

**NC State Student Media Board of Directors
April 2018 meeting minutes**

**Tuesday, April 10, 2018 • 7 p.m.
356 Witherspoon Student Center**

Present: Lilly Neal, Laasya Vulimiri, Tyler Dukes, Dean Phillips, Darian Blakey, Josh Hyatt (via telephone), Jonathan Carter, Jamie Halla, Deja Richards, Anna Long, C Phillips, Patrick Neal

Absent: Sam McRee, Robbie Williams, Tania Allen, Meghan Glova, Anahzsa Jones

Others present: Jamie Lynn Gilbert, Ellen Meder, Zanna Swann, Kaydee Gawlik, Nick Faulkner, Katie Tart, Sam Clendenin, Matt Norris

CALL TO ORDER & APPOINTMENT OF RECORDING SECRETARY

Board Vice Chair Laasya Vulimiri called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. after Josh Hyatt joined the meeting by phone to establish a quorum. Jamie Halla volunteered to serve as recording secretary for the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 2018 MINUTES

Dean Phillips moved that the March 13, 2018 board meeting minutes be approved, with Laasya Vulimiri seconding the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

APRIL BUDGET UPDATE

Jamie Lynn Gilbert presented the April 2018 budget update, which was included as part of the meeting package and is made a part of these minutes by reference. She also spoke about a downward revision of Technician's revenue goal for the year. Items Jamie noted are as follows:

- For expenses, we spent \$960 on 40 student registrations for the North Carolina College Media Association conference held at Withers Hall on Saturday, Feb. 24. That's \$270 more than budgeted, but we did not incur any expenses for transportation or lodging since it was on campus. Typically individual outlets pay registration fees but General Administration covers transportation and expenses.
- WKNC will also end up a little over budget in current services due to our microphone refurbishing costing about \$1,000 more than anticipated.
- Agromeck is still expected to meet its non-fee income goal and WKNC is now expected to surpass its non-fee income goal by about \$3,000. This is due to a mixture of additional income from Double Barrel Benefit tickets, the women's basketball team making it to the Sweet Sixteen in the NCAA tournament, high sales for WKNC merchandise, a high volume of promotions with Live Nation and an increase in demand for WKNC DJ services and studio rental.
- As of April 1, Technician had raised 43 percent of its non-fee income goal for just over \$69,000. We've deposited about \$500 more since April 1. Our original income goal for 2017-2018 was \$160,000. That was the same goal we had for the year before, 2016-2017, which we hit 83 percent of for about \$132,000. A few months ago we revised our Technician revenue goal down by \$50,000 to \$110,000. While possible to meet that goal, we would have needed to deposit \$12,500 every month for four months. We deposited \$9,000 in March, making the \$110,000 goal no longer realistic. Jamie said the "revised revised" goal would be \$80,000-\$85,000, which is 50 to 53 percent of our original goal. That gives us \$11,000 to \$16,000 to deposit in three months, or an estimated \$5,500 to \$8,000 for April for March ads and \$5,500 to \$8,000 in May for April ads, as we will not print in May. Based on estimates from Zanna, we have about \$10,000 in outstanding ads. Jamie said that should get us to \$80,000.

CMBAM RECAP

Student leaders and staff who attended the 2018 College Media Business and Advertising Managers Conference in Kansas City, Missouri, March 27-30 spoke to the board about their experiences. Student Business Office General Manager Deja Richards and media consultants Sam Clendenin and Matt Norris gave the board a brief recap of sessions they attended on marketing, sales, relationship management and organizational leadership. The students also had the opportunity to interact with other students and advisers from across the country to exchange ideas

on ways to increase revenue and enhance marketing efforts. One consistent sentiment the group heard was declining newspaper revenues across the country, which had led to many, if not most schools reducing their print schedules and, in some cases, going digital-only. With that in mind, the group said they focused on opportunities in the digital realm, especially social media, as well as building strong relationships with clients instead of one-off transactions.

PROPOSAL FOR TRIAL MODIFICATION OF COPYRIGHT POLICY FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

Photographers Kaydee Gawlik and Nick Faulkner asked the board to consider changing Student Media's copyright policy to allow photographers to post their work on social media. They said allowing photographers to do so would bring Student Media in line with practices that were already standard for many professional photographers, allow the student photographers another way to showcase their work and drive traffic back to Student Media's publications. The current copyright policy, along with a version that highlighted the proposed changes, were included with the meeting package. Kaydee and Nick asked the board to consider the policy modification over the summer, as a pilot program, and then reconsider it in the fall after seeing if any problems or challenges arose.

