

**NC State Student Media Board of Directors**  
**January 2024 meeting minutes**

**Tuesday, January 9, 2024 • 7 p.m.**

*3222 Talley Student Union and via*

*Google Meet (inclement weather)*

Members present: Madeline Renneker (Google Meet), Tim Werner (Google Meet), Dean Phillips (Google Meet), Christa Gala (Google Meet), Tyler Dukes (Google Meet), Julianna Lopez (Google Meet), Jake Seaton (Google Meet), Scarlett Taylor (Google Meet), Milan Hall (Google Meet), Ethan Bakogiannis (Google Meet), Jameson Wolf (Google Meet), Garrett Gough (Google Meet), Jermaine Hudson (Google Meet), Ryley Fallon (Google Meet), Erie Mitchell, Bran Poster, Patrick Neal

Absent: Robbie Williams, Caitlin Laye

Staff and guests present: Ben McNeely (Google Meet), Abi Barefoot (Google Meet), Zanna Swann (Google Meet), Jamie Lynn Gilbert, Ray Black

#### **CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS**

Board chair Julianna Lopez called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m., and all members introduced themselves and spoke briefly about their backgrounds and connection to Student Media. Patrick Neal gave a special introduction for Student Employment and Finance Associate Abi Barefoot, an alum of the Student Media Business Office and the newest member of the professional staff.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF BOARD SECRETARY**

Garrett Gough agreed to serve as recording secretary for the meeting.

#### **APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES**

Dean Phillips made a motion to approve the minutes from the Oct. 10, 2023 meeting, with Tyler Dukes seconding the motion, and the board unanimously approved them. Those minutes were included in the meeting package and are made part of these minutes by reference.

#### **JANUARY 2024 BUDGET UPDATE**

Jamie Lynn Gilbert reviewed the January 2024 budget update, which was included in the meeting package and made part of these minutes by reference. She noted the following:

- We are officially halfway through the fiscal year.
- Agromeck's non-fee income is still at 8%, all from archive sales, and Jamie said she was encouraged by the sales numbers Jermaine had been tracking in his board reports. Payroll is on track for the year at 46%.

- Nubian Message's non-fee income is at 15%, which includes about \$500 in kiosk revenue. Payroll is a little low, at 26%.
- Roundabout's non-fee income increased slightly, now at 93% of its goal. Jamie noted that some of the advertisers in the Orientation issue would be billed in the current fiscal year, so Roundabout was on track to meet or exceed its revenue goal for the year. Payroll is good, at 53%.
- Technician's non-fee income is increasing, now at 31%, which includes about \$500 in kiosk revenue. Payroll is good at 53%.
- Windhover's payroll is good at 25%.
- WKNC's non-fee income is increasing, now at 34%, and its payroll is a little low at 31%.
- General Administration's non-fee income is only about \$500, which means we are currently \$37,500 shy of our \$39,000 overall kiosk sales goal. Jamie said she had conferred with Patrick about the shortfall, who reassured her that a good number of panels had been sold, but that payment for had not yet been posted, as they had been sold via an ad agency. Temp payroll is at 31%, which is a little low. Supplies are now at 89% after the HVAC units in the transmitter house at DH Hill had to be replaced (see below), so she advised that we should be judicious with GA supplies purchases for the rest of the year.
  - Patrick and Jamie updated the board about an HVAC outage at WKNC that necessitated a complete replacement of the system in December. Patrick said that on Nov. 14, WKNC Consulting Engineer Will Patnaud notified him that the transmitter was "folding back," or automatically reducing signal power, which it is designed to do under circumstances where continued operation under full power could damage the unit. Patrick went to the transmitter room on the top floor of D.H. Hill to investigate and found that the AC units had failed, and that the temperature in the room was over 100 degrees from heat generated by the transmitter during normal operation. Patrick said the station reduced power and turned off the HD-1, HD-2 and HD-3 signals to prevent possible damage to the transmitter, and technicians from the DASA Facilities staff were able to provide a temporary fix that brought the temperature down below 100 degrees, but still well above the optimal temperature for the space. Patrick had great praise for DASA Facilities, saying they went "way above and beyond" over the holidays to help the station quickly find replacement units and a contractor to install them. In the end, he said, the station was able to bring the signal back to full power Dec. 12. He said it was fortunate that the station was able to do so in less than 30 days, as a power reduction lasting longer than that would have required WKNC to file for Special Temporary Authority with the Federal Communications Commission beyond the short-term notice the station had to file at the time the power was initially reduced. Patrick said that while the transmitter room was now back at its optimum temperature, and everything was back to normal and running well, the project would cost a total of about \$14,000, and that this was an unbudgeted expense. He said that in retrospect he should have had a maintenance plan in place for the units, noting that while they were only six years old, they received extremely hard use, essentially running at maximum capacity without pause 24/7/365. That being the case, he said the technicians from DASA Facilities had advised him that even though the units were designed to last 15-20 years with typical (i.e, residential) use, a six-year lifespan for the units was about as much as we could expect, though that might be prolonged with a twice-yearly inspection/maintenance plan. Patrick said he was working with them to establish such a plan. Budgetarily, Patrick said an

