

SELECTION COMMITTEE OF THE STUDENT MEDIA ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes for Friday, July 1, 2016, at 1:00 PM

Rita Laden Senate Chambers on the 3rd floor of the Joe Crowley Student Union

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Director Steelman called the Selection Committee of the Student Media Advisory Board to order at 1:00 pm in the Rita Laden Senate Chambers on the 3rd floor of the JCSU. Presiding secretary, Andrea Godoy.

2. ATTENDANCE

Alex Crupi, Alexa Solis, Blythe Steelman, Brandon Boone, Breanna Denney, Carissa Bradley, Caroline Ackerman, Jordan Russell, Rachel Carr, and Terrance Bynum were present.

Davis Goicoechea was absent excused.

A quorum was present.

3. INTRODUCTIONS

Director Steelman said that all nominees will be allowed to make introductions and give speeches for 10 minutes; she will be keeping time. At the conclusion, the committee may ask questions for a period of 5 minutes. They will be given a moment to identify questions and all members are responsible for keeping track of all questions. It is customary for nominees to leave the room during discussion of nominees and during the presentation of other nominees but they are not required to leave. When all nominations have been completed, the voting will take place by roll call vote. Nominees will be recognized in order they applied; Linda Zecchino and Jacob Solis have successfully applied.

4. SAGEBRUSH EDITOR SELECTION PROCESS

A. NOMINATION OF LINDA ZECCHINO TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEVADA SAGEBRUSH

*Brandon Boone left the room at 1:04 pm.
Jacob Springmeyer stepped in for Mr. Boone at 1:04 pm.*

Ms. Zecchino said she will play two films, one about her journey coming to Nevada and how she became a journalism student. It will feature some of the stories of people she encountered on her journeys. The other film she is working on and it is for Goldfield, NV and will be used as a promotional video for them.

The body moved into questions and answers.

Mr. Bynum asked why she wanted to be part of the Sagebrush.

Ms. Zecchino said she was planning on getting a masters in journalism and it would be ideal to work for the university in her field to get her stories out into the community. She also has ideas about interesting stories she would like to do.



Ms. Russell asked if she had written stories for the Sagebrush before.

Ms. Zecchino said she started out in TMCC and wrote many stories for them and even had the center fold. She came to UNR two years ago and did different types of studies and was therefore not doing a lot of writing. Her stories were done mainly at TMCC and has about 12-15.

Senator Crupi asked what kind of experience she had managing people and being able to work one-on-one to better stories.

Ms. Zecchino said she did most of the work in TMCC in a small classroom and made decisions about stories based on merit, creativity, and interest. She has always worked with groups of people, even before coming to UNR. She has worked in the real estate business and knows how to encourage others and be cooperative to find out what they like to do in order to find ways to make everyone contribute.

Senator Bradley asked for her specific goals.

Ms. Zecchino asked what the goals of the body are. She knows very little about their personal goals and asked if they wanted more advertisements or wider audiences reading it or if they want a conservative newspaper or if they want a newspaper that is well read. If they tell her what they want, then she can tell them how to achieve those goals.

Director Steelman said the editor usually works the goals out with his/her staff at the beginning of the year.

Ms. Zecchino would want to create a paper that people want to read and are talking about. She wanted to start addressing issues that are an interest to students, whether they are controversial or sensitive matters. She would also like to see more artwork like photography for digital stories.

Ms. Denney asked if she had read the Sagebrush before.

Ms. Zecchino said yes and read it regularly. She mentioned how she was very good friends with the editor-in-chief, Markus. Markus was in fact not the editor-in-chief so she apologized for her mistake and asked how often they switch out the editor-in-chief.

Mr. Bynum said that they change out the editor-in-chief every year.

Ms. Zecchino asked if the editor-in-chief has term limits.

Mr. Bynum said not really, it is up to the staff. As long as you are a student, you can be editor-in-chief.

Ms. Zecchino asked if you had to be a journalism student or English student.

Mr. Bynum said no.

Ms. Zecchino asked if anyone can write for the Sagebrush.

Mr. Bynum said yes but it is up to the staff's discretion. It really helps if it is professors and

students because that is who the audience is but they don't stop anyone from out in the community to write for the paper.

Ms. Zecchino asked if they had advertisements.

