



## AGENDA REPORT TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 14, 2014

Item:	Gazette Publishing Committee: Report #1
Author:	Iain Boekhoff, Editor in Chief, The Gazette Scott Courtice, Managing Director, Government Services
Purpose of Report:	For Information
Item #:	7 a)

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### Recommendation:

That the Board of Directors receive this report for information.

### Background:

The University Students' Council is the publisher of The Gazette, and the USC Board of Directors has a fiduciary responsibility to supervise the management of the publication. The Board is made up of several elected student representatives who are frequently the subject of Gazette news and editorial coverage, making it challenging for the Board to provide objective and effective governance. As such, The Gazette has not fully benefited from the strategic, policy and business decision-making that effective Board governance provides, nor have the Editors received constructive feedback on their performance, or professional development to assist them in their roles.

In response to the above challenge, an arms-length Publishing Committee has been created to offer objective recommendations to the Board on strategy, policy, finance and personnel matters. The Publishing Committee is composed of students with no affiliation to The Gazette or the USC, and non-student community members who provide valuable skills and perspectives to the committee, and act as a source of continuity. The non-student members include a faculty member from the J-School, a News Editor at The Globe and Mail, and a former Editor in Chief who now works in digital marketing in London.

### Report:

The Gazette Publishing Committee held its first meeting of the year on Friday, October 17<sup>th</sup>. The Committee reviewed its mandate, heard and discussed a report from the Editor in Chief, and

received a report by Carrie Passi, Managing Director, Corporate and Financial Resources, in regards to business planning and the annual budget process.

Committee members and the Front Office editors will be actively engaged in the Business Planning process and budget. Passi will be distributing questions to committee members and editors to do an environmental scan (SWOT and PESTE analysis) and will examine a number of alternatives in response to that scan. The process will look three years out to align with the USC's desire to set longer term targets.

Some preliminary discussion was held regarding two issues that should be prioritized during business planning:

- Urgent need for a formalized training program for volunteers, editors, and Front Office staff.
- Need a long-term plan to improve The Gazette's digital product, and to evaluate the future of the print product.

The committee's next meeting will be on December 5<sup>th</sup>. The committee will finalize a SWOT, PESTE, and make recommendations regarding budget priorities for the 2015-16 year.

The committee will also meet on Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, and Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Sign-Offs:**

General Manager Review:	Cathy Clarke	
Editor in Chief:	Iain Boekhoff	
Managing Director Review:	Scott Courtice	
Financial Review:	Carrie Passi	
Legislative or Legal Review:	N/A	

