

# **STREET PULSE: THE FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS**

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# **1. WHO WE ARE AND WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO**

## **1.1 Introduction**

This document represents the organizational foundations of the Street Pulse Newspaper and is to serve as a malleable template for current and future volunteers. The Board of Directors will re-evaluate and re-sanction these documents once every year (see 1.3.4 Organizational Goals for more details). In the meantime, amendments, improvements, and additional information can, and should, be included as necessary.

## **1.2 THE MOTIVATING STATEMENTS**

### **1.2.1 Mission Statement**

The Street Pulse Newspaper is a nonprofit cooperative that works to identify and address homelessness and social issues by empowering the voices of those both marginalized and concerned, providing direct, concrete avenues through which individuals can help by promoting communication and awareness throughout the Madison community.

### **1.2.2 Organizational Values**

We recognize that:

Homelessness is a problem that needs to be continually addressed, confronted, and combated through novel, effective, and creative means and actions.

To help any person, one must provide some means for them to help themselves. One must instill a profound confidence as well as encourage, foster, and employ each person's motivation, determination, and unique perspective.

Homeless and low-income individuals often face inordinate obstacles when finding steady employment. Therefore there needs to be an organization that provides steady, legitimate, accessible employment for those who are unable to overcome such obstacles.

While Madison is inundated with media sources, we feel not one devotes sufficient attention or recognition to the grave issues surrounding those marginalized through homelessness or inadequate income. There needs to be a media source which responds to and acknowledges the marginalized community so that the voice of the voiceless may find public expression through a legitimate mode.

The newspaper must reflect the Street Pulse organizational goals and values.

Along with providing a legitimate mode of public expression for the marginalized and concerned, there must also exist legitimate and accessible means through which such individuals can reach out into the community in order to raise awareness, stimulate action, and involve the greater population.

There are no qualifications or conditions for being a Street Pulse volunteer other than having a genuine and sincere desire to help. The very concept and cause of Street Pulse spans beyond indulgent titles and petty distinctions and exists outside the bounds of political, religious, ethnic, social, economic, etc.

differences. This organization amalgamates and coheres disparate members of the community, all with various backgrounds and perspectives, into a force with immense potential. In this lies our strength and character.

The means which we find most suitable and efficacious for affirming and embodying these values lies in a cooperative spirit which embraces and nurtures both individual initiative, ingenuity, and uniqueness as well as a collaborative, mutual aid which unifies its disparate parts into a collective whole. Each of these entities are imperative in the establishment of an equitable and functional organization. Furthermore, each entity must be both conscious and respectful of the others wills and desires. The individual must recognize the consensus of the whole while the whole must refrain from smothering the drive of the individual. Inherent in the essence of a cooperative spirit rests the requisiteness to strive for a consensus on all topics of discussion. This is absolutely essential for maintaining a balance and concordance between the aforementioned entities.

### 1.2.3 Vision Statement

Therefore, Street Pulse strives to serve these functions:

Provide accessible, legitimate, respectable, and steady employment for those homeless or low-income individuals who are temporarily unable to obtain a stable or sufficient income. Through providing employment based on self-motivation, Street Pulse engages in the most sustainable solution to the homeless and low-income problem: helping the homeless help themselves.

Act as a platform through which Madison's most marginalized as well as concerned individuals can present their perspectives, express their opinions, showcase their artistic talents, and raise awareness of homeless issues.

Seek to promote and create awareness in the community about events and organizations which are concerned with homeless and social issues.

Reach out into the community as well as establish inter-organizational cooperation in addressing, confronting, and combating homeless and social issues.

Hold individuals in the organization as well as the community accountable for the issues being addressed, moving to ignite interest and concern as well as motivate individuals to educate themselves, accept responsibility for their community, and, ultimately, take action.

### 1.2.4 Organizational Goals

The Board of Directors will re-evaluate and re-sanction these documents ***once every year*** at the start of the spring semester. The Board of Directors is then to present all reassessments and revisions during regular Sunday meetings, ultimately aiming to gain approval from the entire group of any changes made. Although tedious, this responsibility is vital to both the success and function of the Street Pulse organization.

