Minutes for Sept 16, 2018

Publications and Communications Committee, Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

PRESENT: Maggie Knight (presiding), Mylène DiPenta (recording), Anne Trudell, Catherine Novak

REGRETS: Kerry MacAdam, Robert Kirchner

The meeting opened with worship.

2018.09.16.1. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

We accept the minutes of July 8, 2018.

2018.09.16.2. UPDATE ON MID-YEAR BUDGET REPORT

Maggie reported verbally. Today's financial matters are discussed in the Editorial Subcommittee Report.

2018.09.16.3. MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

We welcome Catherine's return for another term and thank Chris for her faithful service. We currently have a spot open for another member. We ask all members to keep their ears open for others who might be led to serve.

2018.09.16.4. REPORT BACK FROM CYM

Maggie reported verbally on the Special Interest Group (SIG) we offered in collaboration with Education and Outreach Committee. The SIG was well-received by approximately 30 people who attended.

2018.09.16.5. EDITORIAL SUBCOMMITTEE

We accept the report from the Editorial Subcommittee, included as Appendix A. In order to produce this year's third issue of The Canadian Friend and continue with the current pace of web updates, which have been more time-intensive than expected, we will require approximately $5000 more than we had initially budgeted. We approve using money from our line item for website renewal to cover this expense.

We lay over until October the decision about whether we require the editor to attend CYM-in-Session, what the duties should be, and whether we need to propose modifications to the content of the contract.

2018.09.16.6. COMMUNICATIONS RE-EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Anne reported verbally. The subcommittee is not yet in unity about the goals and process of the website updates. Anne has collected feedback from members. We ask her to bring this back to the subcommittee and bring a proposal to a future meeting.

We are laying down the forum functionality on our website, as the technology is no longer supported by the developer, and has seen very little use in the past several years.

2018.09.16.7. FINANCE UPDATE

Maggie reported verbally. She has consulted with committee members about upcoming budget needs, and will bring a draft 2019 budget in advance of our next meeting.

2018.09.16.8. EMPLOYMENT AND CONTRACTING UPDATE

Maggie reported verbally. She is working with Bruce at Capflex Consulting to transition quaker.ca to another host, including generating documentation that would be needed by a future host. Bruce has agreed to send a report on his activities this year so far, as well as a possible timeline for hosting transition, by the end of September.

We ask Policy and Procedures Subcommittee to work with Glen so that reports come to P&C with research and recommendations ready to implement.

2018.09.16.9. PLANNING FOR OCTOBER IN-PERSON MEETING

We thank Maggie for circulating the draft agenda for October's meeting. Any members who have suggestions or requests about the agenda are asked to contact the Clerk.

2018.09.16.10.   POLICY AND PROCEDURE SUBCOMMITTEE

We receive the report from the subcommittee, included as Appendix B. We ask any Friends who have comments to contact Mylène.

Next Meeting: Friends House, Toronto

Friday-Saturday October 12-13th, 2018

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Appendix A.   Editorial Subcommittee Report

Submitted to: Publications and Communications

Compiled by: Mylène DiPenta

THE CANADIAN FRIEND

Our second issue of TCF was mailed in time for people to receive it before CYM-in-Session

Our third issue is now in production. Submissions were due September 1, and Tim is in the process of editing and laying out.

We expect to submit this issue to the printer by Nov 2. Mailing should take place within 1-2 weeks after that.

The upcoming SPG pamphlet will be distributed with this issue of TCF. John and Tim will work together to co-ordinate printing and mailing, and ensure that the total costs do not exceed the combined budgets.

Tim is planning to contact Kerry about when we should expect to distribute TCF in 2019, in order to meet the needs of Programme committee and others who count on us to distribute information.

