

**Glebe Report Association  
Annual General Meeting — May 20, 2015  
Draft Minutes**

**Attendees:** Lynn Barlow, Martha Bowers, Micheline Boyle, Bob Brocklebank, Gillian Campbell, Elizabeth Chiang, Teena Handelman, Julie Ireton, Andy Joyce, Valerie Lasher, John MacNab, Elaine Marlin, Christine McAllister, Liz McKeen, Ian McKercher, Sheila Pocock, Jock Smith, Ruth Sayers, Tom Tanner, Steve Zan.

**Regrets:** Julie Houle Cezer, Judy Field, Dan Lanfranconi, McE Galbreath, Jeanette Rive, Clyde Sanger, Ellen Schowalter, Lois Siegel, Ashwin Shingadia, J.C. Sulzenko, Zita Taylor,

**1. Call to Order and Welcome**

Bob Brocklebank called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., welcomed those present and explained that the AGM needs to be held within six months of the end of the financial year, which for the Glebe Report Association (GRA) is November 30. A June meeting would be beyond the six month limit.

Since the Glebe Report Association is “the closest thing to a literary society”, Bob read a poem by Robert Graves called “Read me, please”.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Ian McKercher and seconded by John MacNab that the agenda be approved as circulated. Carried.

**3. Approval of Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting, June 9, 2014**

Moved by Elaine Marlin and seconded by Steve Zan that the minutes of the 2014 AGM be approved. Carried.

**4. Julie Ireton spoke on the state of journalism.**

Julie Ireton is a journalist/broadcaster with the CBC, a lecturer at the School of Journalism, Carleton University, a contributor to the *Glebe Report* and a resident of the Glebe. She is active in the community and is very familiar with the Glebe Community Centre.

Julie started her journalism career in 1993 with the *Tri-Valley Crier*, a paper which no longer exists. Her first assignment was to profile a tractor dealer. She found this fun and has now been in journalism for over 20 years.

Many small newspapers are no longer published. Habits have changed; people consume news differently. Now it comes immediately by cell phone, tablet or desktop computer.

When Julie graduated in 1994 there were no jobs so she became a freelancer for NPR Radio, Radio New Zealand, CBC, etc. She also did newspaper work but wanted to do

broadcasting. She sold items on spec. and this allowed her to travel all over the world. Such experience helped her get her job with the CBC. In 2000 she became the first technology reporter for the CBC. It was boom time for high tech in Ottawa, but no one realized the expansion would be short-lived. With the Nortel bust she became the "layoff reporter" at CBC. Today she is still a news reporter covering business, government, politics, etc. and doing original documentaries broadcast on such programs as "The Current".

The shift in technology has been extraordinary. When Julie started she cut and spliced tape to edit. At first she had to have a technician for sound because of union rules. Now items are edited on computers and field equipment is small. One can do almost everything on a smart phone but the quality is not the best. There are few technicians as reporters are doing the technical things themselves.

Julie is now working on radio and TV, but many stories are put out on social media too. The CBC is now putting digital platforms (phones, tablets, computers) first and then broadcasting. Everything which is broadcast should be on line. A story needs to be presented on every platform.

Since 2011, Julie has been teaching business and finance reporting at Carleton. Her biggest challenge is to get to know her students and what they need to know. Graduates need to be able to do everything; need to be able to file on all platforms. They need to be able to write appropriately for each platform. They have to be fast learners, computer savvy and able to "go live" in order to deliver product to insatiable consumers. Her students see many opportunities in media - blogs, for example - and want to be entrepreneurial.

Student habits are very different today. Julie teaches mature students in their early 20's who are the "cream of the crop". Most do not own a TV; they watch on tablets and laptops. They want to watch "on demand". They do not read paper newspapers. Most get news from Twitter and Facebook. Students are reading the *New York Times* and the *Guardian*, on line of course.

"Don't they miss things by not flipping through a paper journal?" This question was answered with "Yes".

Students are reading web sites which they tend to find through social media. For the CBC, the web is key to survival. It is important for news organizations to see data about who is reading what and when. Real time analytics provide key information about who is reading an article and for how long. What stories are getting the most clicks? (1) animal stories (2) celebrities (3) articles with "sex" in the title. The CBC's biggest day was October 22 [shooting at the War Memorial] when people really wanted news and were reading everything to the end. They wanted all the information they could get. The second biggest day was the day after the Alberta election.

Analytics shows that last week there were 1.9 million page views for CBC. The top stories were about Elizabeth May and Eugene Melnyk, along with the City TV reporter and the Hydro One worker who lost his job because of bad behaviour.

Julie does not pay attention to the analytics because she wants to do good stories and this is just distracting. Nevertheless, news organizations encourage video clicks because people pay attention and watch to the end. Since the video is shown only after the viewer sees an ad, these ads cost more.

At a recent CBC digital first workshop the corporation maintained it still wants to do contextual stories. The “water skiing squirrel” is “click bait” to draw viewers in to watch other content. Since Julie came up through CBC Radio, she did not have to be concerned about ads — unlike those in TV.

The CBC does not have stable funding — thus advertising is important. Most journalism organizations have to make a profit. Lots of journalism organizations are being funded by “deep pockets”. How to get money is the key to everything in journalism and the pace of change is very rapid. Five years from now there will be great differences.

Question: “On October 22, did people choose the CBC because it is the authoritative voice?” Answer: There are more resources at the CBC and items went directly to digital. During the 9-11 events, people rushed to TV and radio. On October 22 they went to computers and phones.

