

Meeting Opened 2044

Chair: Michael

Minuting: Joel

In Attendance: Eliza, Ebe

Absent with Apology: Tatsunori

1. Reports

Michael: Jason has not submitted a news report. Eliza and I obviously sit on the editorial board as well. The other 3 editors will be chair of that board on a rotating basis. Whichever one is chair will submit a news report. This will detail things that require decisions, updates, and issues. The digital report will be issued by Ebe.

Ebe: I can't get a hold of anyone who has applied currently.

1.1 News Report (Editorial Board)

Eliza: We decided not to publish non-urgent stories until February. We won't get traction right now. We will keep writing but won't publish unless it's urgent breaking. We discussed plans for O-Week including DAILY PRINTING. We will need to talk to Tats about that in terms of budget. We will host, in O-Week, an introductory session for people who want to get involved.

Michael: I forwarded Eliza an email from DSL. They are putting together an O-Week calendar. We should notify them.

1.2 Digital Report (Digital Team)

Ebe: I have been a bit AWOL over the past 2 weeks. I'll work on catching up in the next little while. We will continue to, as more people join, post. Not much else to report.

Eliza: Don't stress. It is still majority ANUSA people in that group.

Joel: I would wait until the end of the month. Half of people don't get their offers until Jan 25.

Michael: It would be better to leave it until close to O-Week. ANUSA will want to limit posts and we don't want to lose posts later for doing them now. We need to introduce ourselves and the organisation to people who don't know what it is.

1.3 Administrative Report (Joel)

Joel: Not a whole heap to report. I've been in contact with Andrew Heath. I've found some new emails confirming he needs the docs by the 11th. Andrew said we can submit the docs to him by then. We have 19 members if Tats and I are considered members, so we should have quorum as I've only received 2 apologies.

Things that I still have to do for the GM are:

I received no additional submissions for the agenda, so we're just discussing the Constitution.

I promised I would get out a summary of the changes, it's possible I won't, but I would like to.

Getting things done for Andrew is my primary concern.

Finally, I need to look through the six policies Jason has linked to me.

1.4 Financial Report (Tatsunori)

Absent

1.5 SSAF process (Eliza)

Michael: We have been officially allocated SSAF. \$32,000 - surprisingly public consultation changed nothing. This means a few things. We get money, which is good. We can also now publish an article on SSAF if we want to. I think it would be a good idea to set precedent of having articles like that come before the Council for approval. Not all editors believe that we should do this, but I think it is in our best interest.

1.6 Hiring (Michael)

Michael: I don't have anyone to present to the Council today. I've been looking through the process and it's clear we need a policy to determine when an officership expires and renews. We should do that for everyone who is continuing. Flag that to get done by next meeting. Jason and Joel with input from me can put that together. Staff policy.

1.7 Et Cetera Conference (Michael)

Michael: I went to a conference. They're looking to start a joint-media organisation publishing nationally relevant news, opinion, and content from activist groups. This would activate with original content, as well as borrowed content from campuses/campus newspapers. I like the idea, with caveats. I've volunteered to work with Elias and Liv on the governance and structure. If anyone else wants to get involved I'd be happy to connect people.

2. Elections

2.1 Election of Chair of the Council.

Michael: Before we get into this, we should talk about what we want this role to be, and how the Council will function. The Council is the governing body of Observer. Ultimately we are the final decision makers. We are responsible for anything Observer does, and have liability for problems it faces. We have the capacity to represent of Observer at an institutional level if we have backing from the Council. We should talk about the extent to which we can represent as individuals. In the context of the Chair - whether we want to make that a functional role, or endow them with the power to be the public face/representing the institution. I am not sure on how that should look.

Eliza: There a very few situations where we need or want to have 1 person doing the representing. We've always worked best with two or three. I don't see the need for the chair to become the public face of the organisation. In any situation we will likely continue to send multiple people where possible.

Ebe: I was thinking that - you know me, I love future proofing - in the future where we may not have just a few people knowing everything that is going on, I am of the opinion that we should remain collaborative and keep the Chair role internal with the Public role being assumed by multiple people at different times.

Joel: For the most part I agree. Obviously we do need a technical Public Officer, that doesn't need to be the Chair and the Chair doesn't need to be the public face.

Michael: It would be easiest for the Secretary to be the Public Officer, keeping governance entirely in their purview.

Eliza: If you're in charge of the constitution it makes sense to have you communicate with Access Canberra.

