



THE ANU OBSERVER

Meeting of The ANU Observer Council

2018-02-18

Meeting Opens at 1810

Item 1 - Apologies and Attendance

Councillors in Attendance: Michael Turvey, Eliza Croft, Joel Baker, Tatsunori Yamaguchi, Ebe Ganon

Members in Attendance: Jason Pover, Madeleine Birdsey.

Item 2 - Acknowledgement of Country

Given by Michael Turvey.

Item 3 - Previous Action Items

3.1 Secretary to contact ANU regarding the need for Auditing.

Joel: Andrew Smith said he'd get back to me.

3.2 Secretary to investigate whether or not legislation requires organisations to evaluate the ANU's performance during the SSAF process.

Joel: As far as I can tell it does not require this. Doesn't seem like a bad idea if they are, but I think it's another action item.

3.3 Chair to create a poll to establish a regular Council meeting day and time.

Michael: Didn't do it. O-Week was busy. Weekends aren't ideal. News meetings will be on Mondays. How do we feel about Tuesday evenings fortnightly.

Eliza: So long as it doesn't conflict with DinSoc.

Madeleine: That's 6:30 to whenever.

Ebe: Digital will meet on Wednesday.

Eliza: Tuesday seems the best then.

Michael: Let's say Tuesdays at 5.

Eliza: 5:30 incase people finish work at 5?

Michael: Agreed.

Joel: We'll start Week 2.

3.4 Digital team to give Secretary access to the website.

Joel: I apparently have access. Doesn't work.

Ebe: It looks like they both had accounts. Joel's isn't working. I'm guessing it's your security certificate. Tatsu has a login, but I'm not sure if Adam passed it on to him. Will

continue to look into it.

3.5 Secretary to advertise meetings on website.

Joel: Will be able to do this once I can get on the website.

3.6 Chair to notify honorary life members of their new membership.

Michael: I have done this. They were both "chuffed".

3.7 Secretary to review passed policies.

Joel: Changes to these don't seem to be a high priority. Everything is workable.

Item 4 - Reports

4.1 News Report

Michael: Any questions to the news report? Noting it's located in the Appendix of the Agenda.

None

4.2 Digital Report

Michael: Any questions to the digital report? I just wanted to check in on digital meetings.

Ebe: It was O-Week. We appear to have settled on our first meeting being Wednesday of this week. Most people have sent through timetables and attendance should be consistent now.

People need to be more active on Slack though.

Michael: It's key to make sure everyone has it on their phones.

4.3 Financial Report

Eliza: Good to hear you've discussed things with the PARSA Treasurer.

Michael: Have you received bank details from EOs?

Tatsu: I've got Ebe's, yours, and Joel's.

Ebe: Money can be exchanged for goods and services.

Actionable: Get Ebe access to bank account - Tats

4.4 Other Reports

Joel (secretary): Obviously tried to deal with Richard but had email issues. After getting in touch, received the response from Andrew saying he will get back to us in a few days. It has been more than a few days.

Michael: Did you communicate to him that our situation is somewhat dire.

Joel: Yes. Told him we don't have money and that O-week has started. In the next email I'll mention that we're spending our own money currently.

Ebe: Try calling him?

Actionable: Call Andrew Smith - Joel

Item 5 - Items for Decision

5.1 Term 1 General Meeting

Joel: We need to hold a General Meeting. When? We need to give 21 days notice. I wanted to hold in week 3, but the time for that is past.

General Apathy

Eliza: During business hours during the week is good practice.

Eliza: Do we think this venue is large enough?

Michael: I have no doubt this venue is large enough.

Joel: I'd like to advertise it on the door of the Office Space as well as online. I know Michael has thoughts on this, anyone else?

Michael: I think on the door is fine.

Eliza: I back doing it.

Michael: Given news is busiest Monday-Wednesday, shall we say Thursday or Friday?

Joel: I can do either. Do note that quorum is 30, so we do need people to attend.

Eliza: Joel and I will not be here on Friday of Week 4. We'll need to do Week 5 if it's a Friday.

Michael: I leave the decision up to Joel.

Actionable: Call meeting - Joel or Michael

5.2 Motion that The ANU Observer adopt the Advertising Policy (Appendix D).

Jason: Basically, the policy sets out limitations on the way we advertise, and the procedure for approving advertising. Under section 4 it states that the provisions and the policy will be executed into a standard form contract - the Treasurer is responsible for that. Tatsu will need to create that form. 5, 6, 7, and 8 deal with ethics and independence from editorial and digital decision making. There are differences between them. There will be a register under section 9.

Eliza: 4.3 is missing a word.

Joel: Friendly amendment to add in whatever the missing word is?

Jason: Agreed.