WEB EDITING

We continue to receive more and more complex requests for material to be posted online. Tim and the subcommittee have been working together to work within existing structures (Vimeo account, blog posts, sharing on Facebook group), modify existing structures (adding or modifying static pages where it seems to make sense, such as the TCF page which is now kept updated with the next issue status), and recommending new structures to Glen and/or the Communications Reevaluation Subcommittee (need for online table-of-contents capability, improved search functionality that returns PDF content but not custom posts, etc.)

BUDGET

Both TCF and our web editing work are significantly over budget. Tim has taken less time with each successive issue of TCF, and we were hoping that that pattern would decrease enough to keep us within budget, but that is not the case. We have currently spent a full year's TCF budget on two issues, while we have committed to producing three. We are also using significantly more web editing time than budgeted, and the expected unneeded time in the TCF budget has not been available to cover this overage. As a result, Mylène took on some web updating work in the leadup to CYM-In-Session. We have been working with both Tim and the budget officer to discern how to move forward.

We have asked Tim to refer more significant requests for web editing to the Editorial Subcommittee for review before approving. We have also asked him to report when web editing time approaches 10 hours, and when an issue of TCF approaches 100 hours, so we can plan to prevent overages in the future. We have clarified our expectation that we can support Tim in declining, postponing, or redirecting requests if they seem inappropriate or overly time-consuming. We have also clarified our expectation to Tim that any contractor will seek approval from us, as the client, before overspending.

Tim advised us at the last meeting that he believes 100 hours is a manageable goal for an issue of TCF. However, as a subcommittee, we are recommending an increase the budgeted web editing time. More on this issue will be addressed in the budget report.

Do we require the editor to attend CYM-in-Session and perform web editing duties? Should this be maintained as a separate contract or folded into future yearly editing contracts?

COLOUR COVER

The 2018 Issue #2 was accidentally printed with a colour cover by the printer. Tim contacted the Editorial Subcommittee about going with the colour version using the 48-hour approval process we use when decisions need to get made between meetings. Especially in light of our significant deficit, and because we are not in a position to print in colour consistently, it did not seem responsible to distribute to the wider CYM community an issue that would look significantly more "high production value" – even though the dollar value wasn't large. Therefore we advised against printing in colour. However, Tim replied to the printer and authorized the colour version before all of our responses were received. While this added only $50 to the cost, it was not the sense of the subcommittee's meeting.We discussed this with Tim and clarified the importance of understanding P&C's role as his client. We emphasized that we welcome his advice, appreciate the value of his input, and respect his aesthetic. However, we need to be able to depend that he will deliver what we request. He understood and agreed to both wait for the subcommittee's discernment for future decisions, and rebate the committee the $50 difference on the next invoice. This did not occur on the July invoice, and we have not yet received the August invoice.

We have received occasional requests from internal groups (such as other CYM committees) and external groups (interested advertisers) about printing in colour. We are currently recommending that the black and white look is a design element that creates continuity of look and feel. We may reconsider the idea of a colour cover (or other colour design elements) in the future, if we are able to do it consistently.

Appendix B.   Policy and Procedure Subcommittee Report

Sept 15, 2018

Submitted by Mylène DiPenta

The subcommittee needs to find a new regular meeting time, and has not met since the last P&C meeting. With Chris's departure, we are down to two members. Another member would be welcome!

POLICIES/PROCEDURES NEEDING DISCERNMENT

The following policy items are currently outstanding.

- Who we accept/don't accept when they try to create an account to log in to Quaker.ca
- Who does/doesn't get an email account or email group @quaker.ca, and what naming conventions should be used.

Anyone who has comments about these topics is invited to speak to any member of the Subcommittee.

INTERNAL COMMITTEE COMMUNICATION

We currently have a shared email account, separate from the Clerk's account, used by several committee members when we are conducting committee business with non-members of the committee. For example, I use it when submitting editing invoices to the CYM Bookkeeper for payment. This has the following advantages:

- It retains committee business emails in one place that is not lost with member turnover
- It keeps committee business emails out of our personal inboxes
- It makes it easy to hand off responsibilities from one committee member to another, without having to forward large quantities of email history, since that member can simply read the past emails when they need to
- It makes it easy to pass on roles when members join or leave the committee

Are there others conducting committee business with non-members who would like to use this shared account?