Though we are a non-profit, Street Pulse as an organization must become fiscally responsible, secure, and sustainable. Vendor sales and fundraising should make up the foundation of our income. If we are to be financially solvent, then we must become financially independent, relying on our product and our

volunteers to procure a secure source of funds. Funds are to be sought through fundraising, vendor sales, ad sales, and donations.

Since one of this organization's core values is to provide the steady, legitimate, accessible employment for homeless and low-income individuals, then it is absolutely imperative that this organization produce timely, monthly, printings for the vendors. It is simply inexcusable that those who this organization proclaims to help be left without a fresh, current issue of Street Pulse to sell.

The volunteers of this organization must strive to establish greater connections and collaboration amongst other student and community-based organizations which share similar missions, goals, and values.

Volunteers must also work to raise the profile of Street Pulse on campus and in the community in order to, among other things, increase subscriptions, vendors, vendor locations, volunteers, etc.

## **2. THE STRUCTURE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

### **2.1 Section Introduction**

What follows is a detailed look at how the Street Pulse newspaper and organization staff functions. When circumstances change, different people have different ideas, and any document such as this needs to be organic and adaptable to whatever conditions arise.

### **2.2 Street Pulse Cooperative**

Any individual who attends Street Pulse meetings is a member of the Street Pulse cooperative. The cooperative has weekly Sunday meetings, in which every attendee has one vote. Street Pulse committees, which meet outside of the weekly, Sunday, cooperative meetings, are to prepare and present weekly reports concerning progress, concerns, ideas, accomplishments, etc. during cooperative meetings. Any major decisions committees make, namely those which involve the entire Street Pulse cooperative, must be approved by the cooperative. Major decisions that are to be made at the following weekly meeting should be mentioned in the weekly e-mail sent out to members. Approval is to be attained by striving to reach a consensus. In striving for consensus, it is imperative to be mindful that it is the *responsibility of all members* to refrain from stifling individual dissent while simultaneously being conscious, as an individual, of when one needs him/herself to concede or compromise for the sake of organizational progress and efficiency. This process is to be enforced by the Board of Directors.

### **2.3 Street Pulse Committees**

Street Pulse committees meet on an ad hoc basis outside of weekly cooperative meetings to discuss and achieve their goals. Each committee director is to send weekly reports to the Internal Communications Director, who in turn will send out one weekly email to Street Pulse volunteers prior to the weekly cooperative meeting. This weekly email also serves as an agenda for the weekly, cooperative meeting and is to be posted on the website as well.

### **2.4 Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors consists of 5 elected members. (Note: More on Board composition, tenure,

processes, etc. can be found in the Appendices under protocol). The Board ensures that the organization's financial and organizational rules are being followed as well as oversees that its mission and goals are being fulfilled. Directors are responsible for attending the weekly Street Pulse Cooperative meetings and calling meetings to address problems they perceive at the weekly meetings. At these meetings, one member of the Board is to act as secretary. This person will be responsible for insuring that the meeting follows the agenda, taking minutes of the board meeting, and sending an account of these minutes to the Internal Communications Director. Secretarial duties are to be on a rotational basis. The Board also acts as an ad hoc Board of Grievances, which hears complaints brought by Street Pulse volunteers, vendors, or other persons about Street Pulse issues. They will annually review the organizational documents and conduct an annual report on whether or not Street Pulse is successfully attaining its mission statement and goals. They will suggest changes and strategies for improving the organization, but changes and strategies must be approved by the Street Pulse cooperative before formally amending the Street Pulse Cooperative's Foundational Documents.

Note: It is the *responsibility* of the general members of the Street Pulse Cooperative to hold the Board of Directors *accountable* for their actions or therefore lack of. If the Board of Directors fails to accomplish its aforementioned tasks and responsibilities, does not adhere to Street Pulse ideals and/or values, or one or more Director(s) is/are found negligent in his/her duties and/or capacities, then general members are obligated to address such issues at the weekly meetings. (See Appendices for protocol for removal of negligent Directors.)

## 2.5 Organization Structure Overview

The Street Pulse organizational structure is divided into four parts:

**Editorial and Production Committee:** Positions involving the creation, organization, and production of the newspaper.

**Communications Committee:** Positions involving the handling of internal and external communication.

**Vendor Coordination and Outreach Committee:** Positions involving vendor and volunteer coordinating as well as community outreach to the homeless population, student population, other organizations, etc.

