

# Minutes of the Lever Press Oversight Committee Meeting

September 25, 2017

Present: Andy Ashton, Beth Bouloukos, Mark Christel, Dalia Corkrum, Mark Edington, Terri Fishel, Bryn Geffert, Marjorie Hassen, Jonathan Miller, Kevin Mulroy, Mike Roy, Becky Welzenbach

Absent: Marta Brunner, Peggy Seiden, Charles Watkinson

Approve draft minutes from 8/28 meeting

The OC approved the minutes.

**Action item: Becky Welzenbach will post the August minutes to the Lever Press website.**

## Ops Update

### Roles & Responsibilities document

Becky described the Lever Press Ops Roles and Responsibilities document that the Operations group has developed in order to make clear the roles involved with the press as our new editor came aboard, to articulate roles and responsibilities that we anticipate in production on the Michigan side, though some of these folks have not yet been involved much in our work, and to clarify areas of responsibility among ourselves. One key area for us all to be thinking about is the gap about outreach and promotion. The OC has stepped up to this role with the Communications task force working on social media and coordinating the webinar series. This will become increasingly important (and more work!) as individual titles start to be published and require promotion.

**Action item: OC members please review the draft document linked from the agenda and provide any feedback, questions, or suggestions by the October meeting.**

## Budget Update

Mark Edington and Becky Welzenbach walked through a quarterly budget update, flagging items of interest that have occurred in the last quarter. All pledging institutions have made their contributions for the year. Michigan has transferred part of Amherst's share over thus far; one more such transfer will come before the end of the year. At the face to face meeting in August Michigan also agreed to shift an additional \$10K to Amherst for the purpose of supporting travel for Beth, since presence at scholarly meetings and on campuses is an incredibly important component of the acquisitions process. Becky noted on the Michigan side that we have

overspent our year two budget for marketing, largely due to production of the Lever Press promotional video. However, we substantially underspent in this area in year one. Overall, we are 75% of the way through year two, but have only spent about 30% of the anticipated budget for year two. This is because about half of the year two budget was earmarked to support the production of books--and it's taking longer than anticipated to get the point of publishing any books. So, those funds remain unspent.

## Editorial Update

Beth Bouloukos reported on works that are currently in the pipeline. She described to the OC three proposals that she presented to the Editorial Board at their last meeting on 9/21. Two of these the Ed. Board is eager to see go out for peer review. For one, she is seeking reviewers right now. For another, she is waiting for a more substantial submission to come in from the author before she sends it out for review. Kevin Mulroy asked Beth to summarize what's unique about these works, and what makes them a good fit for Lever. One of these works is in media studies and African American studies and has the potential to include a lot of archival material and multimedia as well as materials for the undergraduate classroom. The other work applies literary studies to contemporary social and economic issues and would be an appropriate fit for the "Great Questions and Grant Challenges" channel. This project is less focused on digital affordances, but is innovative in its content/approach. Both of these works are also shorter than the standard monograph, making them a good fit for an OA/digital first treatment.

The third project, which aligns with the "Learning and Teaching in the Liberal Arts" channel, the Editorial Board would like to see more information about before moving on to the next step. Beth notes that she also has several other proposals pending that should be coming in soon.

Mark Edington summarized the 9/21 Editorial Board meeting, which focused a good deal on the Ops group's autonomy to issue a contract early in the process of acquiring a title. This is important for obtaining an author's commitment before the press invests significant effort and resources in developing and reviewing the manuscript. Such contracts are always absolutely conditional upon the Editorial Board's final approval of the project, so the board retains the final say over what gets published, but separating these processes in practice has been challenging as we go through this process for the first time with these early titles. Mike Roy also noted that it was an extremely substantive meeting because we were discussing in detail titles that we're considering for publication, and that the Editorial Board is especially aware of the importance of the first works we publish and how they'll establish the reputation of the press.

Bryn Geffert reported on what he, Mike, and Peggy Seiden have been doing to support acquisitions work in the special collections channel. They have contacted nearly 30 special collections librarians and archivists to explore what kind of work is going on that might be suitable for Lever, and to lay groundwork for outreach from the press to interested folks.

Mike Roy reports on the quarterly summary of works in the pipeline and where they are. We have the same number of active works (21) as we did last quarter, but there's been some shifting: new things have come in, and others have been dropped from consideration. We still do not have any publications beyond the peer review stage.

## Oversight Committee Elections:

Becky Welzenbach proposed that we charge a nominating committee to build a slate of candidates, and that we aim to finalize the slate by the end of October, open the election in November and leave it open for 2 weeks or a month. Then in December we should know the outcome and can announce. Dalia Corkrum, Marjorie Hassen, and Jonathan Miller volunteered to form the nominating committee. Dalia will convene the group. The committee noted that they need to know exactly how many seats we are looking to fill--this will depend on whether any of the OC members currently set to rotate off this year are willing to stay on.

**Action item: Becky will share with Dalia, Kevin, and Marjorie the election text /info from last time so it can be re-purposed**

**Action Item: Mike will talk with the OC members scheduled to rotate off to see if one or two are willing to stay on.**

## Agenda for General Update in Portland

Becky walked the group through a draft agenda reflecting the the conversation we had at our last OC meeting, along with things that Mark, Becky, and Charles wanted to share. The goal is to finalize this soon so it can be made public for all Lever Press pledging institutions.

**Action item -- Becky will put links to appropriate videos (Lever Press promotional, Fulcrum screencast) in the agenda so people can review them.**

## Deep Dive: Teaching, Learning, and Leading in the Liberal Arts

We did not have an update on Teaching, Learning, and Leading in the Liberal Arts, but the report from Bryn on the Special Collections channel took its place.

## Communications Task Force

Terri Fishel reported that the draft language to announce the Open Access week Webinar is ready to go. She proposes to post it to SPARC, Lib-OER, LibPubCoalition, Oberlin Group, Lever Press lists. Any others? She requests help from Charles with access to ARL lists. We can also post to Lever Press Facebook page. Where else?

## Agenda for October's F2F OC Meeting

Mike proposes Two ideas:

1. Idea One: Kevin leads a discussion on core values (based on previous discussions)
2. Idea Two: All-hands work on the long-term sustainability plan

Dalia Corkrum notes that values conversations are more productive when they happen face to face, whereas sustainability can be discussed offline, in documents, etc. The group agreed.

Kevin Mulroy previously volunteered to lead this effort. Kevin and Mike will convene a conversation offline to develop a plan for this meeting.