

Meeting Attendance

Present:	Margo Foster, Tom Lewis, Luc Levasseur, Nicki Monahan, Jacob Porposian, Michelle Walker, Wesley Watson, Nadia Bello
Staff :	Maura Lawless (Executive Director), Becky MacFarlane (Director, Programs and Community Services), Rick McCarty (Director, Finance), John Farrell (Director, Development), Hussain Haider-Ali (Senior Consultant, Human Resources), Monica Notaro (Senior Consultant, Knowledge Management), Kristina Flynn (Senior Consultant, Sport and Recreation)
Guests:	Lisa Gore-Duplessis (Manager, Direct Services), Fiona Crean (City of Toronto Ombudsman), Kelly Sinclair (Volunteer Election Scrutineer, Legal Counsel), plus 67 registered participants
Candidates:	Alwin Kong, Jon Kastikainen, David Morris, Ron Puccini, Tasnim Rehemtula, Nichola Ward
Regrets:	Dan Boyer, Paul Bent

Meeting Minutes

Welcome

Margo Foster, Chair of the Board of Directors, opened the meeting at 6:30 PM.

Opening remarks:

- We would like to acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. We welcome guest speakers Lisa Gore-Duplessis, (Manager of Direct Services at The 519), Fiona Crean (City of Toronto Ombudsman) and ASL interpreter Jo-Ann Martin.
- As outlined in The 519's governing documents and the City Council approved Relationship Framework, voting members must:
 - live in the area bounded by Bay, Bloor, Gerrard and Parliament
 - became members for the first time at least 30 days before today's meeting (on or before August 24, 2015)
 - Lapsed catchment members are eligible to vote if they have renewed their membership prior to the start of today's meeting
 - All people who are eligible to vote were given a voting card / ballot when they came in. If you haven't registered to vote, please do so now.

- People moving motions and seconding motions should show their voting ballot when they raise their hand, so that non-voting members do not inadvertently move motions and second them.
- We also ask that movers and seconders state their full name for the minutes.

1. Quorum Confirmed

Margo confirmed quorum with 31 voting members.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Margo motioned to receive the meeting agenda.

MOVED BY	Paul Macdonald
SECONDED BY	Jacob Porpossian
THAT	the membership received The 519 Annual General Meeting Agenda (2014-2015), September 24 as circulated
DECISION	Carried.

3. Approval of the Minutes

Margo motioned to receive the 2014-2015 Annual General Meeting Minutes of September 27, 2014 with the amendment to replace the year in the title of the Minutes from 2015 to 2014.

MOVED BY	Nicki Ward
SECONDED BY	Luc Levasseur
THAT	the membership received the 2014-2015 Annual General Meeting Minutes of September 27, 2014 with the amendment to replace the year in the title of the Minutes from 2015 to 2014
DECISION	Carried.

4. Declaration of conflicts of interest

No declaration of conflict(s) of interest.

5. Board Chair Report

- It is a pleasure to now present my 2014/2015 Chair's Report to our membership.
- I express my deepest gratitude to my Board colleagues and to all the staff of The 519 for their amazing contributions over the past year.

- Your commitment to the communities we serve, your passion for the causes we fight for every day, and your creativity in addressing the challenges we face, have been a constant source of inspiration to me. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Chair, and for allowing me to be part of this collective dream we all have for the future of our communities.
- The theme of this year's Annual Report is Dreaming the Future, and there is no doubt that all of you who connect with The 519 and share in that dream with us.
- This past year, The 519 has worked hard to remain a place filled with the power to dream of better things, and a commitment to service, space and leadership that is evidenced every day.
- At The 519 we dream. We act. But we know – as you know – that there is much more work to do. And we are so fortunate that we are not doing that work alone.
- Many thanks to committed funders, like the City of Toronto and the United Way; to the hundreds of donors and sponsors who support our work through personal or corporate philanthropy; to community partners that help expand our reach and increase our capacity to provide service; to the 1,326 volunteers who volunteered their time this year; and, to the nearly 268,000 people who intersected with The 519 this year.
- Please know that it is your participation, engagement and creativity that truly gives us the confidence to dream.
- I did want to spend a few moments addressing last week's communication to our communities informing them of the impact of this year's rain-soaked Green Space Festival during Toronto Pride and appealing for their help to address a current year financial short-fall of \$125,000. I am very pleased to report that our communities are responding!
- Since last week, we have raised a remarkable \$18,000 in support for The 519 and received dozens of offers to host third-party fundraising events on our behalf.
- We are heartened by this overwhelming community response. I know all of us at The 519 are confident that we will be successful in addressing this temporary situation, and that our communities will continue to be generous in their response.
- If anyone has any questions on how they can help, please talk to John Farrell, our Director of Development. Thank you again, and I hope you all enjoy the evening.