Joel: So the Secretary will be the Public Officer and the Chair will not handle the public representation of Observer. So, we now need to elect a Chair?

Eliza: Can we outline their role?

Joel: According to the Constitution (post-andrew markup) has a casting vote, may be removed by decision of the Council, etc. Chair can remove observers from Council meetings, chair calls meetings of the Council, can hold debit card, keeps the common seal, keeps all records.

Eliza: Chair and secretary shouldn't be the same in my opinion.

Joel: There are a lot of functions of the Chair that it makes sense to give to the Secretary, but it would be odd to have me delegate minutes every single meeting.

Michael: I'm concerned about having a casting vote and handling the news hiring process. I also intend to step back from a lot of duties half way through 2018.

Eliza: I'm happy with it being either of us.

Eliza: Motion that Michael Turvey be appointed to the role of Chair of The ANU Observer Council.

Joel: Seconded, for the sake of it, not a requirement

Passes by a unanimous vote.

Michael: I feel empowered. Don't cause a tie or I'll come after y'all.

3. Items for Decision

3.1 Policy Approval

3.1.1 Editorial Policies

3.1.2 Management Policies

3.2 Regulation Approval

i. Electoral Regulations

ii. Payment Regulations

iii. Hiring

Joel: These cannot be handled today.

3.3 Equipment Purchases

Michael: We have a considerable line item for equipment.

Ebe: Online will come out of advertising.

Michael: I assume we'll want to do post-sponsorship.

Eliza: What items of equipment do we urgently need before O-Week?

Michael: I don't think we need anything urgently. It would be nice to have a video camera.

Eliza: I think we should wait for SSAF for large purchases like that.

Ebe: I just found the AV cables for my camera. If I can work out how to link it up I can use that.

Eliza: In terms of merch, things that we need before O-Week are: banners (at least one) not later than early February, shirts for our reporters (I found a good company through NCMUN), stickers and business cards to give out at Market Day (these are cheap and can be sourced locally).

Ebe: I can get lots printed cheap through my company here.

Eliza: When will you need to do that by?

Ebe: I'll be back by second week of February. Happy to cop the cost.

Michael: We might not have a budget at our next meeting, or until the start of February. Do we want to, as a Council, move to allocate funding towards the purchase of O-Week materials for Eliza and Ebe to start working towards that.

Eliza: Let me check the SSAF line item to use as a guide to see how much we can put towards that.

Michael: We also have an extra \$1k from our other funds from last year to go towards that. For next meeting we will attempt to put a motion together to allocate those funds. Tabled til then.

4. Items for Discussion

Michael: I want to talk quickly about making sure everyone knows what their job is. First, for the operational people - in our capacity as Councillors - we act as governing members of Observer, not in our Operational roles. We are all responsible for all of the reporting areas. While we work more closely in certain areas, we're responsible for everything. Second, with Ebe and Joel, Eliza and I have talked about bringing perspectives from the Board to the Council. Ebe, for you, the unofficial dynamic we've set up is that there is a senior and junior digital editor based on Council position. Part of what you will have to do is deliver the decisions of Council into whatever strategy you put together with Adam. Joel, when we designed the Secretary role there were some operational functions built into it. I want to work out if you think those are appropriate to you. First is the management of the office space. Also, coordination of administrative functions. One thing, who would handle distribution of printing. We haven't had people who aren't explicitly operation before.

Joel: In my opinion it's important to keep myself and Tats entirely out of the production of news, because it's important to keep at least some of the Council removed from the primary operations of Observer, including distribution of the news. The administration of the office space, that is an operational role, but it's very removed, and I don't think it should create any issues. Anything that's administrative and to do with the Council should fall to me, otherwise it should fall to somebody else.

Michael: I also want to talk to Tats about his duties, because the budget should happen ASAP.

4.1 Summer Plans

Michael: I was hoping that in N Week we could get each of the officers together for 5-6 hours to hash out what we want to be and create a vision of where we want to go, and how things should work. Also come up with new ideas. We are still operating under the vision of the board from 2017, and this new body should have the opportunity to set its own direction. Do people think it is worth the time?

Ebe: I think it's useful. Gives everyone the chance to have ownership over what we're doing.

Joel: I agree, I've felt particularly directionless throughout a lot of the summer, and it would be good to have the opportunity to sit down and pow wow it out as a group.

Eliza: Back it.

Michael: Will people be around and present in N Week?

Ebe: I should be back by the 8th.

Eliza: Yep.

Joel: Yes.

Michael: I have some cool ideas for this.