**Business and Organization Management Committee:** Positions involving the management of the paper's finances and operations.

NOTE: Protocols for each section/position can be found in the Appendices at the end of this document.

## 2.6 Editorial and Production Committee Organizational Structure

### 2.6.1 Section Introduction

To promote greater clarity of content both internally (i.e. among the newspaper staff) and externally (i.e. what readers see in the newspaper), editors, contributors and readers need to be aware of the level of journalistic integrity to which the newspaper aspires. Historically, newspapers have achieved this by delineating different standards of objectivity and verification for different content types, and presenting

these delineations in the layout of the paper. For example, in news reporting, because readership expects the highest standard of truth, reporters are expected to maintain a high level of objectivity and source all information presented as factual. At a slightly lower level of objectivity, opinion columns are expected by readers to reflect the opinions of the columnists, and are allowed greater leeway on issues of objectivity and verification. Creative work, by its nature inherently subjective, is not held to such standards. The three primary types of content in the paper – news, opinion, and creative – are reflected in both the layout and the management structure (see next section).

## 2.6.2 Position Descriptions

Editorial Board: The Editorial Board will have monthly meetings for discussing newspaper content. All editors and writers should attend these meetings. At these meetings, editors will assist writers with the content of their pieces. The Editorial Board will also have monthly Page One meetings. All editors must attend these meetings, and writers and production may attend if they wish. At the Page One meeting, the Editorial Board will determine size and location of submitted pieces. The production team will be responsible for carrying out the editorial decisions made at the Page One meeting. (See Appendices for composition, tenure, processes, etc. of Editorial Board.)

Note: The editorial reflects the opinion of the general membership. The Editorial Board should make *every* effort to solicit the opinion of the general membership in framing the position of the editorial in each monthly issue.

Editor: The Editor is the face of the paper. The editor must make *every effort* to include the Editorial Board in making *all* editorial decisions. However, in situations where time does not allow the inclusion of the Editorial Board, the editor may make final editorial calls. The Editor's primary responsibilities include: coordinating the paper's monthly publication, running monthly editorial and Page One meetings, coordinating the section editors, and doing a final edit overview of the newspaper (i.e. correcting spelling/grammar errors, etc.) prior to publication. The editor is also responsible for a monthly letter from the editor as well as a weekly progress report that is to be sent to the Internal Communications Director.

Section Editors: These editors report to the Editor and are responsible for all content contributions to their sections. They also participate in the monthly Page One meeting and, collectively with the Editor, determine editorial positions and policy. These editors should help come up with content ideas, aid writers with their pieces, and copy edit pieces in their sections.

News Editor: The News Editor each month tracks all breaking news relating to the newspaper's overall mission and manages staff writers who cover these stories as currently as possible through news reports, analyses, and wire service reports. This editor may also find relevant pieces in other media and attain permission for publishing these pieces in Street Pulse. However, priority should be given to Street Pulse writers. Relevant pieces from other media should only be used if the current edition is lacking a sufficient number of submissions for publication. News Editor also coordinates all features content, consisting of longer-length stories with more of a people focus than issues/events-based news stories.

Note: The News Editor holds their content submissions to the highest standards of objectivity and verification; as such they refrain from opinion or editorializing, though their coverage will certainly reflect the overall agenda of Street Pulse.

Editorial Page Editor: Coordinates all opinion/editorial content, striving for a range of opinions reflecting the larger Street Pulse community. Writes the monthly editorial and selects and responds to Letters to the Editor.

Note: Opinion/editorial content is understood by readers to reflect the opinions of its writers but still should refrain for hearsay or other potentially libelous content.

Hearts and Minds Editor: Coordinates the Hearts and Minds section of the newspaper. Makes sure the voices of the marginalized and concerned are represented in the paper by coordinating creative work from the street as well as from volunteers and the larger community.

Production Director: The Production Manager is responsible for overseeing the layout and design of the paper as well as communicating with the printer.

(For Editorial Content Guide and Monthly Protocols see Appendix A)

## **2.7 Communications Committee Organizational Structure**

### **2.7.1 Section Introduction**

This committee's main responsibilities encompass maintaining and supplying organizational information and progress. This includes both internal and external communications. It is their obligation to ensure that all Street Pulse members remain informed of Street Pulse happenings and that the community as well be aware of Street Pulse dynamics.