6. Review of Financial Statements and Auditor's Report

- Good Evening, my name is Tom Lewis and it is my pleasure to present the Audited Financial Statements for the year ending December 31, 2014 as Treasurer for the Board.
- Overall, 2014 can be celebrated as another record-breaking financial year for The 519 with revenues of over \$5.3 million. This represented a 21.5% increase over the previous year's revenues and matches the revenue increase of 21.4% in 2013.
- The audit was completed by Welch LLP who was appointed by City Council and completed the audit on all the AOCC organizations. (AOCC being the Association of Community Centres comprised of the 10 community centers like The 519 that depend

on hybrid funding from both the City and the community).

- I'm pleased to inform you that The 519 once again received a clean audit – there were no irregularities identified.
- The centre ended the year with a \$9,463 program surplus after amortization. This was due in part to the exceptional World Pride Green Space Festival results and increased program revenues.
- Our core funding is provided by the City of Toronto to pay to keep the building open and accessible and covers basic costs for building maintenance, cleaning, utilities, front desk information and referrals and basic administration. We have successfully negotiated with the City for yearly increases to our core budget to offset increases in salaries and benefits so that we can continue to manage no reductions in front-line programs and services. In 2014 we were given an increase of \$49,000 in core funding.
- In 2014, Core city funding represented 23% of the overall operating budget, down slightly from 25% in 2013 and down significantly from five years ago when it represented 56% of the budget.
- Put another way, in 2014, The 519 raised approximately \$3.15 in additional funds for every \$1 provided in City of Toronto core funding.
- Special events fundraising continue to be strong factors in our fundraising success. Margo has already spoken to the challenges we are facing this year, therefore my comments tonight are focused on the 2014 Financial Report.
- Our 2014 World Pride edition of the Green Space Festival was our biggest success ever. We had projected to earn more than \$292,000 and in the end raised more than \$434,000, exceeding our budgeted target by over 48%, thanks to strong support from our communities and sponsors like TD Bank Group.
- Thanks to our Honorary Patron Salah Bachir and sponsors including BMO, the Slaight Family Foundation and Cineplex Media, our 2014 Annual Gala featuring the incredible k.d. lang raised a record \$140,000 for The 519.
- Also of significance in our fundraising success, has been the generous philanthropic support of so many individuals, corporations and foundations. This year, we exceeded budget expectations in all these areas.
- The City has moved to a multi-year budget approval process and once again we have submitted a request to cover the salary/benefit increases and economic factors going forward. This request has received an initial positive recommendation from the budget staff at the City – it is slated to go to Council for approval in early 2016.
- I'd like to thank the Finance Committee members Margo Foster and Jacob Porpossian for all their hard work during this past year. In the coming term the Finance Committee looks forward to continuing its work creating a solid financial foundation which supports the 519 in its strategic plans and ambitious projects. Any questions?
- I hereby bring forward the motion to approve & accept the financial statements and auditors report for the year 2014.

MOVED BY

Nadia Bello

SECONDED BY

Jacob Porpossian

THAT

the membership approve and accept the financial statements and 2014 Auditor's Report

DECISION

Carried.

7. Executive Director Report and Agency Business

- Good evening everyone, thank you for joining us these evening – it's a busy night in the queer community.
- The Proud to Vote Debate is happening this evening and it's focused on Queer issues in the federal elections at our sister organization Buddies. The Canadian Gay and Lesbian Archives is hosting a House warming party this evening at 7:00 PM.
- Our Annual General Meeting – perhaps not as exciting as those two events but certainly important in providing you our membership, donors and funders with a snapshot our work , issues that are important to our community and your chance to elect the members to the Board who help establish The 519's strategic priorities.
- We have about 2,600 regular members and we receive more than 265,000 visits each year.
- There are over 250 individual community groups that use our space on an on-going basis, in addition to the services and programs run by our staff.
- The 519 is the hub of a vibrant and involved community, with very diverse needs.
- We know that one of the key components of a productive, socially progressive, and responsible city is the provision of accessible public space, where communities can meet and advocate about issues that are important to them.
- I am so pleased to be welcoming so many of our members here this evening to participate in our Annual General Meeting and I want to thank each of you for the contributions you have made to making this such an amazing organization.
- This past year has again been an incredible one for The 519.
- Our settlement department has supported thousands of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer (LGBTQ) identified newcomers and refugees from over 170 countries around the world.
- Every week, hundreds of refugees gather here in this ballroom to find support and to build relationships that help them to settle in their new neighbourhoods across Toronto.
- So many of those who receive services from The 519s Settlement Program give back through thousands of hours volunteering – including those who are here helping out tonight – thank –you to all of them for their amazing contribution to the 519 and our country.
- Our amazing counselling program – which is made up predominantly of volunteer counsellors – has provided hundreds of hours of counselling to those would not otherwise be able to afford this important service.
- The team also provides group counselling to our refugee program participants through the "A Place To Talk Refugee Support Group." Access to trauma-informed counselling and support continues to be a major priority for our organization and one that we will continue to fight to make more accessible.
- This year our Education and Training Department grew by over 200% and has

