

2016 Annual Meeting Minutes

The 2016 Annual Meeting of the Cornell Alumni Association took place via conference call on Thursday, June 30, 2016 at 12:00 noon.

Attendees:

Kendra Saldaña
Jim Mazza
Bill Howard
Jenny Barnett
Bill Sternberg
Nancy Sverdlik
Simon Krieger

Call to Order - Bill Howard

Quorum Present: Bill Howard, Bill Sternberg, and Jim Mazza. With that, Bill Howard to call the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

Report on CAA Activities - Jim Mazza

Last year, the CAA board voted to reduce its size, and focus primarily on the oversight of the Cornell Alumni Magazine. The CAA board also recommended the creation of a 15-member Cornell Alumni Advisory Board to provide directed input and counsel on issues of importance to the VP of Alumni Affairs and Development, the AVP of Alumni Affairs, and their leadership teams.

This new advisory board, which was seated through the Committee on Alumni Trustee Nominations, has met twice in person and is currently addressing issues of volunteer onboarding and orientation, training, and related offerings.

Another program branded under the CAA is the CAA travel program. This program offers some 18 trips per year, the majority of which are international, although domestic programs are growing in popularity. The program attracts on average 350-400 guests per year. An increase use of social media and email for marketing the trips also has facilitated discussions with travel providers about purchasing displays ads in Cornell Alumni Magazine.

Alumni Affairs continues to look at other services and offerings under the CAA banner and hope to introduce new products and services within the year.

Report on CAM - Bill Howard

This is the 2nd year with Jenny Barnett as editor, and the magazine has had excellent content, and the graphics and body of work have improved. However, finances and circulation remain soft. Compared to 10 years ago, circulation is down down 10,000, and the most current issue July/August '16, is down 500-600 issues. One positive is that Jenny's initial numbers for end of FY16 show the magazine will turn a slight profit, its first since 2008. This means it will not incur any additions to the deficit for the first time in many years.

We face a few challenges:

All print mags are down in circulation numbers nationwide.

Participation in classes declining through membership.

No one wants class membership to fall any farther, but if it declines, the magazine would be unable to continue.

Lack of funds make it difficult to do in-depth stories, and has slowed ability to move ahead on the planned website redesign to make site more contemporary.

One attempt to increase subscriber members is a plan to approach recent but not renewed subscribers this fall. We will ask them to re-subscribe at that time. It's not an attempt to take away from dues-payers, but rather just to increase numbers of subscribers in total.

In May, the magazine committee suggested working with stakeholders on campus - to that end, Jenny met with Jim Mazza, Joel Malina, and Fred Van Sickle; there is consensus that we want to move forward on a taskforce to consider all possible future courses of the magazine.

Jenny Barnett opened the floor to questions on the magazine, but no one had any at this time.

Report on CAM 15 audit - Jim Mazza

Each year, the CAM is audited by an outside independent accounting firm. The FY15 audit was completed with no significant findings. It pointed to one issue of concern about which we are well aware, and that was the increasingly tenuous financial position of the magazine and consistent years of net losses, largely the result of declining dues payments and subscriptions.

As we look to FY16, however, we are seeing a bit of encouraging news, thanks to the steadfast leadership of new publisher and editor Jenny Barnett. Jenny has taken a numbers of steps to reduce costs further, while working with magazine and Alumni Affairs staff to generate strategies for increasing income. This fiscal year is projected to be at a near break even point, for the first time in several years. We are continuing to work with Jenny to identify ways of further strengthening the magazine's financial health.

Election of officers - Bill Sternberg

- * Bill Howard, President
- * Rob Rosenberg, Vice President
- * Jim Mazza, Secretary/Treasurer

The motion to approve the slate was unanimously approved.

Bill Howard: is there any other business of the committee?

Jim Mazza: Shares his thanks to Bill Sternberg for his involvement and leadership, it has been a pleasure to work together on the magazine. He hopes Alumni Affairs can find good ways to keep him involved in the future.

Bill Howard: Declared meeting adjourned 12:16 pm.

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