### **2.7.2 Position Descriptions:**

Communications Director: The Communications Director is responsible for conducting Street Pulse cooperative meetings based on the agenda. The Communications Director is to send out *one weekly email* to Street Pulse volunteers *directly following* a weekly meeting which briefly and concisely summarizes the happenings of that particular meeting. This email is to be sent out *prior to* the following weekly, cooperative meeting. The email will in part be composed of the progress reports that are to be sent to the Communications Director by the other committee directors weekly, the secretary's minutes, and any other necessary or important information. This weekly email also serves as an agenda for the weekly, cooperative meeting and is to be posted on the website. The Communications Director should also keep a record of contact information of all Street Pulse members. The Communications Director will, lastly, coordinate the Communications Committee.

Secretary: The Secretary is responsible for keeping minutes of every meeting, which are to be posted promptly online.

Public Relations Director: The Public Relations Director has the responsibility of coordinating all public relations, promotional, and marketing efforts. S/he should send out press releases to media contacts for Street Pulse events. This person will also work with the Vendor Coordinator and Outreach Committee in helping them promote recruitment and outreach efforts.

Webmaster: The Webmaster is responsible for maintaining and updating the website in a timely fashion as well as ensuring the posting of cooperative meeting agendas and minutes. They should cooperate

with the Business and Organization Management Committee, particularly those positions involved with financing, to put advertisers on the website.

## **2.8 Vendor Coordination and Outreach Committee Organizational Structure**

### **2.8.1 Section Introduction**

Vendor Coordination and Outreach will be spending significant portions of time out in the community communicating with people and trying to elicit their help with the newspaper. However, since they also have other functions to fill, a separate Community Outreach Coordinator has been added to coalesce with other groups and find support for Street Pulse functions.

### **2.8.2 Position Descriptions:**

Vendor Coordinator: This person's primary responsibilities are to recruit, train, and aid vendors, including: organizing Vendor Recruitment days; establishing a regular vendor orientation meeting; maintaining the Vendor Code of Conduct, the Vendor Bill of Rights, and the Vendor Orientation packet, and working with vendors to find ways to make vending more accessible and lucrative. S/he should seek the assistance of a representative of the homeless community, preferably a trustworthy and reliable vendor, who can help the Vendor Coordinator be more successful in his/her duties. Also, the Vendor Coordinator should work to extend vending locations and opportunities. This person is also responsible for sending the Internal Communications Director a weekly progress report. (Vendor Coordinator protocols can be found in Appendix B)

Volunteer Coordinator: This person is in charge of recruiting, training and maintaining volunteers. This includes: establishing regular methods for recruitment; reserving a table at all Student Organization Fairs; creating creative and innovative ways to reach out to volunteers in the homeless, student, and general community; ensuring that all pamphlets, leaflets, and other promotional and informative handouts be up to date and consistently replenished; etc. This person is also responsible for sending the Internal Communications Director a weekly progress report.

Community Outreach Coordinator: This person is in charge of cultivating relationships with other organizations, both student and community, and the media. Duties include: forming connections with social service organizations in Dane County; attending monthly Homeless Consortium meetings; managing work with Dane County Buy Local initiative; managing drop-off points and distributing collection drive items at Savory Sunday's meal; maintaining a list of media outlets; working with the Public Relations Director to send out press releases, especially those for the monthly collection drives. This person is also responsible for sending the Internal Communications Director a weekly progress report.

## **2.9 Business and Organization Management Committee Organizational Structure:**

### **2.9.1 Section introduction:**

The Business and Organization Management Committee is in charge of business operations (e.g. marketing, office management, ad sales, fundraising), general financial health of the organization, ensuring that the organization is fiscally responsible, and overseeing that the organization remains intact and functional.

## 2.9.2 Position Descriptions:

Operations Director: The Operations Director is in charge of managing the Street Pulse office in the Student Activity Center, stocking the office with supplies, tracking all records, and maintaining staff organization. This person is to also keep a record of current position holders, oversee that all positions that can be filled are filled, and ensure that positions that will be becoming vacant have a trained and suitable replacement to fill the void.

