

Marlboro College Alumni Council
October 3, 2021

In Attendance: Dagmawi Iyasu Eminetu, Kate Hollander, Melanie Gottlieb, Pamela Nye, Bess Poehlmann, Ellie Roark, CJ Churchill, Mark Genszler

Meeting called to order: 1:04 PM EST

Approval of agenda

Agenda amended to add discussion of upcoming alumni survey to “Old Business”

Approval of Minutes

Minutes approved without amendment

Officer Reports

- Treasurer – Mark will work to gather in one spot who is paying for what and communicate that to us within the next month
- Clerk – Despite her statements in previous officer reports, Ellie is holding off on posting Potash Hill committee minutes for the moment.
- Moderator—Melanie submitted a correction of typo in our 501(c)(3) application, but has not heard back yet about the status of the application.

Committee Reports

Communications

- Did not get a message out this month. Melanie’s new job is extremely busy-- she does not have the capacity to draft messages, so she’s requesting assistance. Kate volunteers to help draft future communications.
- Not many new emails to report on. A question has arisen on Facebook about whether the alumni are allowed to go to the campus right now. People would like us to officially ask MMF and disseminate the answer. What we want people to know is that all parties are at the table and everyone is trying to figure it out. Also, if people are particularly energized about wanting to be back on campus, let’s ask them to participate in organizing a reunion at such time as that is possible.

Resources

- Have contacted Ellen to get another meeting on the books. Hoping for a mid-to late October meeting. Discussion will focus on a joint letter from the Music Festival and Council, and a separate letter from Ellen to the Association

Governance

- New bylaw article to discuss today!

Old Business

Update on Potash Hill Committee and a new proposed council subgroup

- There was a proposal last time to dissolve the Potash Hill committee for the moment, initiate a new council subgroup to create a new charge for a Potash Hill committee and outline a new structure for the committee, because we realized we did not articulate our vision for Potash Hill clearly enough before we formed the current committee.
- We need clear language about what Potash Hill is and what it needs to be. We have discussed setting forward an entirely different leadership structure—appointing an editor who gathers their own staff.

- Once we have a clear outline/proposal for what needs to be done, we can figure out what resources we will need to allocate.
- The current committee members have really valuably volunteered their time and energy-- even if we're conflicting in our visions, that energy is valuable and we are deeply appreciated. We can invite them to apply for the editor position.
- The question is on the table is whether we should officially dissolve the committee in order to work on our new process, or just continue to pause while we work on articulating our vision better.
- General consensus is that the committee is still paused; dissolution will make way more sense once we have a clearly articulated alternative to the committee structure.
 - We need to develop guidance for committee dissolution in the committees article of our bylaws—the governance group can look at this.
- We agree to appoint a subgroup to develop and articulate this vision. Since we've discussed this a fair bit, this will likely be a relatively quick process. By next meeting, a subgroup will have outlined our vision for Potash Hill and will bring it back for discussion and approval.
 - Dagmawi and Kate volunteer for the subgroup; will also reach out to Gretchen.
- Mark and Melanie will draft a note communicating our re-visioning about this from the council to the existing committee.
- Next meeting we need to discuss how we communicate this with the community.

Alumni Survey

- Thank you, Bess, for putting this draft together!
- Much discussion of question-specific wording and content.
- Discussion of structural and philosophical questions: what is the best way to elicit the year people most closely associate with the college in a way that's useful to us?
- Discussion of whether to use a ranked choice method for asking how people feel about our agenda in the next year. Ranked choice survey responses tend to have a lot of "noise" in the data—it may not be a clear way to discern association priorities. The way Bess set up the survey is more of a "temperature gauge" that can help us discern enthusiasm for each item on our agenda.
- When we get the survey results back, we will do our best to digest them and then report on the results in our newsletter. We don't need to promise a comprehensive report—we just need communicate a summary of the results back in a timely fashion.
- Timeline: tease survey in next communication and publish with the following communication.

New Business

Elections article from the Governance Group

- Tabled to the next meeting due to time constraints

Language for Facebook page norms from Ad Hoc Facebook committee

- The guiding principle is that the community should become more transparent to itself. Committee shared a draft of a new "page norms" document with current moderators and gave them a few weeks, so far they have had no feedback. Soon the committee will share with us so we can discuss them. We will then ask the current moderators if they can agree to moderate according to these norms. Then we'll pin to the top of the Facebook page and ask people to endorse it when they join the group. We can see the finish line!
- Eventually the Ad Hoc Facebook committee would like some kind of an affirmation from the council about the new norms. Kate has linked that document in our agenda. Let's comment between now and the next meeting and then endorse briefly next meeting.

Open meeting adjourned at 2:36PM
Closed meeting follows.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellie Roark
Clerk