Michael: Tatsu, you've looked over this?

Tatsu: Yes.

Michael: In 7 and 8 there are a few instances where it says 'Observer' where it should probably be 'the Council'. 7.2 doesn't provide direct responsibility. I also think 9.1 should have a specific role... nevermind, I missed that. I think 8.1 should state 'the Council' as well.

Eliza: My thoughts are that given the Council is the committee under the act, it is the contracting body - so when you say Observer it means the Council.

Ebe: I think bringing in the Secretary for the register is unnecessary.

Eliza: Tatsu, are you happy for that to go to you?

Tatsu: Yep, that's fine.

Eliza: It should be on the website and in the Google Drive once we have it.

Michael: I thought we had conversations about the Editorial Board having veto power over certain content.

Jason: It's in 3.3.

Michael: How does 3.3 interact with section 8? Does it also grant the Editorial Board to enact 8.1.

Eliza: 3.3 basically gives the Editorial Board the power to stop things ahead of time. 8.1 is after.

Jason: The point of 8 is that you normally couldn't terminate a contract during its term, but 8.1 allows us to do that if the action will bring us into disrepute.

Tatsu: If a conflict of interest arrives after, would you like a new entry in the ledger or for it to be overridden?

Eliza: We can resolve that when it happens.

Madeleine: I propose a ban on the word 'bois'.

General refusal

Michael: The motion is that the ANU Observer adopt the Advertising Policy noted in Appendix D of the Agenda.

Moved by: Michael Turvey

In Favour: Michael, Eliza, Ebe, Tatsu

Abstaining: Joel

Motion passes.

Item 6 - Items for Discussion

6.1 O-Week Performance

Jason: I feel like there was a lot of work put on Eliza. It would make sense to have an event manager in future. I've mentioned this before but it's really a matter for Council.

Eliza: The amount I had to do this past week was fine, but if we want to do more than that, it would be too much for me while also being an editor. I can see the value in taking someone on. I don't know how much interest there would be.

Ebe: I would love that, but in the future it needs to be two people for events, especially based on our experience at Market Day.

Eliza: I back that. For the rest of the year I support dedicating a digital person for digital events, while I handle the news side of events.

Ebe: It would be good for marketing. I'd be down to do it for digital.

Michael: A lot of things we didn't have the manpower to do in O-Week. Staff movie night, workshops at Res Halls, a one-year anniversary party, etc. The issue is that it's hard to find someone who just wants to organise things for O-Week. The Associations can pay people to organise O-Weeks. It would be hard for us to find someone who wanted to do something like that for us for free.

Ebe: Eliza, how much work do you think it was? We both sat in an events-focused role at Ursies.

Eliza: It wasn't too much, it was just a lot when added onto the editor workload.

Michael: I think we should bid for a line-item for Bush Week in the mid year round and O-Week for next year to try and get someone to organise events.

Ebe: I don't like that. You can't help but engage with ANUSA as a student. Observer is quite niche comparatively, you require an active understanding of the organisation to work in it. I don't think we'd have anyone with an active enough institutional knowledge to run events.

Michael: As an organisation we have Joel, Tatsu, and two very niche teams. There isn't anyone who can pull out and do events work on an ongoing basis. Changing that would require some major changes, obviously. It's a tricky dynamic since we're not geared up for running events.

Ebe: It plays into where marketing and communications comes from. Right now it's digital because of me, but that won't always be the case.

Eliza: A third digital editor that is a marketing/comms editor?

Ebe: I want to suggest that, but it requires re-defining the Digital Team. That appeals to the type of person we will get applying for the team later in Observer's life. In the short term I'm happy to handle Bush Week. A lot of what digital does is not held to the same time constraints that news is.

Tatsu: I think the Treasurer has a role in this, since all the events have a financial aspect.

Eliza: It would still involve you, particularly through the Council. The Treasurer doesn't have an inherent responsibility to organise events though. From this discussion, I'm understanding that we

want to move towards changes in the mid-year. Constitutional changes need to be ready for ANU Council in their July meeting.

Ebe: We could look at adopting a model similar to the news team. Do we want to discuss how we worked through O-Week?

Eliza: O-Week happened. Market Day was - I thought - very successful given the winds. We had a lot of people at the stall in the morning, especially with Loki there. A lot of first years had a general idea of what we were, which was great. It means we got enough branding out before O-Week. We should look at getting weights for the marquee.

We got the number of people we wanted with the event, despite not doing flyers or posters.

Ebe: We need to be a lot more militant with branding and distribution of what we have. When we had lots of people involved, we didn't have the business cards. All the editors need to carry them around so that they can be handed out.

Michael: Need to distribute them to reporters as well.