Mr. Bynum said yes, that is how they are funded. They go through periodically and make sure they are selling enough advertisements to keep the staff afloat and to make sure they are able to give different awards.

Ms. Zecchino asked if they had a budget that they have to meet every year.

Mr. Bynum said yes. There is a budget set at the beginning of every year. He said that if she were to be selected, that would be her job.

Ms. Zecchino said that while in real estate you must sell yourself all the time, her question would be if they had salespeople who go out to get advertisements.

Mr. Bynum said they had graduate assistants in the last years but it really is up to Director Steelman.

Ms. Zecchino said that being editor is about raising money and getting great sponsors who want to advertise. People want advertisements in the paper.

Ms. Solis wanted to address her statement about the first amendment and the obligation of a journalist.

Ms. Zecchino said that as journalism student, they have an obligation to the community about what is going on in the community and that their stories are balanced and report about the government without fear. The goal of a journalist is to use freedom of speech rights to give information to the community. It should be information that impacts their lives and makes them knowledgeable about social problems to help them find solutions.

NOMINATION OF JACOB SOLIS TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEVADA SAGEBRUSH

Mr. Solis said that during his first week at UNR, he did not know what to do. He had become a journalism major but didn't know what it meant. He did decide to become a Sagebrush volunteer and was thrown into action right away. He has since thrown questions at the White House and local politicians. He wants to give something back to the organization that gave him those opportunities. He has learned what the beast is made of, so to speak, and knows it in and out. He has been writing for two years and now knows what makes a good writer and what makes the Sagebrush fail and succeed. He knows what should be changed and what should be implemented. The first thing is to implement social media. It is a print product but they also need to expand their content. He wants to hire a videographer to make a real multimedia manager and editor who focuses on video and audio work and a social media editor. The editor would be invaluable to the paper to put interactive content on the stories and to the website. As good as the product has been, no one ever visits the website; they can't do that anymore. They need to create podcasts or news casts in order to take advantage of their partnership with Wolf Pack Radio. These endeavors don't take a lot of work as long as they have the right people making them work. He can push his staff to get it done. Next, they need to evaluate the use of data and how they run things, primarily online. Their social media has been lacking due to the multimedia manager being lacking and free spirited, meaning they did not utilize social media as it should; they did not care about key words or deadlines. He has written his fair share of stories but nothing sucks more than having almost no one read a story you have poured your

heart into. They need to re-evaluate and re-approach their internet brand. Data as a reporting tool should be used if they make good looking and easily readable charts, graphs, and tables. They should use quality data to their advantage to express the budget or other things students care about. They need to look into new ways to present information. Finally, they need to enhance their online presence. Part of it involves social media but part of it is how they run the website. They usually only post their stories to the website, but there is only so much space so things don't get read since they are competing with one another. One way to counteract this is to have a strong social media presence that posts the right things and the right times and also not posting everything all at once. They need to get more stories on the website by hiring two staff writers to produce extra content for the midweek period and to traffic people to the website on other times besides Tuesdays when they publish. They waste their web presence 6 out of the 7 days. They really need a good social media manager which involves hiring a good person who knows the difference between a personal account and a business account. There is a lack of accountability between staff members where everyone just trusts each other but it causes failings. They need to create a google spreadsheet of to do lists to increase accountability. If things are signed off on without actually being done, then he can easily call them in. Finally, he wants to update the website. They do it every 4 years but it is now tangled on the back end and many staffers don't understand it. Pictures are often small or pixelated and it is the fault of the website, not the staffers; that is why he wants to update the website. He thanked them for allowing him to present.

The body moved to questions and answers.

Senator Crupi said he spoke on his experiences in writing for the paper. He asked what experience he had managing people. That is, if he were to come into a conflict where someone wrote several stories that they wanted in the paper that week and he is not able to get everyone on the paper that week, what experience does he have managing that sort of complication.

Mr. Solis said that as a manager he worked as the news editor this past year. He was in charge of all the content that was going into that newspaper for the whole year. He had a small team that was just him and his assistant. For the most part, he never had problems with having too much content but there were times where he didn't have enough so he had to go in and add things. Even then, he talked to people that may have ideas. Even if they are not the best ideas for that week, the story that doesn't get published that week can get published next week or to the website rather than in the paper. He feels that they need to be putting more stories up on the web because in their 10 paper, then can only publish 20-25 stories. If they want to have a lot of great content then they need to increase that number. That is why they need to increase their online presence.

