

Lever Press Oversight Committee Meeting

March 26, 2018

3:30 – 4:30 EST

Attending: Mike Roy, Jonathan Miller, Peggy Seiden, John Tombarge

UM and Amherst: Charles Watkinson, Mark Edington, Beth Bouloukos, Terri Geitgey

A quorum wasn't present, so no official votes were taken on agenda items. Rather than defer votes until the April conference call, voting will happen via email.

1. Approve February minutes

[need quorum]

2. Report on implementation of Revised Budget

Mark: Amherst has hired a Coordinator for Outreach and Social Media. They also have had an expression of interest for the Consulting Acquisition Editor position; will keep the group posted on how/when that opening is filled.

3. Report on Peer Review Transparency meeting

Mark shared a pdf of the draft report via email attachment prior to the meeting. Co-authored with Amy Brand at MIT Press. Will be posted for comment on MIT's open journals platform, PubPub. Based on comments, draft will be revised and a final version formally published. Were extremely conservative on expenditures, so total costs came in at 66% of funds granted, which may help in the future if they go back for more funding. Once it's up, Mark will send around a link to the report on PubPub.

4. Motion to apply for introductory membership in the Association of University Presses

[need quorum] Mark shared the application form cover sheet via email attachment prior to the meeting. Supplementary materials are requested as part of the application process. He also provided a link to the draft response to that request. Questions about membership costs were raised. Mark said it's \$600 for the first year, rising to \$1500 by year 5. After year 5, the rate is based on sales revenue, which means Lever Press will likely be in the lowest possible cost category. If Lever joins, there will be at least 4 Open Access AAUP press members. Mark thinks AAUP should create an OA category, at a reduced price. Beth mentioned it's important for author tenure and promotion arguments that Lever Press be an AAUP member. The group would like to know the lowest category cost before voting via email. Mark will find out and report back to the group.

Action item: Mark to inform the group as to cost of lowest category of AAUP membership.

5. Setting the date of the annual August Ann Arbor meeting

Terri let the group know that the August meeting dates will be Monday, 8/20 and Tuesday, 8/21. Mike said the Oversight Committee will have more time on the agenda than last year. There was a question about when OC members should plan to arrive. The Editorial Board folks will

arrive Sunday afternoon, 8/19, but it's likely the Oversight Committee members wouldn't need to arrive until noon or so on Monday, 8/20. However, this all still needs to be worked out. It depends on how much time the members think they'll need to accomplish the Oversight Committee's own work, outside of the joint sessions with the Editorial Board. Discussion on this will continue. Mike has a call scheduled with Mark on 3/27 and they will begin working on an agenda.

6. Discussion of Communications to membership

Since Mike wasn't present at the last meeting, he's not sure whose item this is? Peggy suggested we wait to discuss until a quorum is present.

7. Card counting

Mike added a spreadsheet link to his card counting exercise for March. Currently have 65 active projects; up by 18 since Dec. There is a new category called manuscript peer review and we have 2 manuscripts in that category, so progress is being made. Beth clarified that one manuscript is just peer review only, and one is both under contract and out for peer review. There are 5 fully signed contracts and 1 pending. Some titles are contracted before they go out for peer review, and some aren't. Mike asked if it would be possible to have 2 columns that distinguish between the two? Mark explained there is no single process that all titles go through. It's more case by case. Beth said she or Mark can always answer questions about how many contracts are signed/counter-signed. Peggy said there was a concern early on, that projects were tilting toward being heavily digital titles, and wondered if there is more of a balance now? Beth says most of what she has now are not intense DH projects. The first project that will probably come through has no multi-media at all. There was also a question about why a project gets dropped from consideration? Mark explained that the reviews may not have been good; the Editorial Board may not have agreed to pursue the project; it may be difficult to find appropriate peer reviewers, etc. Beth added that so far, no potential Lever authors have ended up signing with a different press.

Mike: the card counting exercise will happen again in June, and in September. The September numbers will be presented at the October Oberlin Group meeting. He asked if we will have actually published something by October? Beth thinks we probably will, but it's difficult to say for sure at this point. Mike noted it will be important to decide what to communicate leading up to the Oberlin Group meeting, in order to reduce any negative surprises, and let them know that things are progressing. He asked if the card counting exercise seems helpful? Peggy said yes, would love more detail, but understands about confidentiality issues. Beth offered to share a breakdown of where things fit in the channels. Mark cautions that the group shouldn't get bogged down in why are we doing x y or z. Peggy said she has started to get inquiries and expressions of interest and excitement; people are asking what are the kinds of things Lever Press is looking at? Peggy and Bryn haven't been able to do the kind of outreach they expected. Mike says patron privacy issues have come up during outreach to Special Collections that have made it more difficult to identify potential projects. It was agreed that Mark will send a dozen of the Lever Press information cards to each member library for distribution. He asked Terri to send him a list of contact information for the member institutions.

Action item: Terri to send member institution contact information to Mark.

Action item: Mark to send Lever Press information cards to member libraries.

Mike asked Terri to please send out the Zoom connection link a day or two in advance of the meetings, rather than rely solely on the link in the meeting invitations.

Meeting was adjourned. The next Lever Press Oversight Committee meeting is on Monday, April 23, 2018, 3:30 – 4:30 ET.