



THE ANU OBSERVER

Meeting of The ANU Observer Board

Date: 26/2/2020

Open of Meeting: 17:03

Item 1 - Attendance and Apologies

Present:

Absent:

Item 2 - Acknowledgement of Country

By Konstantinos

Item 3 - Previous Action Items

Item 4 - Reports

Chair Report: Konstantine Katsanis

Received Late

We had Governance Training and I think it went really well. We've gained a bit of an idea on how an organisation like ours should run and what changes we may need to implement; mostly looking at having a sufficient structure that will fulfill our purposes for years to come. I've emailed Lodge again, seeing that our emails have not gone through, to give office access to more people and whether changing the label outside is an option.

Access Canberra details have been updated.

Market Day went well last Wednesday, however I will contact ANUSA to see whether the cost we paid was correct, because (I believe) it was supposed to provide us with a stall position in a high traffic area and provide us with a marquee, although we provided our own.

The social event also went well and I am hoping to see more people joining us next time when we settle more into the semester; we should be having them more often, at least twice a semester.

Moved by Tristan, seconded by Angus, passes unanimously.

Finance Executive Report: Konstantine Katsanis

Received Late

I invoiced FSS for 70% of our total allocation. I requested for them to transfer the sum by 25 February but we still have not received the monies. For some reason, they have also not come back to me on my request to receive the amount Jules did not include in last Semester's invoice.

I will give them a call after we receive our allocation or if we do not receive our allocation by today. Last fortnight expenses included paying for maintenance of our domain name, Market Day stall and snacks and pizza for the social event we had.

Me and Tristan went to the bank and became the new trustees of the organisation. We will all need to go again and provide our signatures if we ever need to add another trustee. Although ideal to have a third one, it is a stressful process, so we will need to decide today who would like to be and remain, hopefully, until the end of their term. If so, we would need to decide on a date to go to the bank together and get it done

Moved by Tristan, seconded by Angus. Passes unanimously.

Secretary Report: Hayley Hands

In the next few weeks there are a number of policies I need to update. I have provided a link to my current to do list and includes everything I am doing/am thinking about doing.

The governance training was immensely helpful, and I really have a clear vision for what we need to do policy wise in order to get Observer on track. There are notes about the governance meeting on the Board drive or the actual resources we received in the office. If you didn't attend, or want a refresher, I would highly encourage that you go through those so you can be in the same headspace of governance and future planning for the strategic meeting.

I finally reviewed the purchase policies. According to our Constitution, a withdrawal of over \$100 from the Observer bank account must only be approved by two Board members. As far as I have been made aware, there are no other checks on this so you should be fine to make a purchase of any amount over \$100 without approval from the majority of the board, although this may be good practice with large spends.

In addition, if there is not currently a policy guiding you for a decision you're wanting to make and you think there should be, please bring it up with me. If you're wanting to do something related to content (e.g ANU Sport interview stuff) and there is no policy, it does not breach our advertising policy/code of conduct, and is only associated with the work of your team, I'm inclined to say go for it! We are a young organisation, we are able to take some small risks and make some small mistakes to see what works and what doesn't. This is the one of the main things I want to talk about at our strategic meeting.

Once again, thank you to everyone who joined us for the Market Day stall and our social, it was a great day and I've heard we have had many applications as a result.

Please please please submit your reports/apologies/agenda items 24 hours in advance. If you can, please submit them to me on slack rather than directly changing the agenda because it can mess with my head when I go in and see everything has moved around. This week I received no reports on time. If you aren't going to submit a report, or have nothing to report, you also need to tell me 24 hours in advance and I will note it. Please don't do this and then proceed to give a verbal report.

Also, please communicate things for the news/digital team with them directly unless it's something informal/something that doesn't require action. It helps a lot with team communication if you talk between each other rather than through me.

In the next week I want to sort out some door signs and a cleaning roster, especially as we will have a lot of newbies. In my opinion, the first office should be the 'news office', for editors or news stuff like interviews, etc. The second should be the 'digital office'. We need to make sure the common spaces are kept clean and clear including of digital equipment except when they are in use. This makes sure nothing gets broken and we can properly use the common space.
Moved by Angus, seconded by Tristan. Passes unanimously

Visual Content Executive Report: Tristan Khaw

Received late

Market Day

Market Day seemed to go well from a subjective perspective. We had great engagement with the student body. We gave out a bunch of cards and it was good to see the first year/new students becoming aware of our organisation. We had a quick, very impromptu livestream on the day. Would be good to have a nicer livestream next time, with more notice given to the student body. It might be nice as well, for next time, to have a proper walk through Market Day which we can edit and release. Another idea is having a time lapse set up of our stall.

Job Applications

I created the graphics for the 3 positions we were advertising for (visual team, journalists and web assistant). I also wrote the web and Facebook ad listings. They were a little delayed, but it seems that, in conjunction with our strong presence, we have had great success with it. I am in the process of replying to the 3 visual team applications we received. We are currently suffering some email problems which makes replying difficult but I would like to set up a time to meet with each of them individually.

