



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

of The 519 Church Street Community Centre

MEETING MINUTES

**for the meeting held on April 4, 2013
2012-2013 Meeting # 6**

Meeting Attendance

Board Members and Staff

Scott Bomhof, Tyler Fleming, Margo Foster, Angeline Ico, Luc Levasseur, Julia Lo (7 PM), Stephen Menon, John Thornton, Rudy Ticzon. (Regrets: Pascal Dessureault. Kerry Bell)

Maura Lawless (Executive Director), Helen Rykens (Manager, Public Access and Facility Services), Julia Gonsalves (Supervisor, Community Services – Adults and Seniors)

Visitors and Guests

Julia Gonsalves and Heather Bain (Coordinator, Community Development Services, will be making a presentation on item # 6

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome

Rudy Ticzon, the Vice Chair, opened the meeting at 6:35 PM.

2. Approval of agenda

MOVED BY Tyler Fleming
SECONDED BY Margo Foster
THAT the Agenda be approved.
CARRIED

3. Visitors

Welcome to Julia. Heather will join us shortly.

4. Approval of minutes

MOVED BY John Thornton

SECONDED BY Angeline Ico

THAT the minutes of the meeting held February 25, 2013 be approved.

CARRIED

5. Declaration of conflicts of interest

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

6. Agency Business – Julia and Heather reported

Maura introduced Julia and Rudy welcomed Julia and Heather to the meeting.

Maura gave the context regarding changes in the program over the past year, in which we re-focused the program to serve LGBTQ people and allies. There was a petition against the changes to the program that was presented to the Board and to which we responded. There are still a few people who remain unhappy with the changes, even after our communications regarding the reasons for the changes. However we believe fundamentally that it was the right decision and given our mandate it's completely appropriate to focus on creating a safe welcoming space for LGBTQ people and their allies who are experiencing homelessness.

Sunday LGBT & Allies Drop-In

- Previously serving general homeless communities, became the first LGBT & Allies homeless drop-in program in the city at the end of October 2012
- The change was initiated and shaped by reports from participants- both out and closeted, in both group forums and one-on-one conversations- expressing the need for greater safety and inclusion as LGBT people in homeless drop-ins and an improvement in service provision
- Also shaped by regular instances of homophobic language and aggression amongst drop-in participants including common use of the word "faggot"
- In preparation for the change, staff and students hosted weekly workshops to define LGBT communities, allies, safer space and to articulate the ways in which all participants would play a role in supporting the mandate of the new drop-in
- Most participants who attended the program before October continue to attend, and attendance has increased since the change with often 200+ individuals attending over the course of the day
- More visible presence of queer and trans-identified participants. LGBT participants are more open about their experiences, identities and interests

Program change is well-received by most participants

- 31% increase in participation
- 7% increase in individual attendance
- 18% increase in meals provided
- Drop-In environment is more personal, stronger sense of community and stronger connections to staff teams
- New Food Animator Position and Program Chef have increased food quality and portion sizes dramatically, consistent rave reviews

- New weekly community kitchen program well-attended by trans women in particular and new nail art programming has successfully attracted women severely marginalized within general drop-in populations
- Participants travelling to and from other parts of Ontario, Canada and the US recognize our drop-in a place to articulate their needs and pursue support as transient LGBTQ people

Continuing to build

- Additional new programming is evolving
- Self-Defense class is an example of programming emerging from incident debriefing with participants
- Incidents in the program handled by staff with consistent support from participants- demonstrated understanding of what will not be tolerated in an LGBTQ and Allies space
- Improving relationship with Toronto Police Services
- Program will continue to build a unique set of supports around folks who need it most, including educating and developing a community of peers unified by common experiences of struggle instead of separated by real or perceived sexual experience

The Board entered a discussion of the petition during the presentation of the above report. Persons who are involved in circulating the petition do not have service restrictions, though they have told people at other drop ins (staff and participants) that they are barred from The 519. The key organizer is a former staff person who is not eligible for service as she is not homeless or under-housed. Any person experiencing homelessness/under-housing can attend our drop in (regardless of stated or perceived sexuality or gender identity) as long as individuals contribute to a positive space for LGBTQ persons. Homophobia is not acceptable, so if a person expresses homophobic language or ideas, staff speak with them about it. If the person doesn't acknowledge that their homophobia is a problem, they will receive service restriction according to our policy and procedure.

Most people who are attending have told staff they don't see the petition as relevant anymore. Participants get upset when the petitioners say that they can't attend if they aren't queer. Misinformation from the petitioners has been damaging and The 519 will not continue to permit individuals to undertake activities that disrupt the drop-in through petition activities.

The next appeal mechanism for the petitioners is the City of Toronto Ombudsman's Office. This has been communicated to the individuals involved.

Heather explained why people might be carrying their protest on for a long time. There are cuts across the city, so they may see this as part of the general loss of services. Ten years ago the program served 250 people in the ballroom. One of the individuals wants to go back to that model, which we not prepared to do. The decision to change was to improve safety, program services and enhance community connections.

We provided a self-defense class after a violent incident – participants appreciated this response.

There is a value of mixed space- having a program for LGBTQ People & Allies lets people be who they are and learn how to create safe space. We hope the model will spread to other drop ins.

Rudy thanked Julia and Heather for their presentation.

7. Executive Committee Report – Pascal reported

The Executive Committee had no report – items will be covered in the Executive Director's Report.

8. Executive Director's Report – Maura reported

City of Toronto Budget Process

The City of Toronto is introducing a new funding submission process this year. All AOCC will now be required to submit draft operating budgets in a new format and through a web-portal including uploading service plan data. The AOCC were notified last week of the change and the Finance, Manager and ED will be attending various training sessions over the next month to get ready for the submission in mid -May early June.

