



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

of The 519 Church Street Community Centre

MEETING MINUTES

**for the meeting held on November 26, 2012
2012-2013 Meeting # 2**

Meeting Attendance

Board Members and Staff

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

Maura Lawless (Executive Director), Matthew Cutler, Rick McCarty, Janet Rowe, Helen Rykens, Morgan Page (Trans Community Services Coordinator), Karlene Williams-Clarke (LGBT Newcomer Community Services Coordinator)

Visitors and Guests

There were no visitors or guests

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome

Pascal, the Chair, opened the meeting at 6:30 PM.

2. Approval of agenda

MOVED BY Scott Bomhof
SECONDED BY Angeline Ico
THAT the Agenda be adopted as circulated.
CARRIED

3. Approval of minutes

MOVED BY Kerry Bell
SECONDED BY Tyler Fleming
THAT the minutes of the meeting held September 10, 2012 be approved.
CARRIED

4. Declaration of conflicts of interest

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

5. Agency Business – Grant Application Approvals

City of Toronto - Community Services Partnership Program (CSP)

CSP supports:

1. 50+ LGBT Programming including the 2 monthly book clubs, a weekly drop in for 50+ LGBT folks; regular outings and the friendly callers program
2. Community Support Services Program includes the Community Counselling program which provides free counselling to community members delivered by professionally trained volunteer counsellors; support and advocacy for LGBT survivors of intimate partner abuse.

Amount: \$50,000

MOVED BY Margo Foster

SECONDED BY Luc Levasseur

THAT the Board approve the application for funding from the City of Toronto Community Services Partnership Program

CARRIED

Agency Business – Trans Community Services

Morgan Page, Trans Community Services Coordinator, presented information about the Meal Trans Program, which takes place every Monday evening.

The program, developed in 1997, was Canada's first multi-service program for trans people, and remains one of only two focusing on trans people living with HIV/AIDS and trans sex workers

Key statistics from 2011:

- Served 1,940 meals and made 944 referrals
- Majority of participants are 35-55 years old and attend regularly, often for many years
- 80% of participants report an annual income of less than \$15,000.
- Most face barriers to health care and employment

The Meal Trans Program at The 519 provides:

- Healthy Meals
- Peer Volunteer Engagement & Skills Building
- Referrals & Resources
- Informal Counseling
- Safer Sex Education & Supplies
- HIV/AIDS Education
- Harm Reduction Outreach from Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy (OAHAS) in partnership

Funding: a number of funders, including the United Way, City of Toronto AIDS Prevention Partnership Program, City of Toronto Homeless Initiative Fund, and The 519's fundraising.

2012 emerging work:

- Deeper participant engagement in food programming & closer connection to other 519 Drop-In's serving homeless/under-housed community members through new Animator Position
- Frequency of participants in crisis, responding to community grief & loss

2012 successes:

- Meaningful volunteer engagement, some have been involved for over a decade
- Referrals to primary health care
- Core participant group as an indicator of program's impact in decreasing social isolation
- Referrals to other 519 programs

Agency Business – Newcomer Community Services

Karlene Williams-Clarke, LGBT Newcomer Settlement Services Coordinator, presented information about the settlement program, highlighting the Among Friends group which welcomes and provides services to Newcomer LGBTQ Refugee Claimants every Wednesday evening.

Key statistics:

- 100-150 people attend Among Friends every Wednesday
- Food is a big part of the budget and a healthy meal is an important part of the program
- There are 680 new participants this year and 1,600 active members.
- Over 85 countries are represented.
- We have language challenges – there is no budget for translation, but we do the best that we can.
- age range is 17-55 years

Newcomer Community Services provides:

- Support Programs, Workshops and information Sessions about the refugee process and about living in Toronto and Canada.
- One On One Support Services
- Letters of Support

Significant positive feedback, such as:

"The Among Friends program goes a long way to meeting the needs of increasing numbers of LGBT claimants in Canada. Thanks to the Among Friends program, I have found my clients are better informed, better connected to social / health services, and much less stressed. They are also stronger advocates for their own needs and concerns."

Funding: The United Way and 519 fundraising activities support this program. We also have an application in with the Province to support work with refugees.

The impact of changes to legislation:

Janet Rowe, Director of Programs and Community Services spoke about changes in legislation, which will have a negative impact on Among Friends clients.

- The turnaround time for the refugee claim process has been shortened.
- The Minister will be designating “safe countries” – meaning that people from these countries will not be deemed to be refugees. However, there are a number of democracies that persecute LGBTQ people.
- The Minister will be able to decide that a country is safe at any time. At that time, claims that have been accepted would be reversed and deportation could take place.
- There are also new visa requirements for some countries.
- Interim federal health care is being cut so that will have an impact on health for refugee claimants.
- Legal Aid reforms – they anticipate a surge in refugee claimants. There is now a limit on the amount of time that a refugee lawyer can work on a refugee claim and receive payment for the work.

The Board discussed the possibility of advocacy work on the issues outlined by Janet.

6. Executive Committee Report – Pascal and Maura reported

The committee met by phone last week.

It was decided that the 2013 recommended budget would be reviewed at the December Board meeting vs. the November meeting because our core budget goes to Budget Committee for review next week. Depending on their recommendation it would affect the Centre’s overall operating budget so presenting the budget at this point would be pre-mature.

