 books was \$55, so Jamie said \$62 per copy for 400 books seems reasonable for the current budget. She also noted that the 2020-2021 budget was forecasting for the 2021 book price (which we won't pay for until 2021-2022's budget), so that translates to about \$2,000 extra in current services for Agromeck -- but with about a quarter of that going toward postage to mail return books, it's more like \$1,500.
 - Agromeck's non-fee income is now at \$9,492.56, which is 105% of its \$9,000 goal. That includes a \$6,500 check from outside advertising sales representative Rick Loper for 10 full-page ads, which is what we budgeted for. The rest is a check from Lifetouch (never budgeted as income) and a handful of online book sales. Per an Aug. 31 email from Rick, "We will have more sales in the spring but I would like to go ahead and pay for what we've sold so you can get some revenue in early."

- **Nubian Message**
 - The Nubian's payroll increased by about \$1,300 during the month of September, bringing it to 36%. Nubian's payroll budget is \$850 "per issue," but Jamie noted that the Nubian has only had three true issues so far this fiscal year where payroll has posted. That means payroll should be about \$2,500 for the year instead of at nearly \$4,000.
 - Nubian's non-fee income, though, is at \$1,066, which includes everything that's been sold to date (mostly five ads in the symposium issue). Nubian has a goal of \$1,500 for 2020-2021 in print/online ads, and the rest is their split from outdoor advertising.

- **Roundabout**
 - Roundabout income went from \$560 in August to \$14,500 in September, for 52% of its goal for the fiscal year. The Orientation issue goal was \$21,000 and just over \$16,000 was billed. This more than covered the cost of production and payroll.
- **Technician**
 - About \$5,000 was deposited to Technician in September, bringing it to \$6,000 in income and 12% of our goal. Payroll is at 16% at 25% into the budget year. One factor skewing expenses for the month was paying five months' worth of TownNews invoices in September.
- **Windhover**
 - No notes.
- **WKNC**
 - Non-fee income is at \$2,300 but some of that is actually Technician 100 T-shirt sales that were put in the wrong account. Payroll is at 20%, which is good.
- **General Administration**
 - General Administration has \$360 in e-store revenue, which is also an error that needs to be corrected. Temp payroll is at 13%, which is good. We received another \$28,000 in student fees in September, which is good. There was \$57 added to the Student Media Enhancement Fund in September, bringing its total to \$679. There was \$2,970 (including two \$1,000 donations) added to the Technician Century Fund, bringing that total to \$24,750.

TECHNICIAN NEWSLETTER UPDATE

Ellen Meder compiled a summary of online traffic at Technician since its weekly, campus-wide email went live the first week of September. It is attached here and made part of these notes by reference.

Ellen noted that while the newsletter was demonstrably driving new traffic to technicianonline.com, overall engagement online was down year over year. She noted, however, that content was also down due to lower staffing – some 40% fewer staff members than last year – and a dearth of events that formerly comprised a significant portion of Technician's coverage.

On the marketing side, Zanna Swann said the ad spaces on the newsletter were sold at least through the election and that a major college-oriented advertising agency, Flytedesk, was extremely pleased with both the low opt-out and high open rates seen since the newsletter's debut. Lucas Martin added that those favorable rates made the newsletter a much more attractive buy to campus and local advertisers as well.

CARD ACCESS UPDATE

Patrick said the card access units were installed on all the main suite doors and should be functional by the end of the week. Jamie said she was reviewing the list of students approved for access, and strongly urged that the senior leaders ensure that their staff members' paperwork was on file, as no current paperwork would equal no access to the organizations' offices for those students. Patrick said that students involved with multiple organizations would get access to all of those entrances and that any of the professional staff was authorized to add or remove access for student staff as needed.

BOARD VACANCIES UPDATE

Patrick updated the board on the three seats currently vacant on the board.

With regard to the academic seat formerly held by Dean Phillips, Patrick said Dean retired as a full-time member of the Communication faculty July 1 and thus could not have any role on campus, formal or informal, for six months following that date without endangering his retirement benefits. Fortunately, Patrick said, that six-month will have elapsed in January and Dean was returning to teach a handful of classes each year post-retirement, so he expected Dean's return to the board for its January meeting.

Patrick said that he had reached out to the Poole College of Management over the summer with regard to PCOM's appointment, but a staffing change in the department led to some miscommunication over filling the seat. He said he had identified and connected with his new contact at PCOM and hoped that they would choose a student to represent them on the board soon.

Student Body President Melanie Flowers, who appointed Sarah Gagner and re-appointed Abi Hearn, said she had sent out a notice in the Howl newsletter regarding the opportunity to serve on the board but said no one had yet responded. Patrick encouraged everyone present to think about possible candidates for the seat, noting that the only limitations were that the appointee could not be a current member of Student Media or Student Government.