expense like this would normally be paid for out of Student Media's capital reserve, but he said those funds had already been depleted for the year by the purchase of Student Media's new equipment locker. That being the case, he said the project would affect the General Administration supplies budget line, and that the board could expect to see that line go well overbudget by year's end.

- The Student Media Enhancement Fund has almost \$12,000 and the Technician Century Fund is now over \$48,200.

## **OVERVIEW OF 2024-2025 BUDGET PROCESS**

Jamie gave an overview of the budget process for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. She asked all of the senior leaders to meet with their respective advisors about any changes they wanted to make in their budgets for the coming year, particularly with regard to any new positions they would like to add. She said she would need any requests by Jan. 31, and that she would do her best to accommodate them as resources allowed, but she said she could not promise she would be able to do so. She said that once the numbers were done, she would pass the budget to Patrick, who would write a budget narrative explaining any changes to the budget for the coming year, and that the deadline for all DASA budgets was typically mid-February. Patrick said once the budget went to the division level, it would be reviewed by his supervisor and the DASA budget office, and that they sometimes had questions or asked for revisions to the document. From there, he said the budget would go to the university budget office, and that the directors of that office would sometimes ask departments to meet with them, usually in April; typically, he said, such meetings didn't happen unless the department in question was asking for a fee increase, and that Student Media would not be requesting an increase for the coming year. He said final approval typically didn't happen until April or May, but that once it was approved at the DASA level, he said one could safely use it to plan for the coming year. Jamie added that the timing of the budget process was unfortunate in terms of Student Media's senior leader transition – that is, this year's editors and general managers would be making requests and suggestions for a year where most of them would no longer be EIC or GM – but she noted that perhaps that was a good thing, as this year's senior leaders would have a full semester's worth of experience to call on as they made their requests.

## **CALL FOR 2024-2025 EIC & GM APPLICATIONS**

Patrick said he sent out the call for applications for 2024-2025 Editor-In-Chief and General Manager positions for all organizations on Dec. 4, and he urged any senior leader who hadn't already distributed it to their full staffs to do so ASAP, as the deadline for all applications would be at noon on Thursday, Feb. 1. He then briefly reviewed the hiring process for newcomers to the board. (The full call for applications, which included an overview of both the process and the format for application packages, was included in the meeting package and is made part of these minutes by reference.) He reminded everyone that while some requirements could be waived, the board could not waive the requirements under University Regulation 11.55.6 – that is, that students applying for the positions must have a cumulative GPA of no less than 2.5, they must be free of any active sanctions from the Office of Student Conduct, and they must be full-time students unless they were seniors in their final semesters of study. Patrick said he would be checking all of those things for each applicant, so he asked the senior leaders to make sure they reminded any prospective applicants of those requirements to avoid putting anyone in an awkward situation during the process.