7. Executive Director’s Report – Maura reported

Maura circulated the Homelessness Partnership Strategy meeting document on LGBTQ Homelessness and the Toronto Context. This document outlines the reasons for increased LGBTQ homelessness in Toronto and the issues facing LGBTQ youth. The 519, Sherbourne Health Centre – SOY, University of Toronto Sexual Diversity Studies, York University and Alex Abramovich met with senior staff from Shelter Support and Housing Administration to present recommendations on addressing and improving services for LGBTQ homeless youth who are disproportionately over-represented in the shelter / homeless system.

The following four high level recommendations highlight some immediate opportunities in the next round of the City’s HPS funding strategy:

1. Address lack of demographic data – establish formal working group of key

community / academic experts to develop a framework to collect and analyse relevant LGBTQ homeless demographic data (shelter intakes, Street Needs assessment etc.) to effectively inform the Toronto context in developing the City's strategy to end homelessness for LGBTQ people experiencing homelessness.

2. Fund LGBTQ Homeless Research – dedicate a portion of HPS funding to undertake relevant community/academic research in Toronto (or nationally) to better understand the specific issues and appropriate recommendations that will address the cause and impact of homelessness in LGBTQ communities
3. Fund the development of an intentional case management and/or support service framework for LGBTQ homeless people – dedicate a portion of HPS funding to support the development of a case management program and/or best practices framework that is specifically designed to meet the needs of the LGBTQ homeless people. This support program and its framework may be replicated across the homeless/housing sectors.
4. Develop dedicated transitional housing for LGBTQ homeless youth – LGBTQ homeless youth need a safe supportive environment to stabilize and reduce the risk of suicide and high risk behaviours - dedicate a portion of HPS funding for the development of transitional housing for queer homeless youth. This much needed housing would be developed to meet the unique needs of these youth and would be the first of its kind in Canada.

Maura presented a confidential briefing note regarding the City's Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) for a shelter operator or youth serving agency to take over the management and operations of an existing youth shelter. The 519 has historically engaged in a leadership role in responding to the needs of the local and broader LGBTQ communities, and in the likely absence of an LGBTQ submission, The 519 should investigate the feasibility of submitting an alternative proposal, (ideally a joint submission with another LGBTQ serving partner agency) to operate the shelter as a transitional shelter/housing project.

The Board discussed both the opportunity presented and possible issues:

- Transitional housing for LGBTQ youth is needed. One youth shelter reports that 25% of the people accessing their services identifies as LGBTQ. Transitional housing is also a model which helps reduce homelessness and move people into permanent housing.
- Our community would welcome the opportunity to contribute to housing / shelter project for homeless LGBTQ youth. If there is a financial risk, we would likely be able to fundraise for it – detailed costing and budget development underway.
- The facility is not large, so some of The 519's infrastructure (Executive Director and other management positions could be extended to this location).
- We might partner with a shelter operator in order to provide programming.

- There are several unknowns: current condition of the building, current staffing levels, etc.
- This doesn't fit exactly with our current strategic plan, however, it is an opportunity that may not come along again for several years.
- The City specifies that they are looking for a shelter operator or youth services agency to apply. The 519 does not fit either of those descriptions, however, if the City is unsuccessful in their search, they may wish to look at a proposal for an LGBTQ transitional housing program. If they are successful in their search, they may stipulate that the successful operator partner with The 519 for LGBTQ specific programming.
- By making a proposal, we would be making the point that the needs of LGBTQ youth who are homeless need to be addressed with specific programming and housing opportunities.
- After a discussion, the Board members agreed that it is worth pursuing because it would address a serious need within our community that is not being addressed in the City, or indeed anywhere in Canada.

MOVED BY Scott Bomhof

SECONDED BY Stephen Menon

TO go forward with the process presented by Maura's briefing note:

- Cost pressures to be considered
- Operating impact for staff at The 519 to be considered
- Make the process public in the New Year when we are further along the track.

CARRIED

8. Human Resources Committee Report

The Human Resources Policy Committee did not meet and has no report

9. Strategic and Program Planning – Margo reported

The committee met to discuss the REOI discussed in the Executive Director's Report.

Pascal noted that all committees must meet quarterly. He will ask a member of each committee to organize a first meeting.

10. Development and Community Engagement

The Development and Community Engagement Committee had no report.

11. Pan Am Games Subcommittee

The Pan Am Games Subcommittee did not meet and has no report

12. Finance Committee Report – Tyler reported

Tyler reviewed the monthly financial update. The item was received.

14. Correspondence

No correspondence

15. Emerging Issues

The next Board meeting is scheduled for the same evening as the Church Wellesley Village BIA Annual General Meeting. Should we change our Board meeting date?

Pascal noted that he had already polled the Board regarding an alternate date, and that it was not possible to change The 519's Board meeting date in December. Angeline Ico and Matthew Cutler will attend the Church Wellesley Village BIA AGM.

16. Adjournment

MOVED BY Margo Foster
SECONDED BY Stephen Menon
THAT the meeting be adjourned
CARRIED

17. Next Board Meeting

The next regular Board meeting will take place on December 10, 2012 at 6:30 PM