Students are like a barometer to see where the industry is going. Students don’t watch TV. But there is a huge future for video on mobile platforms. Soon there may not be a CBC national fixed time newscast. Julie watches TV on a tablet or laptop. Everyone will consume news in different ways. There will be a lot of focus on ‘breaking news’ which is quick but offers no analysis. Whole areas of news can be avoided — and what is consumed can be inconsequential.

Steve Zan asked if students outside Journalism would consume quality newspaper content. Julie said this was not likely. Facebook provides much of what people consume and many don’t have TV. Students may watch, but not on cable TV.

“Will news consumption habits change the way election campaigns are covered?” Julie answered that traditional campaigns are very expensive to cover. There will be fewer reporters “on the bus”. More will be in Ottawa doing reality checks. Organizations need a camera following the leaders but the reality is that there is much the same speech every day. We may get more context in the forthcoming election. Julie is hopeful about election coverage.

Concern was raised about the “echo chamber” effect — a small number of people are doing tweeting and setting the topics. The breadth of thinking may be narrow.

Julie did a fellowship in entrepreneurial journalism. She followed scholars in the USA who tweeted items in US publications. What you follow determines the breadth of news you consume.

Liz McKeen asked what is happening to local culture? Julie answered that it depends on who you follow. The *Glebe Report* tweeted that Julie Ireton was speaking at the AGM. Julie follows a lot of people locally — city councillors, etc. Everybody's cluster is different. People often follow groups or people who will help them with their jobs. Some organizations put out news on Twitter first. Even the Royal Baby was tweeted first.

There is a problem with unverified twitter posts. People who work for news organizations follow a code of journalism ethics. The CBC does not tweet unverified information. One should always be careful what you post as potential employers will check. Don't post something that will haunt you.

Ian McKercher noted that the Prime Minister has refused to take part in the 'consortium' televised debates and asked if the consortium could say it would not cover his campaign. Julie ventured that perhaps that is a possibility. She said that governments now send statements instead of responding to questions from reporters. Robyn Bresnahan of Ottawa Morning no longer reads these statements on air. The Alberta election has made the upcoming federal election more interesting.

Bob thanked Julie and applause showed the audience appreciation.

## **5. Networking break**

It was decided to press on with the agenda.

## **6. Report by Board Chair**

The newspaper has become more colourful and the web presence is being enhanced. New contributors are being published and the number of letters to the editor is increasing. The community calendar is a popular item in the printed paper and is being updated frequently on the web. The *Glebe Report* recognizes a number of partners including not-for-profit newspapers in neighbouring communities, the Glebe Community Association the Glebe Neighbourhood Activities Group, the Glebe Business Improvement Area, the Glebe Centre and Abbotsford House, the schools, churches and other organizations who work together to keep Glebites informed.

Zita Taylor, not present because of illness in her family, has said that businesses at Lansdowne have been supportive in making the paper available to their customers.

The Volunteer Appreciation Dinner was a success — more so, according to one board member, because the board chair did not make a speech. Bob took that as an endorsement for brevity and moved on to introduce the members of the production team. He also mentioned that Dudleigh Coyle and Martha Bowers are retiring from the board.

## **7. Reports by members of production team**

Liz McKeen [editor] reported that she had now published 10 issues. The work is very interesting and has been a steep learning curve. Several feature articles were highlighted and the variety of topics reported was noted. With more colour and an increase in the average number of pages, the paper is doing well.

Liz introduced the production team and mentioned that all contributors are also appreciated.

Judy Field was not able to be present. Advertising revenue has been increasing and colour ads are popular. The printer can handle a maximum of 32 colour pages per issue. In Judy's prepared report, she thanked Jock Smith who does a terrific job of fitting the ads within the editorial content in each issue. Liz McKeen has had an exceptional first year as editor and has been open to introducing new features involving our advertisers — "this goes a long way in furthering our relationships with our advertisers."

### **8. Financial reports**

Sheila Pocock, Business Manager and Treasurer, reported that the paper had its best year ever. Revenue was more than \$120,000, up 17% from the prior year. Some of this is due to the demand for colour ads (which cost more). Twenty-four advertisers paid for 11 months of advertising in advance. Expenses were up 5%. The current year ended with a surplus of \$3,634. Our cash position is healthy. Provision is made to replace computers about every four years. Collins Barrow reviewed our records and raised no concerns.

**MOTION:** Moved by Sheila Pocock and seconded by John MacNab that the board accept the financial information presented and re-appoint Collins Barrow as the accountants for the current year of 2015. In addition Collins Barrow will be given a free ad for a year in thanks for the deeply discounted invoice received. Carried.

### **9. Election of members of the board**

Dudleigh Coyle and Martha Bowers are resigning from the Board. The other board members, Bob Brocklebank, Andy Joyce, Dan Lanfranconi, John MacNab, Sheila Pocock, Beatrice Keleher Raffoul, and Tom Tanner will continue in office.

The Chair asked three times if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none.

The Board should have between 3 and 12 members. Traditionally the Board consists of 9 members. There are 7 incumbents.

**MOTION:** Moved by Andy Joyce and seconded by John MacNab that the number of directors for the coming year be fixed at nine. Carried.

This motion allows the Board to seek and appoint two new members.

### **10. Other business**

Motion of Thanks: Ian McKercher moved a motion of thanks to retiring Board members Dudleigh Coyle and Martha Bowers. Seconded by Beatrice Keleher Raffoul. Carried.

A question was asked about the *Glebe Report* having an ap. This will be investigated, but it is seen as requiring technical resources.

Liz McKeen asked everyone to invite people to write for the paper and submit story ideas.

## **11. Adjournment**

Moved by John MacNab and seconded by Elaine Martin that the meeting adjourn. Carried at 8:40 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_ *Bob Brocklebank, Chair*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Tom Tanner, Recording Secretary*

*Dated* \_\_\_\_\_