Patrick then quickly confirmed Advisory Board assignments for current board members as follows:

- Newspapers Advisory Board: Christa Gala, Jake Seaton, Tyler Dukes
- Broadcast Advisory Board: Julianna Lopez, Dean Phillips
- Student Business Office Advisory Board: Robbie Williams

Previously unassigned board members were assigned as follows:

- Tim Werner – Student Business Office
- Madeline Renneker – Broadcast
- Scarlett Taylor – Newspapers

### **DEAN PHILLIPS AWARD FOR GENERAL EXCELLENCE NOMINATIONS**

Patrick said nominations for the third annual Dean Phillips Award for General Excellence were officially open. He said all board members would receive a link to the nomination form via email, and he asked them to distribute the link in turn to all members of their respective staffs. He said all student staff members except the current editors-in-chief and general managers were eligible for the award, and that any Student Media student could nominate any other Student Media student and could also nominate themselves. He said the nomination period would close March 5, and that all nominees, supporting materials and a link to vote would then be sent to all board members, both voting and ex officio, who will cast their votes in advance of the April board meeting. The winner, he said, would be announced at the April board meeting, and that the winner's name would be added to a perpetual plaque outside the Business Office and receive a \$250 honorarium.

### **UPDATE ON VISUAL MEDIA ADVISER POSITION**

Patrick said the Visual Media Adviser position had officially been posted on the university's website as of Friday, Jan. 5, and that as of the meeting date, 14 people had already applied, even though he hadn't even sent it out to the College Media Advisers mailing list yet, so he expected a healthy number of applicants. Given that level of interest this early, Patrick said he planned to leave the position posted until the end of January. As was discussed at the board's October meeting, he said Student Media would employ the same selection method it had used in hiring the Editorial Adviser – that is, it would empanel an all-student hiring committee to go through the applications, identify semifinalists, interview those semifinalists, and then make recommendations on finalists to invite for on-campus interviews. To that end, he said he would work with the various student leaders to assemble a committee with two representatives from Agromeck, two from the photo staff, one each from Roundabout and Windhover, and two "at-large" representatives who could be from any of the other organizations that would not be under the Visual Media Adviser's direct advisement. He said Jamie would technically serve as the committee chair, though she would primarily serve as an organizer and coordinator. Patrick said the only real difference between the previous process and the one to come would be for the on-campus finalist interviews; specifically, he said Student Media would probably forgo the "campus partners" session, since the ones for the Editorial Adviser candidates were poorly attended and, in Patrick's opinion, added little value to the process.

Patrick said that the speed of any hiring process was somewhat unpredictable, as many aspects of it were out of Student Media's hands, but he said he to have in place before May.

## **CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS**

Patrick briefly reviewed the recommendations of the constitution working group consisting of Patrick, Jamie, Dean, Tyler, Erie Mitchell and Ray Black. (The proposed changes were included in the meeting package and are included as part of these minutes by reference.) Patrick noted that the proposed changes would have to go before the student body for approval in the spring Student Government election in March before they could be adopted, but he noted that if it was approved, this would be the last time Student Media would ever have to do that.

Patrick said the group did discuss the possibility of making student leaders voting members, but ultimately decided to leave their current ex officio status unchanged to avoid conflicts and other potential issues related to the board's policy-setting, hiring and disciplinary functions. Dean, Tyler, Ben McNeely and others noted that retaining the current structure would stay true to the concept of true outside oversight similar to other, comparable boards in the private and nonprofit sectors.

Ben asked Patrick if he had shared the recommendations with his counterparts at Student Leadership and Engagement to get their opinion of the proposed changes. Patrick said he had not, as he didn't believe it was appropriate to do so before the board had a chance to review it and either approve or reject it. He said if the board approved it, he would submit it for inclusion on the ballot, and if they had any issues with it he expected to hear about them at that time.

Jamie then asked whether the board might prefer to consider each proposed change one by one or make their decision based on the document as a whole. After a brief discussion, the consensus was to consider it in its totality.