The policy put forth would have required the photographers to establish a "professional (or business) account operated independently of the creator's personal account and meet standards outlined in the Code of Ethics." The language went on to forbid the operators of those accounts from posting "biased or potentially inflammatory content" on them.

Tyler Dukes questioned the necessity of forcing the photographers to set up separate accounts just to post their work. He said the publications should already have social media guidelines that would forbid any members from posting content that would bring disrepute to their respective organizations. That consideration, he said, had nothing to do with copyright and more to do with effective social media policies. He said the phrase naming editors as the final judges in such matters should be sufficient to handle any situations where the publications' work might be associated with content detrimental to the publications' reputations.

After some discussion, Tyler moved that Section 3, Subsection b be modified as follows:

~~"b. In regard to photography and cartoons/comics, Student Media grants the creator license to post their intellectual property created on behalf of Student Media to professional social media accounts granted that the following stipulations and constraints are met:~~

~~i. The social media account must be a professional (or business) account operated independently of the creator's personal account and meet standards outlined in the Code of Ethics.~~

~~1. The account may not post any biased or potentially inflammatory content. Err on the side of caution for opinionated/controversial things and just don't post them. Editors will be the final arbiters."~~

In the end, Tyler moved to approve the proposed policy change with that amendment, and Lily Neal seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

PROPOSED CHANGE TO TECHNICIAN PUBLICATION SCHEDULE FOR 2018-2019

Board members and staff who were present at the April 3 called meeting briefly recapped the conversation around proposed changes to Technician's print publication schedule, specifically cutting back to one print edition per week. (Complete notes for that meeting were distributed by email to the board in advance of the regular meeting; they are attached here and made part of these minutes by reference.)

In the end, Jonathan said the consensus among those at the called meeting was that Technician should publish one print edition per week, and that that print edition should be published on Thursdays. After a brief discussion, Tyler moved that the board endorse the change, and Dean seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve it.

ADVISER & PROGRAM SURVEY

Patrick asked the organization leaders to be on the lookout for an email from their advisers with a survey asking each student staff member to assess their advisers, their own organizations and the program generally. Patrick urged them to do everything they could to give all 2017-2018 staff members an opportunity to make their voices heard. Patrick said the professional staff would use that feedback to improve their advising methods moving forward. Patrick said the survey would be live through the end of the semester.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP FOR 2018-2019

Patrick surveyed the voting board members present as to whether they would be returning to the board in 2018-2019. Lilly, Tyler, Dean, Darian Blakey and Josh Hyatt all said they would be returning. Laasya said she would be graduating, and thus not returning, and Patrick said Missy Furman and Meghan Glove had indicated to him prior to the meeting that the board would be losing them both to graduation. Patrick said he would follow up with the remaining board members with regard to their intentions for 2018-2019.

ADJOURN

Laasya adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

**Notes from a called meeting of the Student Media Board of Directors,
Newspapers Advisory Board, Business Office Advisory Board and Technician staff
regarding proposed changes to the Technician's print publication schedule for 2018-2019**

**Tuesday, April 3, 2018 • 6 p.m.
Room 5101 Talley Student Union**

Present: Patrick Neal, director of student media advising; Connor Fraley, Technician staff writer and copy editor; Missy Furman, chair of the Student Media Board of Directors; Laasya Vulimiri, PCOM representative and vice chair of the SMBOD; Justin Hammond, DASA Communications and Business Office Advisory Board member; Noah Jabusch, Technician assistant opinion editor; Meghan Glova, CHASS representative of the SMBOD; Andrew Schnittker, Technician sports editor; Nick Weaver, Technician design editor; Robbie Williams, SMBOD and Business Office Advisory Board member; Chanon Smith, Business Office Advisory Board member; Tyler Dukes, SMBOD and Newspapers Advisory Board member; Cory Smith, Newspapers Advisory Board member; Casey Johnson, Newspapers Advisory Board member; Adam Skrzecz, 2018-2019 SMBOD member, elected; Anahzsa Jones, Nubian Message editor-in-chief; Ellen Meder, editorial adviser; Jonathan Carter, Technician editor-in-chief; Jamie Lynn Gilbert, associate director of student media; Dean Simpson Phillips, SMBOD faculty representative; Zanna Swann, student media business and marketing manager; Aditi Dholakia, Technician opinion editor

CALL TO ORDER

Patrick Neal called the meeting to order shortly after 6 p.m., and Laasya Vulimiri volunteered to serve as recording secretary.

OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND

Patrick gave a brief overview of Technician's non-fee revenues, which have fallen every year for the past 15 years except for one. A line graph plotting Technician's revenues over that span was distributed to attendees and is attached as part of these notes. Also distributed to attendees was a one-page summary of various scenarios representing changes to the Technician's print publication schedule; it is also attached as part of these notes. Finally, a detailed breakdown of Technician's non-fee revenues that was originally distributed to SMBOD members at their regular meeting in March was also made available for review.

Patrick said the Technician's declining revenue had left a projected \$50,000 hole in Student Media's overall budget for the 2017-2018 fiscal year and beyond. He said going from two issues to one issue per week and eliminating the print summer edition (i.e., Scenario 4 on the handout) would make up about half of that shortfall. He said the remaining \$25,000 came from cuts elsewhere in the budget that would have no effect on any student organization's operations.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AND STAFF'S COMMENTS ON PROPOSED CHANGE

Technician EIC Jonathan Carter said he believed the Technician staff was ready for the change, and he said he believed it was the right move to make regardless of declines in the paper's print revenue. He said the Volume 98 (current) staff was the first staff to truly embrace a web- and social-media-first approach. He gave a brief overview of the Technician's social media initiatives, and Ellen Meder gave a similar overview of Technician's web traffic. (The summary handouts Jonathan and Ellen used at the meeting are attached here and included as part of these meeting notes.) Jonathan noted that he had changed his staffing model to beef up Technician's web and social media efforts.

Following Jonathan's remarks, each section editor and other members of the staff spoke about what the change would mean for their respective sections. Each of them said that the move would benefit their

sections either immediately or in the fullness of time, and that it was time for Technician to face the reality that a clear majority of its student readers preferred getting their information online rather than in the paper edition.

A wide-ranging discussion lasting more than an hour followed, touching on everything from reallocation of student resources to monetization of Technician's various online platforms. Some points of note:

- While there was a strong consensus around the switch to a once-weekly publication schedule, it was not unanimous. Staff writer and copy editor Connor Fraley in particular said he believed reducing the print publication schedule was a "reactionary" mistake, adding that that he believed students and businesses would support an effort to keep the twice-weekly publication schedule if they were made aware of the Technician's financial situation. While several board members were sympathetic to that view, they questioned whether such support could be sustained over time given the paper's non-fee revenue history.
- Board members asked the Technician staff whether they expected their journalists to try and hold stories so that they appear in print rather than submitting it earlier for the web. The editors said that the mentality at Technician had changed such that they didn't believe that would be a big issue.
- Patrick emphasized that while the change in publication schedule did represent a budget cut for Technician, nothing had been cut from Technician's personnel budget.
- Ellen pointed out that the budget did allow the staff leeway to publish two to three "extra" editions a year if the editors felt there was a subject of great import to Technician's readers.
- Tyler asked if Technician had seen a decrease in the number of stories as the publication schedule has moved from five, to four, to two times per week, and if so what effect they anticipated the current reduction would have. Ellen said that the number of stories had decreased somewhat in the year immediately after the Technician moved from four to two days per week in print, but she said that the staff's productivity had bounced back strongly this year, with work done for the website comparing favorably to activity seen when Technician was printing four and five editions per week.

PUBLICATION DAY

The latter part of the meeting was devoted to deciding which day of the week Technician should publish its print edition.

The discussion quickly boiled down to two possibilities, Monday or Wednesday/Thursday, and the pros and cons of each day were discussed at length. Some points of note from that discussion:

- Zanna Swann said the Student Business Office would be OK with either day, and that they did not believe any major clients would be inextricably wed to Monday or Wednesday/Thursday.
- Patrick noted that under Scenario 4 – the scenario upon which Technician's budget next year is based – there would be no print edition at all over the summer, but Jonathan noted that staffing would remain the same as in years past, only devoted to online content versus print production.
- Opinion Editor Aditi Dholakia and others spoke in favor of aligning the Technician's publication schedule with that of the Nubian Message so that they could be distributed together. Patrick said that while that would greatly improve the Nubian's on-campus distribution times, he urged the Technician staff to make the decision that was best for the Technician, as the Nubian's editorial staff would have the final say on any changes to their publication schedule.

In the end, those gathered settled on Thursdays as Technician's publication day, as it was a good day for sections like Sports and Arts & Entertainment to preview weekend events, while at the same time giving writers with News three days at the beginning of the week to contact sources and work on their stories.

CONCLUSION

Patrick thanked everyone for attending and offering their ideas, and said the next step would be for the Technician and the Student Business Office to work together on a publication schedule for 2018-2019 that would work well with the academic calendar.

The meeting adjourned at about 7:45 p.m.