University of Minnesota Communicators Forum board meeting, January 12, 2010

Present: Christopher, Didi, Pamela, Robyn, Abby, Tricia, Kelly, Jessica, Lani

Absent: Jen, Ann, Caryn, Peggy

BUSINESS
Last month’s minutes were approved; Tricia moved, Kelly seconded.

BUDGET
Another $595 in memberships came in in December. This year the memberships have come in slower and steadier. Last year, there were more peaks and valleys.

ACTION ITEMS STATUS UPDATES
Check processing: The instructions have not been updated on the Web site yet. Lani will do this.

Requirements for financial records: Didi checked, and we need to keep them for three fiscal years. We could shred everything older than three years, scan the last couple years and keep hard copies of current year. Didi will carry this out.

Submitting new materials to U Archives: Christopher called Erin George. She referred him to someone else. This person will send him the parameters and process,

Monthly internal communications tip on blog: Yes, Ann and Matt will send items to Jessica.

Action item: Jessica will change the blog posting schedule to delete post-conference assignments, since the board make-up will change.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

AWARDS
We will begin accepting submissions on January 25. Later this week, the awards committee will get content to Lani for the awards section of the Web site. All potential judges have been contacted. We will know their responses in next couple weeks.

AT LARGE
Jen and Kelly hosted a brown bag on social media on Friday, Jan. 8. It was intended to be a casual meeting of people who want to explore and share, and everyone thought it was a great success. Liz Giorgi and Eve Daniels shared their projects and ideas from their respective areas. It was a lot of fun and Jen and Kelly plan on doing another brown bag event like this.

From Jen: Next time, my recommendation is to require an RSVP and reiterate that it is for members only. Also, do we have a policy on transferring memberships? I had a member who wanted to send someone in her office in her place--I didn't think we allow that for programs/conferences, etc.?

We discussed Jen's questions, and our policy will remain members only -- members cannot send a non-member in their place.

MARKETING AND PROMO
Ashley Piediscalzi will be doing the redesign of the Forum materials. We had several volunteers, but Ashley was the first to respond. Allison Gahlon, Ross Rezac, Liz Kastner, Meghan Drabrandt all volunteered to help us out. We should keep them in mind for future design projects. Jen met with Ashley last week and they set a deadline of March 1
for the redesign. Jen recommended having Ashley join us for the March 9 meeting to review her ideas. We agreed this was a good idea.

Jen will begin working on a better acknowledgment/renewal letter system with her committee in February. Perhaps we could implement it with the new membership cycle. Send suggestions to Jen about acknowledgment letters.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
Lani is keeping Web site/listserv/newsletter list current. She will be uploading the video from Copyright Issues for Communicators today.

PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
The January program is underway, a panel discussion/presentation focusing on utilizing the University's brand to its full potential, with special attention given to combining the brand with existing or new unit-based graphic identities. The program will be either the 27th or 28th.

The February program will focus on engaging alumni or a creative design topic, and the March program on event planning. Ann and Pamela are looking for speaker/format suggestions for both of these programs.

In April, we will host Steven Rosenstone, and there will be a 30 minute small group session.

Should we make-up the canceled November program and when? Due to workload, we may not be able to handle scheduling another program this year.

There is a committee meeting this Thursday.

The January program might be strongest if we could incorporate a panel of people doing it well. Pam will try to make it happen.

March event planning suggestions included Kim Araya from McNamara.

For the possible November program makeup, Kelly suggested we could sponsor a webinar. OIT and UMCF did a joint one before and it worked well. It would be a way of throwing in an extra program without having to put together a new program. Pam will ask the committee what they think.

CONFERENCE
The committee is looking at three breakouts and a super panel. There will be around 15 speakers for the day, which is ambitious but awesome.

Possible areas to cover: video production, printing green (when to send out, when to print in your office), search optimization and social media (speaker from Select Comfort), technical writing, sustainability of the office (working at home, flexible hours - this might be more HR - probably doesn't fit), the wonders of feedback (followup and eval)...

Discussion: Tricia commented that she wouldn't be opposed to an HR-type "dealing with change at work" kind of session. Lani agreed that something on workplace culture could be good. OHR has some pre-made workshops like working across generations. A leadership session might be good. There could be a session on balancing work at U with freelance work.

Jessica suggested some basics sessions, like design for non-designers, code for non-developers, etc. She also suggested one on conducting a good interview. Christopher suggested a "getting butts in seats" session on event marketing. Kelly liked the idea of
one about followup up after project -- the launch is just the beginning. Other suggestions: tutorials on mobile Web sites and mobile apps: could Pete Reimenschneider be a resource?

Christopher suggested a session on involving students (student employees, ambassadors, using students to help communicate). Abby’s committee suggested bringing some students in to talk about how they feel about how the U communicate with them, but this might not be the appropriate forum.

For the super panel, Abby is looking at John Rash, the pond hockey championship creator, and Dennis Kass. Send ideas and contacts to Abby.

NEXT MEETING
The next meeting is Feb 9 at the Weisman.