Fortnightly Catchup Progress

The Fortnightly Catchup video series project has stalled. The main bottleneck that I have identified is that I need more knowledge of upcoming and past articles to write my scripts. This

information can only come from the editors as no other personnel within the *Observer* have access to such high-level information. I need a running list of the articles and their publication status (at the minimum). The editorial team is understandably busy, especially with Week 1 and O-Week just past. My suggestion for a system that would be easy for them to implement appears to be unsatisfactory and I am unable to make evening news meetings which complicates things. I wanted to release it at the start of week 2, however that deadline is looking unrealistic at this point. Further discussion is necessary between myself as the VCE and the editors.

Meeting with Visual Team members

I have met with Konstantine, Charlie and Amna in the past week to discuss their commitments and their availability. I have discussed deputy duties with Konstantine, as well as some handover items. I have met with Amna, who has expressed to me that she is excited to work with us again this semester. Her schedule is packed during the day, but she is available during weekends and evenings. Similarly, I have met with Charlie. He will be very able to assist us this semester, but is leaving on exchange in semester 2. He told me that he would like to help more with videography and with interviews in particular. I have yet to meet with Bhuwan, who only just came back to Canberra. We need to set up a regular Visual Team meeting time. Konstantine will sort out office access for Amna and Charlie.

Bank

Konstantine and I went down to the bank and finally signed the transfer of trustee paperwork. The bank mishandled our application, but we were eventually able to get everything set up. I need to sign into Netbank to activate some aspects. We also ordered two bank cards to be sent to our home addresses.

Equipment

I bought 2 x SD cards and an SD card reader for our use. Awaiting SSAF money to be reimbursed.

Tristan: As a VCE, I'm not sure that the editors really understand that a list of articles needs to be provided to us. I had a quick exchange with Anthony and he said he'd rather meet in person. He said it was hard in the news meeting to note down these things because they don't have a dedicated secretary but the thing is this doesn't take more than two seconds. We need to have something like a google sheet that they put articles on so we know what livestreams/pictures to take for the week.

Sam: We talked about it yesterday, other editors have the same consensus that they both wanted to meet in person but I don't think that's 100% necessary as we can [do other things]. Anthony and Adelle want to organise some sort of regular meeting to touch base.

Tristan: One meeting a week isn't enough to [stay up to date], we need to use slack to put messages instead.

Kon: This is what the 'all-editors' channel is supposed to be done.

Sam: We've got editor channels and newsroom channels but you guys aren't a member of those

Kon: We need one where you can communicate with Tristan about general news stuff

Tristan: We need this for us to function because the alternative is I write my script blind and every second Saturday I bombard editors with messages about it only for them to [criticise it].

Hayley: It would be good to allocate an editor as a visual content team liaison who updates digital team about news stuff, and can receive digital updates to give to news. Also can help with script. Also look into /todo.

Moved by Hayley, seconded by Angus, passes unanimously.

News Content Executive Report: Anthony Lotric

Received late

An issue that Adelle and myself want to address as editors is the fact that editors are becoming burdened with having to publish articles after they have edited them, often well into the evening. This also means that articles are coming out later than is ideal. We are planning to put in place procedures so that articles have to be finished by a certain time (5:00 - 5:30 most likely), and to make sure that reporters have the knowledge, resources and access to wordpress that will allow them to publish their articles themselves.

As Adelle and myself train Sam and Bec up as editors, we will try to get to a stage where the work is spread evenly between us. At the moment, the workload is skewed understandably towards the senior editors, and especially Adelle as the most senior person in the news team.

At the moment, the responsibility of creating news graphics is on placed on news reporters and editors. We would like to start asking digital people to create many or most of these graphics before the editing process even begins. This should not pose too many difficulties, as graphics can usually be based on the basic topic of an article, rather than details that emerge as it is being reported.

The climate session article was very good - we were on it quickly, had a lot of spicy comments from the right people, and were relatively timely. Getting onto stories early and making sure that you have all the important people in mind is the best way to get a story like that done well. Also

playing the parties involved off each other, so to speak, by asking them to comment on things that they have been accused of or criticised for, can also be a good approach.

We have had some issues with errors not being caught during the editing and proofing of articles. Most have been minor, but we should look at ways of reducing them in the future. The simplest way is to ensure that all substantive edits have been completed before the proofreader gets their hands on it, and for the proofreader to take their time with the edits.

We need to start thinking about how we are operating will change when we have a large influx of reporters, and planning accordingly.

Tristan: Comment is related back to what I said previously in my report, I'm happy to do the graphics but you have to let us know what the articles are going to be. We're happy to help, Web team might be too.

Angus: I guess

Tristan: But you can't just drop it at 5 o'clock and hope for us to make a graphic. Were you guys going to contact me about this? Or how were you planning to drop the bomb.

Sam: I don't really know. I feel as I'm being trained I haven't been made aware of everything.

Hayley: I heard about a big structural change about how editors had different teams for each topic and now it is editor on duty. I just feel like this is a significant change that should have been included in the report. It is not that I agree or disagree but I think it should have been in the report.

