

# Minutes of the Lever Press Oversight Committee Meeting

## June 27, 2016

Attending: Andrew Ashton, Marta Brunner, Mark Christel, Dalia Corkrum, Terri Fishel, Bryn Geffert, Neil McElroy, Kevin Mulroy, Mike Roy, Margy Avery, Mark Edington, Mary Francis, Charles Watkinson, Becky Welzenbach

### Approve Minutes

Short discussion of the draft minutes from May meeting, in particular whether the task force convened to investigate a social platform for the Lever Press community had a deadline. No such deadline was set at the May meeting.

Mike Roy moved to approve the minutes for May; approved unanimously

Becky Welzenbach reported on a correction to be made to the minutes of the February 29 meeting: the minutes contained a live link to an internal working document. The document is not publicly visible, but the link encourages folks to click. Propose to simply remove this link from the minutes. OC unanimously approves.

**Action Items: Becky Welzenbach will post the May 31 minutes and the revised February 29 minutes to the Lever Press website**

### Report from Ops Group

#### Update on Proposals/Submissions

Margy Avery reported that so far 10 submissions for individual proposals have been received. No proposals yet for series. There has been some clunkiness with the Google form. We have added Google Analytics to the Lever Press website so we can tell when folks are clicking through from the website to the form. Terri Fishel notes that faculty are traveling and busy over the summer; proposals may pick up in the fall.

#### Fulcrum Platform

Charles Watkinson reported to the group on the status of Fulcrum, the publishing platform in development at Michigan Publishing. Info is available at [fulcrum.org](http://fulcrum.org). Year one of development ended in March and we are now entering our first beta phase. The first pilot publications (tied to Michigan Publishing's Mellon grant, not Lever Press) will appear in Fulcrum starting in early fall. The platform first and foremost serves the needs of publishers/presses, with the underpinning of library infrastructure. That is, it emphasizes durability of digital resources, discoverability of digital publications, and flexibility to accommodate new technologies and business models. It is

\*not\* an authoring tool like Scalar. At this point, we envision that authors will produce work in whatever tool they like, with press-mediated ingest to the platform (possibly via epub). We need to be thinking about how to work well with authors using their own tools, either to guide them upstream in their process, or to find a way to interact with/integrate with the tools that authors and libraries at our pledging campuses have already deeply invested in. Becky Welzenbach getting more involved with Fulcrum development team at Michigan, and will serve as bridge between Fulcrum and Lever.

**Action Item: Becky Welzenbach will schedule a first opportunity (of many) for Lever Operations group (perhaps leveraging and upcoming Operations Group meeting) to get more detailed overview of Fulcrum so the editorial team will know how to respond to authors, especially those with digital innovation projects.**

## Communications to Membership

- Press release for PR officers at pledging institutions, highlighting where applicable participation of faculty on Editorial Board. Oversight committee was invited to review this draft at our last meeting; should now be ready to go.
- Press release to go to scholarly societies on ACLS list inviting proposals.

**Action Item: Oversight Committee will review draft of press release to learned societies and make any comments by the end of the week (July 1).**

**Action Item: Mark Edington and Margy Avery will put out these two press releases to the two distinct channels.**

## Travel, Conference, and Outreach opportunities

Terri Fishel and Becky Welzenbach reported on the Oberlin Group Digital Scholarship meeting held at Macalester College June 10-12. Key outcomes: enthusiasm from colleges about the opportunity of Lever, great insight into the work going on on these campuses, as well as the commitment to tools already in use (especially: Digital Commons, Omeka, Scalar). Excitement and surprise that authors from non-pledging institutions could submit work--we need to continue to emphasize this! Some discussion about the date we decided to close membership: July 1 vs. July 31. TF moves to extent to July 31, since this is what folks at the meeting heard, and in order to give the OC one more chance to call for commitments.

**Action Item: Mike Roy will draft an announcement to the Oberlin Group about extending the membership deadline to the end of July, circulate it to the OC for approval, and then distribute to the OG.**

Charles Watkinson, Mary Francis, Mark Edington, and Margy Avery reported on the American Association of University Presses meeting held in Philadelphia June 16-18. In general it was noted that discussions about open access monographs have shifted from the theoretical (as in

years past) to the practical--with growing interest in discoverability, sustainability, and impact/metrics. Charles noted that new vendors--usage/impact aggregators--are starting to appear at AAUP. Margy noted that there is still a significant gap between the more forward looking and the more traditional presses.

Mike Roy, Bryn Geffert, Mark Edington, and Margy Avery reported on the Arthur Vining Davis-funded stakeholders meeting held in Annapolis June 22. Key outcomes: it is vital that Lever clearly define its brand and make that known; there is still confusion about our mission and the value proposition we offer to libraries (i.e., our investors) vs faculty vs. administration. This is further complicated by the fact that there is significant segmentation within the LAC community: priorities divided along economic lines: the least wealthy most concerned about reducing cost to students, while the most wealthy are most concerned about establishing prestige that competes with larger universities. In the years that Lever has been doing its due diligence and getting organized, university presses have started to pivot. How does Lever remain distinctive? We need to be thinking about long-term commitment from and engagement with our pledging institutions--how do we ensure that if the single champion happens to leave a campus, they will remain invested? Several participants filled out cards willing to lend support, from evangelism on their campuses to connections with funding agencies--we need to follow up with these!

**Action Item: Everyone should review the [value proposition/case statement document](#) we wrote last summer and be prepared to discuss at the next OC meeting. Are these still true? What needs to change? Can we refine them to reflect what we know now?**

## Outstanding and Upcoming Agenda Items

- Amherst still awaiting disbursement from Michigan--Becky Welzenbach will follow up with business office to find out what's going on
- There will be a Q2 budget report at the July OC meeting
- For time reasons, need to punt until the next OC meeting the discussion of the relationship between Lever Press, Knowledge Unlatched, and other such initiatives
- The Editorial Board F2F meeting will be held in Ann Arbor on August 22. The Operations Group + Mike Roy + Chris Butchart-Bailey (admin. Support at Michigan) are working on logistics and agenda. Agenda will be shared with the OC when it is ready.