In the end, Tyler moved to approve the amendments to Student Media's constitution for consideration in the Spring 2024 student body election, with Dean seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

## **PROPOSAL TO CREATE WKNC ENHANCEMENT FUND/AUTHORIZATION OF TRANSFER FROM STUDENT MEDIA ENHANCEMENT FUND**

Since March of 2022, Jamie said she and Patrick had been granted access to the monthly spreadsheet of any donations made to both the Student Media Enhancement Fund and the Technician Century Fund, and that these included donor comments. At the same time, she said, Student Media had learned from DASA Development that the minimum threshold for any group to establish its own enhancement fund was \$3,000. With that in mind, she said she began keeping track internally of any donations where the donor mentioned one specific organization in the comments; based on those comments, she said \$55 was currently internally earmarked for Nubian Message, and \$1,138.10 was earmarked for WKNC. She said she and Patrick had agreed that once a group reached the \$3,000 threshold, they would approach DASA Development and try to set up an enhancement fund for that group.

In the fall, Jamie said, an alum who had worked at WKNC had donated \$3,000 to the Student Media Enhancement Fund. Knowing that strong connection, she approached Patrick about the possibility of asking the donor if they would be comfortable with their gift being used to start a

separate enhancement fund for WKNC. Patrick liked the idea, as did the director of DASA Development, so together they approached the donor, and they agreed to repurpose their donation as seed money for a station-specific enhancement fund.

Patrick said WKNC's large and loyal alumni base, coupled with 1.5 million potential listeners in WKNC's broadcast footprint, represented an enormous potential donor base for a station enhancement fund – especially since National Public Radio had already established the idea of donating to one's favorite radio station in the minds of many avid radio listeners through their periodic fund drives. He also said DASA Development planned to make the new WKNC fund one of its "spotlight" funds for the 2024 Day of Giving in March, which could really get the fund off to a strong start.

With all that in mind, Patrick asked the board to authorize a transfer of \$4,138.10 (i.e., the \$3,000 from the alumni donor plus the \$1,138.10 previously given in honor of the station) from the Student Media Enhancement Fund to establish the WKNC Enhancement Fund. Dean made the motion to do so, with Jake seconding the motion. It passed unanimously.

## **MIDYEAR MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

Jamie shared an email she had sent previously to the professional staff breaking down Student Media's 372 unique members at the midpoint of the year. That email was included as part of the meeting package and is made part of these minutes by reference. With that many members at this point in the year, Jamie said it was not only possible but likely that Student Media would surpass its all-time participation record of 411 unique students set last year.

## **ASSESSMENT UPDATE: SMART GOALS**

Jamie said Student Media's assessment goal for the year is for student media staff to set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound) goals to implement a personal or organizational improvement. To that end, she said the 19 students who represented Student Media at the three national student media conventions – the College Media Business and Advertising Managers, College Broadcasters Inc. and College Media Association conventions – would be asked to set such goals based on things they learned in the various sessions they attended. Those goals were included as part of the meeting package and are made part of these minutes by reference. She said these students would then try to implement these goals in the spring and report their progress by April 1 so that she could report back to the board on the results. Jamie noted that it was OK if any of the students didn't achieve the goals they set, but she did want to be able to report the results, whatever they were, as part of the unit's 2023-2024 assessment report.

January organization reports were included with the meeting package and are included as part of these minutes by reference. Addenda to those reports included the following:

- Jermaine Hudson said Agromeck had sold one more book since he submitted their report.
- Milan Hall asked if the floors in the Nubian office had been replaced since a water leak happened in the hallway between the Nubian and Agromeck office the day before Winter Break. Patrick said the floors in the offices were only affected right at the doors and at

the edges, and hadn't needed to be replaced, but they were thoroughly dry after Facilities workers had run fans over them throughout Winter Break. He said the carpet in the hallway, which received the worst of the leak, had been replaced, and the baseboards in both the hallway and the offices still needed to be re-installed. He said workers had been busy in the area, and he expected everything to be back in place by the end of the week.

- Bran said he would represent Roundabout on the Visual Media Adviser search committee.
- Ryley Fallon said everything was on track to send the book near the end of February.

Before the board adjourned, Patrick asked the board if it would be OK if the board went mostly paperless for future meetings. They indicated that they were fine with that.

## **ADJOURN**

There being no need for an executive session, Dean moved to adjourn with Tyler seconding. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.