We also have an email account that is used to distribute information to committee members, by forwarding to all members. This is a function more commonly accomplished with an email "group" or "list server". In many ways an account and a group function similarly; however, there are important differences.

1. An account can be used to email non-members; a group can only be used to contact members. For internal communication, it is not necessary to be able to email non-members, and could lead to confusion or accidental sending of messages to people for whom they are not intended. This also defeats the purpose of having a designated account (mentioned above), since email threads end up in two different places.
2. Many email providers are creating more and more restrictions on email forwarding, since it is a common source of spam. This means that adding people to the forwarding list, removing them, or

updating their accounts, is becoming a more complex procedure that requires a higher level of permissions by administrators. By contrast, adding and removing members from groups is easily delegated without granting extensive permissions, since they have built-in consent mechanisms and so are unlikely to generate spam.

3. Email groups have built-in archiving which allow members to search through the email history without logging in to a separate account. This means that members no longer have to file (time consuming) and save (space consuming) all email correspondence, since it is stored in a secure location that any member can access when they need to.

Should we switch from an email account to an email "group" for internal P&C communication?

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW P&C COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

The P&C Committee has instituted new internal communications procedures over the past year. These include:

- shared document storage
- collaborative document editing
- email accounts that are role-based (rather than person-based)
- shared email accounts
- minutes and notes saved in a searchable, shareable form on our Business site "blog"

Using these well can save time, energy, and frustration. However, it also requires some technical skills that, while not complex for the average email user, are not always obvious. These might include:

- how to receive notifications of new email, so that you don't have to check an account every day
- how to organize shared folders in a system that makes sense to you, rather than the system that makes sense to the person who created them
- How to add a document to a shared folder
- When editing a shared document, how and when to use the "suggesting" feature, the "commenting" feature, and the "editing" feature
- How to easily switch between email accounts
- How to organize multiple email accounts so that they are less work, not more
- How to post your meeting's minutes or notes so they are visible to other CYM members
- How to use an email "group", including how to look up who else is on the recipient list, and how to find

Would members be interested in skill-building on these topics, either one-on-one or in groups? If so, would we like to take time during our in-person meeting to do some of this?

WEBSITE BACKUPS

We still do not have a clear answer from Bruce and Glen about how backups are getting done, what is getting backed up, how often it is backed up, or what we would have to do to restore the site if we needed to use a backup. Both Maggie and Robert have attempted to clarify this with both contractors.

SUPPORT FOR OTHER CYM COMMITTEES

The P&C business subsite has now been stable for a year. It uses features that we could make available to other committees, including a searchable repository for notes and minutes (that does not require downloading each meeting's documents), a calendar, a policy manual, a list of members and their roles, a form that can be used to contact the committee, etc.

Over the course of CYM-in-Session, did anyone have the chance to talk to other committee members about this? Any updates about whether these are things that other committees would find helpful to use or learn about?

We could also create a section of Quaker.ca that contained resources likely to be useful to others who serve on committees – things like, who is the privacy officer and what do they do? If you need advice about how to work with contractors, who can you ask? What are the office staff's hours?

Do we want to create an information resource for other committees? If so, what should it include?

WEBSITE TECHNICAL ADVISING

Glen is working on some ongoing website maintenance that occasionally requires advising or approval. For example, he has been testing search plugins; each one has pros and cons. He is also wondering whether we should pay to update some plugins that are no longer supported by their manufacturers. There is currently no clear place for these requests to go. I have been receiving them on an ad-hoc basis. For simple issues (such as testing new plugins), this can work, and can allow work to move forward quickly. However, for more complex decisions, we may want to have a designated process by which these decisions get made, to ensure that they are accountable, transparent, and easily transferred to new members.

How do we want to advise and approve website technical issues?