Spring Gala

The Gala has been scheduled for May 26th and we are completely sold out within one day – again as a result of the tremendous leadership of Salah Bachir, The 519's Honorary Patron.

BMO is the patron sponsor and Cineplex Media is a lead sponsor. The entertainment includes Lorraine Segato and Louise Pitre. The food will be provided by Fabarnak. Jann Coppen has again been secured as the main event planner and will do the majority of the interface with Salah on the design / development of the evening's look and feel.

State of the Village Study

We have completed our selection process for the consultants who are going to be leading the Village Study. Thank-you to the review team of Pascal, Margo and Matt we have selected The Planning Group. The firm has brought together various experts in LGBTQ issues, urban planning, public realm and community planning. We are excited about working with them and will be launching the project in mid-April.

One of the exciting aspects of their proposal is that they will be taking advantage of Pride 2013 to undertake an extended community consultation process throughout the Pride week and into the weekend so the exposure to the project will be enormous and we will be able to reach a greater number of people to provide their feedback on the draft community plan.

Jane's walk (May 4th). Jane will be leading the walk in our neighbourhood.

Grant update

I am pleased to announce that we received approval from the Enabling Accessibility Fund for \$49,000 to be used to improve accessibility features at the 519 – in particular with an emphasis on replacing various doors to make them accessible for people with disabilities. This is a program that requires us to contribute a portion of the funding we are also going to ask the City capital funding side to see if they are able to contribute. I would like to acknowledge Helen and all her work to get this very detailed submission in and with a successful resolution.

9. Human Resources Policy Committee – Scott reported

Scott has volunteered to chair this committee, and there has been one meeting with Hussain. The committee will review all of the organizational policies – there are about 200 existing revised policies and new policies.

The committee will also work on the development of Human Resources Development Plan.

10. Strategic and Program Planning – Stephen and Julia reported

Stephen and Julia reported that the committee met in early March to discuss the PrideHouseTO framework for 2015. The committee will be working on timelines for the 2013-2016 Strategic Action Plan.

11. Finance Committee – Tyler reported

Tyler reviewed the monthly financial information. Fundraising information is on a twelve month basis rather than actual. Program expenses somewhat underspent due to gapping of salaries.

12. Resource Development Committee – Tyler and Maura reported

We weren't able to hire a Manager of Development in the most recent posting. Maura recommended that we hire a fundraising consultant to look at what we're doing well or not doing well and to provide some high level recommendations on hiring, focus for the position. In the interim until we post the final position, Matt will continue to have leadership responsibilities for the funding and with the new staff in this department it will free up resources so that he will be able to focus on projects such as World Pride 2014 and PrideHouse TO.

We may also look at opportunities to use fundraising contractors for special projects will allow us to turn on a dime as changes in our needs arise.

MOVED BY Scott Bomhof

SECONDED BY Stephen Menon

THAT the Board approve Maura's proposal to hire a fundraising consultant based on the

discussion above.

CARRIED

13. Correspondence

No Correspondence

14. Emerging Issues

MOVED BY Stephen Menon

SECONDED BY Scott Bomhof

THAT the meeting go in camera to discuss a confidential matter.

CARRIED

The Board received an in-camera report regarding a complaint against a former Board member for allegedly breaching allegedly the Anti-Harassment and Discrimination policy and the City of Toronto Code of Conduct for Local Boards. In 2012, The 519 contracted with an external investigator to conduct the investigation. The investigator spent a number of months investigating the allegations. In the end the investigator found that the former Board member did violate the two policies. The investigator also provided recommendations.

MOVED BY Tyler Fleming

SECONDED BY Luc Levasseur

THAT the meeting go out of camera.

CARRIED

MOVED BY Tyler Fleming

SECONDED BY Stephen Menon

Based on the in-camera discussion the following outlines the Board motion:

THAT the Board Chair and Vice Chair will notify each party formally in writing of the conclusion and findings from the investigation including that the Board has been notified of the results of the investigation.

That the previous Board member will be informed that the behaviour was unacceptable and that members of the Board have a greater duty to uphold the Centre's policies and the City's Code of Conduct at all times. The individual should consider formally apologizing to the complainant and the Board of The 519.

That in the future this individual is expected to comply with the centre policies or will be restricted from attending The 519 in accordance with the Centre's Service Restriction policy and the AHD complaints policy and procedures.

That the complainant will be thanked in writing for bringing the complaint forward and assured that any form of retaliation will not be tolerated and to advise the Executive Director immediately who will take immediate action.

That the Group leaders in the community led group where the incidents occurred will be expected as a condition of on-going space use to attend a mandatory Human Rights training organized by The 519 to ensure that they are aware of how to manage a similar occurrence and to reinforce the expectations that participants may not engage in activities that violate / contravene the Centre's policies.

That by the end of April 2013, The 519 would send a formal reminder to all group leaders that they are obligated to ensure that their groups are accessible to diverse communities and groups are expected to uphold the Centre's policies including anti-harassment and discrimination policies at all times. The 519 would also provide training for those group leaders who identify a need to receive this training.

That the Board agrees to undergo additional training related to their obligations as Board members under the Centre's Anti-Harassment and Discrimination policy and the City of Toronto's Code of Conducts for Local Boards.

That the Board make a formal motion out of camera, acknowledging the investigation of a former Board member, the overall findings and the Board approved next steps however omit the specific names of the parties and community group to ensure we do not breach MFIPPA and at the same time ensure transparency and public accountability.

CARRIED

15. Adjournment

MOVED BY Scott Bomhoff
SECONDED BY Angeline Ico
THAT the meeting be adjourned
CARRIED

16. Next Board Meeting

The next regular Board meeting will take place on Monday, April 29 at 6:30 PM in room 204.