Note: Any person who is planning on stepping down from a position must give the Operations Director *at least* a two weeks notice. However, a months notice would be most courteous, preferred, and appreciated.

Financial Director: The Financial Director ensures that Street Pulse is fiscally responsible, and oversees the organization's accounting. Every week this person comes to the office and tallies that week's paper sales and income as well as any expenditures and then deposits any money, recording each step. Every two weeks this person also checks to make sure the number of papers sold corresponds with the income that we have received and the total income noted in the books corresponds with the amount of money in our bank account. The Financial Director is also to compile a monthly report stating Street Pulse's financial status and past month's financial transactions and send it to the Internal Communications Director. This is to be done preferably at the time of a new publication. The report will then be put on the agenda, read, and discussed at the first meeting following publication.

Circulation Coordinator: The Circulation Coordinator collects data about how many papers are sold at each location and is to continually update circulation numbers. This person must also record information from vendors about sales, record and organize subscriptions, and double-check the Financial Director. Every two weeks this person also checks to make sure the number of papers sold corresponds with the income that we have received and the total income noted in the books corresponds with the amount of money in our bank account. The Circulation Coordinator will make a monthly report at the same time as the Financial Director of his/her information collected. This information is to be sent to the Financial Director, who will compile it as part of the monthly financial report sent to the Internal Communications Director. Lastly, this person is to ensure that papers from the office get distributed accordingly and responsibly.

Fundraising Director: The Fundraising Director is responsible for cultivating and expanding our donor pool through frequent, high-profile, fundraising events. The Fundraising Director will also work in close coordination with the Public Relations Director, the Community Outreach Coordinator, and the Financial Director to plan and implement new and effective ways to raise money and recruit donors. The Fundraising Director is also to see to it that grants are being pursued and applied for. Note that the Fundraising Director should also oversee that Street Pulse have a well-balanced fundraising event schedule, namely that large, energy-intensive, high-profile events be balanced with multiple, more simple, less energy-intensive events. (See Appendices for past Street Pulse events.)

Advertisement Director: The Advertisement Director focuses on cultivating and expanding commercial accounts (primarily small, locally-owned, independent businesses) that advertise in our newspaper. The director creates and implements ad sales protocol, including invoice and billing procedures, solicits local businesses through an array of contact methods, and coordinates with production to set and ensure advertisement details.

NOTE: Holders of the above listed positions are **REQUIRED** to train a replacement/proxy prior to their departure from the position.

### **3. APPENDICES**

#### **3.1 Appendix A: Member Protocol**

##### **3.1.1 Membership Behavior:**

At meetings, all members are expected to uphold the organizational values, goals, and beliefs as well as behave civilly and respectfully towards one another. Any behavior which is disruptive, malicious, or impeding will not be tolerated.

Note: Any violent or belligerent behavior or behavior detrimental to the organization which is connected with Street Pulse in any manner will result in immediate expulsion from the organization.

##### **3.1.2 Filing Grievances:**

###### **Individual Misconduct:**

In the case that an individual member is negligent in his/her duties or has been consistently disruptive, thus hindering the progress of the group, any other member of the Street Pulse organization may, if they will it, file a grievance against the negligent and/or disruptive member. Such measures for doing so is as follows:

-Write a formal complaint stating the situation, the grievance wished to be addressed, and why it is a problem.

-Send the formal complaint to the Board of Directors (which acts as an ad hoc Board of Grievances).

-The Board will set up a time outside of regular, Sunday meetings during which they will address the grievance(s) filed. At this time, either party is welcomed to come and address the issue civilly. Following a discussion, the Board will decide whether or not the grievance filed has validity, and present their decision as well as rationale for the decision during the regular, Sunday meeting. If the grievance is found valid, the course of action for individual misconduct is as follows.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Strike: Warning- The negligent and/or disruptive member will be reprimanded and notified that his/her behavior is not that befitting what is expected of a Street Pulse member. Further pursuance of this behavior will result in suspension or expulsion.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Strike: Suspension- The negligent and/or disruptive member will be notified that he/she will be suspended from Street Pulse for a predetermined period of time depending on the severity of the grievance. A member can only be suspended from 1-4 weeks. The Board will decide the duration of the suspension. The Board will also decide whether the member is suspended from just weekly meetings or from all Street Pulse events.

