

JAM Board Meeting Minutes
October 8, 2024 Meeting
Via Zoom

Attendees: Samantha Davidson Green, Craig Sterritt, Joe Major, Jim Zien, Daniel Maxell-Crosby, Sam Kaas, Tamara Warashchinski

Absent: Tracy Hutchins, Aisha Khan, Sean McIntyre

Others Present: N/A

Meeting called to order by Joe 5:40pm

Samantha noted that Sean McIntyre is stepping down from the JAM Board, effective October 8, 2024, to focus on other professional obligations. The board expressed their gratitude for Sean's service and counsel.

Minutes:

The board reviewed the minutes from the August 14 Annual Meeting. Jim moved to approve the minutes, Dan seconded; the minutes were approved.

Director's Report:

Samantha delivered the director's report, noting that she has recently been preparing the annual budget, and updating the employee handbook, which is ready for board review.

Craig moved to approve the Director's Report, Sam seconded; the report was approved.

Committee Reports:

Financial Committee: Dan reported that the Financial Committee has been working on the budget with Samantha; this will be discussed later in the meeting.

Fundraising Committee: Tamara reported that the Fundraising committee has met with Laura Di Piazza to work on a year-end appeal, and are aiming for engagement with larger donors. Additionally, they are discussing options for planned giving for some donors.

Programming Committee: Craig noted that he and Alex met to discuss WRIF - films are being screened by the selection committee and the program director. They also discussed programming priorities more broadly for JAM, including quick improvements that can be made to work JAM is already doing: for example, adding a way to consolidate chapter bookmarks on YouTube feeds for civic meetings, in an effort to make info easier to access for viewers.

Board Recruitment: The Recruitment Committee has been in touch with two new prospective board members.

Executive Committee: Sam and Dan reported that the Executive Committee has reviewed the revised employee handbook, which is ready for full board review.

Employee Handbook Update:

Samantha presented the revised JAM Employee Handbook, with thanks to Bev Widger of HRXperienced LLC, who updated the document. Samantha explained that this revision adds important clarifications on at-will employment, clear statements on Vermont and Federal protections for employees, and clear, updated language on JAM's harassment policies. It also clarifies policies for working with minors.

Samantha drew the board's attention to the definitions/classifications of employees, clarifying FT and PT in order to better structure benefits. Clarifications were made to the Paid Time Off and vacation policies. Language was added for unpaid family leave and other types of leave in compliance with Vermont law. Bev encouraged JAM to keep a separate benefits guide, which will be easier to update in the future. Staff was asked for input on benefits updates; all other revisions were about updating and clarifying language.

Tamara suggested clarifications regarding bereavement leave, flexible holiday leave, and language surrounding chosen family.

Jim moved to approve the employee handbook with suggestions for possible clarifications to be brought to Bev, Tamara seconded; the motion passed.

Benefits Handout:

Samantha presented the new benefits handout. The new benefits policy increases the contribution JAM offers toward each employee's healthcare premium, with the intention of improving employee care. Samantha also proposes offering a simple IRA with a 3% match to all employees.

Dan noted that, if approved, the board would know the cost of the new health plan before the end of the year, since employees would have to sign up during open enrollment. Retirement costs would be more difficult to project.

Joe asked how significant the budget impacts will be. Samantha highlighted the projections in the current budget draft, which will show a significant increase. Dan notes that, with the organization's current cushion, this is "a growth move" for employee retention and quality of life.

Dan moved to approve the benefits plan, Sam seconded; the motion passed.

Proposed Budget:

Samantha presented the proposed 2025 budget, noting that it is a deficit budget, but not a debt budget.

Dan asked if a budget without a deficit would be possible next year, if requested. Samantha believes that it would.

Jim suggested that the donations goal should be higher, now that JAM has hired a Development Director. Samantha asked the board to advise on a goal. The Finance committee will advise.

Dan moved to approve the proposed budget, Craig seconded; the motion passed.

Jim moved to adjourn, Tamara seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:20pm.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Sam Kaas, Board Secretary.

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