

Minutes of a Meeting of the Lever Press Oversight Committee
December 18, 2017

Present: Mark Edington, Beth Bouloukos, Becky Welzenbach, Jonathan Miller, Dalia Corkrum, Peggy Seiden, Terri Fishel, Mike Roy, Charles Watkinson

Absent: Bryn Geffert, Marjorie Hassen, Marta Brunner

1. Approve November Minutes

The November minutes were discussed. It was proposed to remove the active link to the raw notes from our strategic exercise in October, since this document is not meant for a public audience and won't make sense without context. Pending this change, the minutes were approved. **Action Item: Becky will post the approved minutes to the Lever Press website.**

2. Report Ops Group

a. Acquisitions : quarterly "card counting" exercise.

Six proposed projects have moved into the peer review stage and two contracting decisions have been made. Beth reports that another five projects are in the process of being contracted. In the last quarter we have gone from 21 total projects to 47 total projects in the pipeline.

3. Budget Update (Becky and Mark)

Both Amherst and Michigan spent about 41-42% of their anticipated budget for the year. The major factor in this underspending is that in year two nearly half of the budget was earmarked for per-book editorial and production costs that have not yet been used. These funds will still be needed later when books start to make their way through the production pipeline. Becky noted that in addition, some travel/hosting expenses from meetings in Ann Arbor in August are still pending. The OC proposed that the budget plan should be revised to reflect where the project is now and how our budget and planning is affected by the slower start to producing titles than initially anticipated. **Action item: early in the new year the Operations team will bring to the Oversight Committee a proposal for a revised budget that reflects the present state of the project, and our current understanding of how unspent funds will be applied toward meeting the commitment of producing 60 titles.**

4. Motion to thank outgoing board members

The Oversight Committee of the Lever Press hereby formally thanks Andrew Ashton, Terri Fishel, Neil McElroy, and Kevin Mulroy for their years of service in helping to launch the Lever Press. Through your generous contribution of time and the sharing of your insights and wisdom, you have contributed significantly to our efforts to create in Lever Press a unique organization that is reshaping the landscape of scholarly communication, and demonstrating both the values of the liberal arts, and of collective action.

5. Onboard of new board members (Mark)

Action item: Mark Edington will send a survey around to the current and outgoing Oversight Committee members to ask for input on what they either wish they'd known, or would like the new members of the OC to know. He'll incorporate the responses into an orientation/onboarding session for new OC members.

6. Process for electing a new treasurer and secretary (in January)

The Committee will circulate an email welcoming new members to the OC, seeking input on dates for upcoming meetings, and inviting people to put themselves forward for the roles of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Per the by-laws, these officer roles are to be elected by the members of the Oversight Committee each year. **Action item: Becky Welzenbach will draft this email and send it to Mike Roy for distribution.**

7. Becky Welzenbach's transition

Becky Welzenbach is moving to a new role in the University of Michigan Library (Research Impact Librarian) in January, 2018. Over the first three months of the year, she will transition away from the role of Lever Press project manager. This role will be handed off to Terri Geitgey, a senior associate librarian in Michigan Publishing. Becky and Terri will work together on the transition, with the handoff to Terri to be complete by the end of March. Becky may still have connections to Lever Press through the development of the Fulcrum platform, as well as in her new capacity as Research Impact Librarian--she may participate in the face-to-face August 2018 meeting. The OC thanked Becky for her service, and Becky thanked the Oversight Committee for the opportunity to be a part of establishing Lever Press.

8. Webinar Topics

The committee discussed several possible topics for webinars in the coming year, including guidance on evaluating digital scholarship, and guidance on the future of open access initiatives. There were different perspectives on why Lever Press should do webinars, including offering value to participating members, getting the name and reputation of Lever Press out there, and bringing a uniquely liberal arts-oriented approach to timely topics. Who is our intended audience, and what outcome are we looking for? It was noted that as Terri Fishel is rotating off of the committee, someone will need to take up the thread of the work she has done to support communications, social media, and promotion around Lever Press. The committee agreed that identifying those interested in support communications, as well as thinking about webinar topics, would be a good topic for discussion with the new Oversight Committee members in January. It was also noted that as the press continues toward publishing titles, promotion and publicity will be even more important. Since we can now see this coming and have learned how much effort it is to sustain consistency and momentum, it may be worth taking into account additional support for publicity/promotion in the budget revision.

9. Next steps on accepting new pledging institutions

As of January 1, 2018, Lever Press will be open to accepting new pledging institutions. What strategy does the Oversight Committee want to take here, and how will they go about it? Passive or active? The Committee decided to wait to discuss this until December, so that the new members could participate in this discussion and decision.

10. Other questions:

Will the values statement written by the Oversight Committee be discussed with the Editorial Board? When can we post it publicly? The Values Statement will be shared with the Editorial Board for their information at their meeting on 12/21/2017. Once that's done and the statement approved, it can be distributed publicly.