BOARD REPORT ADDENDA

Board reports from each organization were included with the meeting package and are made part of these notes by reference. Otherwise:

Addenda included the following:

- Cameron Motsinger said Agromeck had received its latest batch of proofs yesterday (Monday, Oct. 12) and would be returning corrections by Friday.
- Lucas said that after a virtual meeting with the Student Business Office staff at South Carolina, the office was exploring an idea of a newsletter to send to their clients as a way to build and maintain relationships with current and potential advertisers.
- Rachael said Technician had worked with the university to send out an opinion poll to the student body in advance of its Voter Guide to be published on Thursday, Oct. 15. She said she was pleased that about 1,000 students had responded.
- Xenna Smith said that after meeting with various Black student groups and artistic organizations, Windhover had decided to change its plans for a 'zine focused on Black artists at NC State. Instead, she said, half of this year's Windhover would be devoted to Black artistry, complete with a "mirror" cover and a split design whereby the book's "regular" pages and Black artist pages would be oriented 180 degrees to emphasize the split.
- Laura noted that WKNC's staff stood at 73 with DJ trainings continuing apace.

ADJOURN

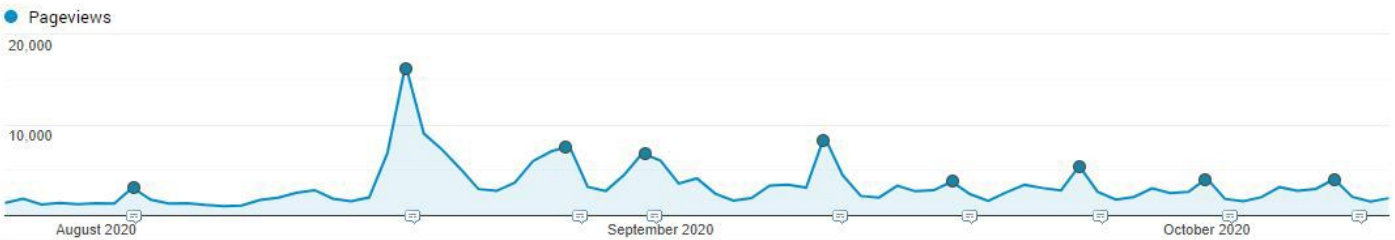
Patrick said that in the absence of a quorum a motion to adjourn was unnecessary, and the meeting ended at 7:44 p.m.

Technician Newsletter Update, 10/13/20

Date	Subscribers @ Send	Net Change	Opt Outs	Opens	Open %	Clicks	Clicks to Technician website pages	Clicks to e-Edition
9/10	35,238		134	15,722	44.6	814	694	52
9/17	35,128	-110	75	18,930	53.9	751	656	29*
9/24	35,053	-75	63	19,074	54.4	1,060	911	49
10/1	34,997	-56	52	19,213	54.9	1,255	1,077	30*
10/8	34,942	-55	20	17,962	51.4	1,118	909	78

Fast Facts:

- Since the newsletter's welcome email on Monday, Sept. 7, email referrals to Technician's website have accounted for 8.7% of all users (4,277 of 49,175 users). That's up from only 0.05% this semester prior to the launch, and about 0.00001% last year in the same timeframe.
- Those users account for 9.5% of the sessions on the site since the launch (6,144 of 64,397 sessions).
- In September and October the newsletter days have a significantly higher pageviews, as compared to other weekdays: non-newsletter weekdays average 2,875 pageviews, while the five newsletter days average 5,216 pageviews. However, that's not strictly because of the newsletter: Wednesday nights/Thursday mornings are also days that more content is published, about twice as much on average as compared to other weekdays.



Aug 3, 2020	3,107: Welcome Back Issue
Aug 18, 2020	16,625: Clusters Announced
Aug 27, 2020	7,645: Housing Shutdown Announced
Aug 31, 2020	6,873: Prof's letter about opening mess, police confusion
Sep 10, 2020	8,718: First Newsletter
Sep 17, 2020	3,739: Second Newsletter
Sep 24, 2020	5,476: Third Newsletter
Oct 1, 2020	4,124: Fourth Newsletter
Oct 8, 2020	4,025: Fifth Newsletter

- The year-over-year pageviews for the semester are down 8% (273,758 in 2019 to 250,734 in 2020), and users decreased 7% (128,590 in 2019 to 119,997 in 2020). That's calculated on a week before the Welcome Back issue this year to the present, July 27-Oct. 11.
 - If you adjust for the earlier start of the semester this year and compare the exact number of days into the year (76), from the week before Welcome Back point — 8/12/19-10/27/19 and 7/27/20-10/11/20 — then page views are actually down 13% (288,628 in 2019) and users are down 11% (134,184 in 2019).
 - Using that same time frame, the number of articles, galleries and videos published on Technician's website is down year-over-year about 35%, with 614 in 2019, as compared to 402 this year. So compared to the decrease in content, the dip in pageviews and users is not terrible. Content is down due to reduced staff, vastly fewer campus events to cover and many fewer photo and video opportunities.