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike: Expulsion: The negligent and/or disruptive member will be notified that he/she is hereby expelled from the Street Pulse organization due to the continuance of inappropriate behavior. The member is to no longer be involved in any aspect of Street Pulse. Note: Any member previously expelled who seeks to be readmitted to the Street Pulse organization must present a formal apology to the larger group, after which the group will vote on whether or not the member is to be readmitted. A complete consensus is necessary for readmission.

-Once the Board has read their decision to the larger group, a 2/3 vote by the Street Pulse members is needed to overturn the Board's decision regarding the grievance filed. If the decision is overturned, the Board must meet again to reform their decision in accordance with the wishes of the larger group. This process will continue until a consensus is reached between the Board and the greater Street Pulse organization. Note: Neither the Board members nor the parties involved may vote.

Note: Do not abuse the grievance process to further individual agendas. The intent with which a grievance is filed should be to benefit the whole Street Pulse organization.

#### Dispute Between Two or More Individuals:

If a dispute occurs between two or more individuals with neither side willing to compromise, the dispute will be brought before the Board. The procedure for the such a scenario is as follows:

-The Board will set a time outside of regular, Sunday meetings during which they will aim to settle the dispute.

-Each party will be required to attend in order to present his/her point of view.

-A civil discussion will follow during which the Board will seek a compromise between the two parties.

-Once a compromise has been settled, the compromise along with a rationale for the compromise will be presented to the larger group at weekly, Sunday meetings. A 2/3 vote is needed to approve the compromise. If a 2/3 vote is not achieved, the Board and the disputing parties must reform the compromise until it is in accordance with the larger group. This process will continue until a consensus is reached between the Board and the greater Street Pulse organization. Note: Neither the Board members nor the parties involved may vote.

Note: If either party fails or refuses to adhere to or arrive at a compromise, an individual misconduct grievance can be filed.

Note: In either case, if the concerned party is a Board member, the larger group will vote in a proxy Board member until the grievance process is complete.

### **3.2 Appendix B: Board of Directors Protocol**

#### **3.2.1 Board Behavior:**

The Board of Directors is expected to act in accordance with the organizational values, goals, and beliefs and to accomplish its designated duties. Like any other member, the Board of Directors is subject to scrutiny by the larger group and the grievance process.

### **3.2.2 Appointment of the Board of Directors:**

- Any member can nominate any other member, even themselves. However, any nomination needs a second nomination to be officially represented on the ballot.
- The Board is to be composed of at least one member from each main committee and, if possible, one member who has dealt with homelessness.
- Board members will have 1-year terms.
- Elections are to be held at the end of the spring semester.

### **3.3 Appendix C: Directors Protocol**

#### **3.3.1 Director Behavior:**

The Directors are expected to act in accordance with the organizational values, goals, and beliefs and to accomplish their designated duties. Like any other member, the Directors are subject to scrutiny by the larger group and the grievance process.

#### **3.3.2 Appointment of Directors:**

- Any member can nominate any other member, even themselves. However, any nomination needs a second nomination to be officially represented on the ballot. Any member can be nominated for more than one position.
- Elections are to be held the 1<sup>st</sup> week of April with nominations being made the week prior to elections. A debate will follow nominations.
- Any member may be elected to more than one position. However, a member cannot hold more than one position given that (a) the member already has a secured position and (b) another member wishes to hold the position in question. Therefore, for example, Candidate A can be elected to both the position of Financial Director and Production Manager. However, if Candidate B wishes to hold the position of Production Manager, Candidate A must cede his/her place as Production Manager to Candidate B.
- If any positions are still empty following the elections, it is the duty of the Board of Directors to find willing recruits for the positions. Recruits found by the Board must be approved by the general membership.
- All directors serve a 1-year term with terms beginning at the start of the fall semester.
- No member can be forced or required to hold a position for which s/he is nominated or to which s/he is elected.

-In case of prolonged absence, a director ***must*** name a proxy to serve in his/her place during the absence. It is assumed that the proxy will be trained and competent in the duties of the particular position. The proxy must be approved by the general membership.

Note: It would be most prudent of the general membership to seek to fill the positions most integral to the functioning of Street Pulse first.