Ms. Russell asked if he could elaborate more about managing the paper and how he would handle common staff problems like burnout or lack of motivation.

Mr. Solis said his leadership style would be to rule with an iron fist but wear a velvet glove. Staffers cannot get away with inadequacy and if a staffer turned a story in too copy late, for example, then that section is done last because they messed up and must deal with the consequences. It sucks when ideas don't come to life because deadlines were not met. Communication is very important. He needs to know what his staff wants but his staff also needs to know what he wants so they can build off of each other. Regarding issues that have happened in the past, he asked if she could give him a specific issue.

Ms. Russell said frustration among different sections when one part is done incorrectly or photos are lacking since they are not all the same quality they were expecting. She asked him

where he thinks these problems come from and how can they be fixed.

Mr. Solis said that the root is miscommunication, they have gotten better with what they want but they need to do more. If they have problems, they come into review meetings only to find the person that was problematic not there. If a person understands they have been problematic, then they can understand that the staff is waiting for them to be better. Some people are stubborn and act childish, then it is about getting staffers to understand where everyone is coming from. The root for that specific problem last year was that people don't understand why others were upset with them.

Ms. Ackerman said the Sagebrush represents the student body when it has a wide range of student volunteers; she asked if he had plans to expand the number of volunteers and how.

Mr. Solis said yes. They want volunteers and the sagebrush exists for students to get their writing out and practice writing, editing, and interviewing skills but it is hard to get volunteers. Last year, Mr. Bynum went to people and asked them to volunteer when they lacked volunteers last year. They really just need to reach out get more volunteers from all education and skill levels, not just the higher grade levels. They need to tell the students that being a volunteer will help them build their writing skills. They can do that because they have rooms for pizza parties where volunteers are invited or they can go to classes so that students can know that they can volunteer whenever they want. Many people don't know and that is a major problem.

The body moved into a general debate and discussion of the candidates.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Alexa Solis was the current president of the Sagebrush Alumni Chapter. She encouraged the committee to see Ms. Zacchino as a staffer because she has some great ideas but she could use some guidance. She formally endorsed Mr. Solis on behalf of the chapter. She said that she is Jacob Solis's sister but she will be voting based on qualifications only.

Chris Folli was an editor for the Sagebrush. He said that prior experience within the newspaper is important. He ran against someone who didn't have any experience and it would have required the volunteers to work harder to get the job done. He said that Mr. Solis would be a perfect candidate for the position and he would do a great job.

6. VOTING AND APPOINTMENT OF THE NEVADA SAGEBRUSH EDITOR

Director Steelman said that before allowing the debate to begin, she would move back to Public Comment should anyone in the gallery want to state any opinions.

Mr. Bynum said he did not wish to see Linda Zecchino appointed to the position.

Senator Crupi said that this is based off of merit, rather than experience. It can even be valuable to have someone with outside experience come in and bring new ideas; but if you are leading a department, you should know the ins and outs of that department. President Boone tried to bring in outside people and that makes sense when all of those outsiders are being led by someone with experience. The entire staff can get frustrated when the leader doesn't know how things work. Mr. Solis proved throughout his entire discussion that he understood not only the inner workings of the Sagebrush but also how to lead it.

Ms. Russell asked if they could move to appoint Mr. Solis unanimously.

Director Beattie said they can but a roll call vote would be better.

Ms. Russell moved to a roll call vote on the candidates for Sagebrush Editor.

Ms. Ackerman seconded.

Director Steelman said that seeing as there was no more public comment, the committee would move to a Roll Call Vote.

A Roll Call Vote was taken; Mr. Jacob Solis was voted unanimously to the position of Sagebrush Editor.

Senator Crupi moved to approve Mr. Jacob Solis to the position of Sagebrush Editor by unanimous consent.

The motion carried; Mr. Jacob Solis was appointed to the position of Sagebrush Editor.

Director Steelman congratulated Mr. Solis and reminded him that the Sagebrush's budget is based on advertising sales.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements at this time.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Director Steelman adjourned the meeting at 1:49 pm.