Ebe: I had an issue with Market Day with us losing our marquee by 1pm. We could have had some more people at the event as well.

Michael: I would encourage Ebe and Eliza to note down your thoughts from today in a handover document.

Actionable: Continue discussions in the lead-up to OGM2 2018 - Ebe, Eliza

Actionable: Look at getting weights for the marquee - ?

6.2 Communications Strategy in Light of Review of O-Week Performance

Michael: Ebe and I came to the same conclusions on this. Sponsoring individual posts on our page doesn't work as well as it could. Some people miss our page being just news. It's a good aesthetic. We have better organic traction than a lot of other groups at the university. We could comment on articles 24 hours after they've been posted with links to applications, tip lines, etc. We could also have a 'want to get involved' link at the bottom of articles. Ebe, can we set up a template for wordpress?

Ebe: I'll follow that up with Adam.

Discussion of Pelican

Michael: Any other thoughts on communications strategy? Do we want to discuss posting on Schmidtposting?

Ebe: Let's.

Michael: We've been doing them since we started. It got us a lot of our initial traction. Just because we've always done it doesn't mean we should keep doing it. The advantages are; extra traction, gaining readership that wouldn't read otherwise, and allows us for better curated comments than on our Facebook page. Disadvantages are; annoying some students, and possibly looking unprofessional. Our surveys say that people go pretty much 50/50.

Eliza: I'm uncertain where you're getting that figure.

Michael: We could several comments that said it's good, and several that said they wanted us to stop. I don't think there's a strong irritation from it.

Eliza: The reason I question the numbers is that the people who find it annoying will tell us, but those who find it just okay, and just good, probably wouldn't say something. I feel more would miss us than be glad for us to be gone.

Ebe: I believe we shouldn't stop, but drastically reduce frequency. If it's an article about parmies, then go for it. But if it's super serious, then it doesn't always get the same traction. Could we get reporters sharing their own stories?

Michael: We encourage them to do that.

Jason: Not all of them want that publicity though. I think it's useful early on, but to ease off as the year goes on. For minor stories with no meme value, the page is the right place. Also articles get more traction on one platform or the other, never both.

Eliza: I don't mind things looking like sad posts, especially on Schmidtposting where things get buried quickly.

Eliza: I'd be worried about missing traction on stories that gain a surprise amount of interest.

Michael: If we don't have a strong positive reason to stop, then we shouldn't stop.

Jason: We're intending to up our number of stories, that seems like a strong reason to stop.

Eliza: I'd like to limit to once a day.

Joel: I honestly feel like one a day is too much.

Eliza: We're trying to get reporters to post their own, so it's not all from one person. Plus our content is a lot higher quality than many things that end up on Schmidtposting. I think the threshold for students getting tired of us is a lot higher, and we should use it.

Joel: I'd like to note that if we start posting less, people who want more, will be clear to us that they want more. If we post too frequently, we risk driving more people away, rather than drawing people in.

Eliza: Then we run the risk of annoying people more.

Michael: We'll table this discussion for now.

Actionable: Set up a template for wordpress posts - Ebe

6.3 Access Canberra Requirements

Eliza: There are some things we need to do for Access Canberra. Lodging our constitution and updating our officers.

Actionable: Lodge constitution and updated officers with Access Canberra - Joel

Item 7 - Other Business

7.1 Semesterly Surveys

Michael: We haven't determined who will be running the surveys each semester. You could make arguments for it to be run by any combination of the officers. Does anyone particularly want to do it, not do it, have ideas about changing it.

Eliza: I enjoy doing it.

Michael: Ebe do you think we could sponsor it?

Ebe: We don't get traction on sponsored posts.

Michael: Maybe the best option is to leave the writing of questions to the Editorial Board and publicity to the Digital Team.

Eliza: We're of course open to the Secretary and Treasurer participating.

Conversation regarding previous survey questions

7.2 Mailing List

Ebe: In terms of the administration, we managed it. Whoever is writing the weekly catch-up should provide that content and format it in a similar manner. Is this something news can take back to whoever can use that information.

Michael: We haven't decided who will be doing it yet.

Ebe: That will become more urgent as the lists get larger.

Eliza: What day were you planning on sending them out, and what's the sign-up been like?

Ebe: I don't have access because of how Adam integrated it. Tentative Sunday release.

7.3 Motion that Rebecca Ganon be granted access to a debit card attached to the Commonwealth Bank account of The ANU Observer.

Moved by: Eliza Croft

Passes unanimously

7.4 Motion that Rebecca Ganon be granted access to the 'Netbank' account attached to the Commonwealth Bank account of The ANU Observer.

Moved by: Eliza Croft

Passes unanimously

Meeting Closed at 1929