4.2 Training

Ebe: Do we have training dates yet?

Eliza: Currently no because we haven't hired most of the people yet. No point setting dates when they're unavailable. We're meeting with them over the next few days and will hash that out tentatively before I leave for New Zealand. Will confirm in early February.

Ebe: I need to sort it out with Kai, who wants to do the workshop with reporters. They're very stressed about Bruce O-Week stuff.

Eliza: Happy to work around him on that. Get him to contact me.

4.3 O-Week Setup

Michael: So, I want to think about what we need to have done before it starts. Printing is the board's responsibility, but the Council needs to ensure the budget is prepared. Eliza is managing most of our O-Week events - fantastic - but I want to talk about the digital and hiring strategies.

Ebe: I had a lot of O-Week centric posts lined up already for social media and hiring. I think it's going to be important that we have got multiple things going on every day of O-Week and that we have a consistent presence. Otherwise, it's a time where everyone needs to be super careful about their posts. Adam and I might be posting a lot on behalf of Observer, this is the first time people see our names and they'll associate our actions with Observer. When I saw people commenting for ANUSA or Woroni in 2016 I associated them as that association. Waiting for ANUSA to get back to me on their events, seeing where we can help.

Michael: Don't forget PARSAs as well.

Ebe: It's a good time to demonstrate what we are like as a whole.

Michael: Flag for later - the balance between hiring and promoting content - hiring should be advertised the week before O-Week, and the week after, but not during. It might make us look desperate.

Ebe: O-Week should focus on providing a diverse range of content and styles, so that people can see all the things they can get involved in.

4.4 Student All Email

Michael: We will need to get onto the Student All email. We need to send notifications for General Meetings, etc. Also work out what we can use it for.

Joel: Woroni doesn't use it very much. Just note that.

4.5 General Volunteers

Michael: Concept of having general volunteers for events and distribution. Currently all staff are in digital or news, so this would be another team of people. We could advertise for people who just want to help out but don't have particular news or media oriented skills.

Eliza: What jobs would they do?

Ebe: Especially if we're not printing. O-Week will be super busy. Between the 7 I think we can manage it, or rope in reporters.

4.6 Office

Michael: Update on the office. Jack told me it would be done by December 14. Not only is it not open, but none of the furniture has been moved. I talked to someone and he seemed to think it was going ahead.

Eliza: Uni shutdown?

Joel: Finished on the 3rd.

4.7 Funding Agreement

Michael: Joel, I want to make sure you know about this.

Joel: What?

Michael: From Andrew Smith.

Joel: No idea what you're on about.

Michael: I've just forwarded your email.

Joel: Can I please get a different email?

4.8 Leave Policy

Michael: We need one of these. Two staff members haven't been around the past few months - with good reason - but we need a leave policy so that we know how much time off someone can take before they get penalised, etc. We want people to be able to take some time off, but we want limits. How much time should elected officers be able to take off during a year and how should it be divided? Semesterly, etc?

Ebe: Per pay period. If someone has overstepped their leave allowance then it is clear how to deduct it.

Michael: So 5 pay periods, about 10 weeks per pay period. I would say 2 weeks off each 10.

Ebe: That's my max.

Eliza: Could we say no more than 2 weeks within a pay period and no more than 8 weeks in a year?

Michael: I back that. 8 weeks is a lot to take off.

Eliza: Yeah, it's not a thing that you just take. It should be for emergencies and assessments and things like that.

Michael: My next thing would be that we should have notice for leave unless it's an emergency. We don't want everyone taking leave at the same time. Maybe 2 weeks notice with the consent of the Council unless it's an emergency. For an emergency you still notify the Council. We can retroactively apply some of this to Tats and Maddie.

Eliza: I don't like retroactive.

Michael: If we don't, we have a stipend issue regarding them.

4.9 Internal Conflicts of Interest

Michael: We've developed a policy for this for news, but we should develop one for our internal operations. People shouldn't manage people who they are involved with, hate, are related to, etc. We need the ability to declare internal conflicts of interest.

Joel: I'll need to talk to Jason as he's more familiar with the internal processes.

Flagging this because there's a lot on our plate before o-week : my productivity over the summer has been fairly low so far this year, especially given I'm going away, there's no guarantee everything will be done within that time.

5. Other Business

None.

Meeting Closed 2154.

For future discussion:

Revenue raising

- i. Advertising models
- ii. SEEF

Payment to EOs

- iii. Allowance forms
- iv. Payment schedule