Sam: An issue that Adelle noticed before was we had reporters who knew a lot about stupol but there was no crossover with other issues, so if someone was unavailable we couldn't bring someone across. We want reporters getting more experienced across the board.

Moved by Angus, seconded by Tristan, passes unanimously.

Web Administrator Report: Angus Brooks

Received late

Since my last report, I have been focussed on fixing things with the site and our systems, and also further investigating a new site for Observer. One major issue we have currently is with our email system not delivering emails correctly. This has been a much more complex issue that I originally thought but I hope to have a fix live by the end of the week.

Our live-blogging software should be working properly - I am more than happy to providing coaching/help to any team member on how to use the software correctly.

Hayley: We should do a live blog test run to make sure it all works with Angus there.

Kon: Collaborative wordpress doc.

Moved by Tristan, seconded by Sam, passes unanimously.

Item 5 - Items for Decision

5.1 Strategic Planning Meeting Date

Sunday March 1st 4pm

Moved by Tristan, seconded by Angus. Passes unanimously.

5.2 Accept Rebecca Zhong's application to fulfill the casual vacancy and become an editor.

Sam: I like Bec, she's got a good work ethic and experience as a reporter.

Moved by Hayley, seconded by Tristan. Passes unanimously.

Item 6 - Items for Discussion

6.4 Arbitration Panel Requests (See Appendix A)

Kon: Want honoraria published, would like to see an increase in people who submit honoraria.

Last time only three people did. I think it's good practice for editors, VCEs and people on the board to form an opinion of who should receive that money.

Adelle: If arbitration had an account it would give them access to other emails and might make it messy.

6.5 Team Photos

Tristan: We should do it when we get shirts, in the break.

6.6 Discussion about collaborating with other organisations (re ANU Sport) and whether a policy should be written

Tristan: Just wanted to discuss this, might be better amongst exec and editors. This year we have ANU Sport and ANU wanting some form of collaboration.

Angus: What would a policy look like to you? Split into SSAF, other?

Tristan: I think it would be up to [discretion] and could be overturned. Split into categories based on profit, external/internal, etc. If someone messages us about a [clear advertisement]

Adelle: How we deal with ANU/ANU Sport should be different from how we deal with other organisations.

Tristan: Even if we keep a list of organisations and what they're good for it would be good. For example, with ANU sport would be good to talk about stuff to do with athletes, but not ok to promote gym/for profit ventures. But if it's a news event we can use them as a source.

Adelle: Previously I have had experiences with ANU Sport. In one we got thrown out of a meeting for being media, so they need to address that.

6.7 Account Trustees

Kon: We updated trustees, said Adelle couldn't find IDs so Tristan and I are new trustees. We could get a third but we need to go again and give all our signatures AGAIN. If we do it again we need to be sure the person is going to stick around to the end of the year. We don't need another one but it would be best practice. I would prefer it to be someone on the board, but if we're going to do it where need to go on a date that all three of us can make.

Tristan: It's a lot of work. We needed to get a letter of resignation from Eliza. We needed a wet ink signature on a physical form. So they had to start the whole process again.

Angus: I can if you want.

Item 7 - Other Business

Item 8 - Recall Actionables

Appendix A

Email sent on behalf of the Arbitration Panel about the payment of stipends and honoraria and other requests. 4 December 2019 4:38PM

Dear ANU Observer Council,

The Arbitration Panel has recently met and discussed how we will perform our duties in the coming term, being recently populated with new members. We would like to inform you of some decisions we have come to.

- Michael Turvey has been appointed chair of the Arbitration Panel.
- The Arbitration Panel has decided that this and future honoraria decisions should be communicated to the full Observer team, in the interests of transparency and given the nature of honoraria as a method of honoring exceptional performance. As such, we request an email list of all current officers before the next round of honoraria (for this round we have simply emailed the news account).
- For the same reasons as above, we request that Observer publish the honoraria on its website (possibly on the documents page or in a similar location) so that they are accessible to the public and preserved for reference of future teams.
- The Panel has observed that there is a consistently low rate of honoraria submissions, which makes determining accurate and justified honoraria allocations difficult. As such, we intend to contact all officers via email before the next deadline for honoraria submission, inviting their submissions.
- The Panel also intends to prepare a document highlighting best practice for honoraria submissions, regarding the importance of detailing specific reasons for honoraria, and the importance of highlighting conduct that is "above expectations" for roles. This is in order to make the process more accessible for members who may be nervous about making submissions. We anticipate this document to be ready for circulation before the next honoraria submission round opens.

- The Panel intends to request certain data before the next honoraria allocation. This includes but may go beyond analytics for news articles and videos, to aid our deliberations. We request that the Council disclose Google Analytics of all content produced for the preceding honoraria period to aid our deliberations.

- The Panel is interested in the possibility of establishing an "arbitration" account on the Observer Slack. This account would not have access to any channels, but would serve as an accessible point of contact for officers who wish to make submissions or ask questions about the Panel's proceedings. Could you please advise the Panel if such an account is possible.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Regards,
Michael Turvey
Arbitration Panel Chair.