delivered dozens of workshops to thousands of individuals in the corporate, government and social services sectors on how we can work together to create more inclusive queer and trans spaces.

- Through this department, we continue to push out effective advocacy campaigns – including our #respectyouelders campaign aimed at improving access to accessible and inclusive services for LGBTQ seniors in this country.
- Our “We Vote” campaign aimed at improving civic engagement among the LGBTQ community during the last municipal election, and our #allblacklives matter campaign that raised important questions and conversations within our organization about race and racism in our city and around the world.
- This year we served almost 30,000 meals to marginalized queer and trans people through our various drop-in programs and integrated our community food program within our social enterprise FABARNAK with the goal of improving access to food service training for those participating in our programs and services.
- Our partnerships with Daily Bread, Second Harvest, and Food Share have improved community access to fresh and affordable food and have allowed us to engage more effectively on broader food security issues.
- We continue to work at a policy level with the city and our community partners to ensure improved access to shelter and housing for our community members - and for the first time this year we will have a Housing Support Worker on-staff dedicated to supporting our community who are experiencing homelessness to access housing and support services. Since last November, our Housing Support Services Coordinator has successfully transitioned 25 marginalized queer and trans community members into safe and affordable housing.
- This past summer, we also trusted PrideHouseTO during the Pan/ParaPan Am Games, offering sports programming, art installations, and community celebrations aimed at raising the bar on sports inclusion - within a multi-sport gaming context but also as part of a broader movement to create ‘a place for all in support’.
- This is especially important to us because, as many of you know, we are working The City of Toronto, in partnership a major philanthropic partner to conduct a feasibility study to determine if Moss Park is suitable for redevelopment of a new integrated Recreation Centre.
- The new Rec Centre would be the first facility of its kind that is open to all Torontonians and at the same time dedicated to advancing LGBTQ inclusion in sport/recreation and while creating a unique opportunity to work collaboratively to build inclusive recreation space across all City recreation centres.
- Over the next year we will be conducting public and community consultations to help shape the vision for the Rec Centre, so I really encourage you to come and be part of helping us to continue to lead the City’s strategies on LGBTQ inclusion.
- The work that many staff and community leaders are engaged in on a daily basis within these walls never ceases to amaze me.
- As much as I am proud to lead this incredible organization, I am also so thankful that I share that leadership with so many of you – members of the Board of Management – past and present, our incredible staff, the funders and donors who make our work possible, and our amazing volunteers that allow us to do more than we ever thought

possible. Thank-you.

- For many LGBTQ people here in this room, in this City, and around the world the struggle to obtain full citizenship, the struggle for equal rights – is a struggle that continues.
- This is something that we can't forget – for all the gains we have made – for every victory shared – there is still so much to be done.
- In an age of political fragmentation, we must work to unify communities and find collaborative solutions on behalf of those most vulnerable. In an age when issues of race still divide, wound and impoverish our communities, we must actively and with tenacity pursue racial equity and racial justice.
- With that it is my privilege to introduce to you Lisa Gore-Duplessis, our Manager, Direct Services who will speak to some of the important work we are doing within our Settlement Department.
- Lisa, who has been with our organization for six years, continues to lead by empathy and example – her innate courage and incredible commitment and professionalism inspires all of us to be better and makes it so much easier for us to imagine and dream.
- Please join me in welcoming Lisa Gore-Duplessis, Manager of Direct Services here at The 519.

Special Presentation: Supporting LGBTQ Refugees in Canada, Lisa Gore-Duplessis:

- My name is Lisa Gore-Duplessis and I am the Manager of Direct Services here at The 519. I'd to talk this evening about Crisis and Support.
- Refugee Crisis... very impactful words
- Globally, Refugee Crisis has been the most utilised phrase in the past 6 months. The plight of unwelcomed refugees crossing borders, experiencing open rejection, abuse and even death has been the main feature of every media source. The desperate situation that war and persecution has created has the world riveted. 19 million people now have the designation of refugee. Some people find the concept hard to grasp until they saw pictures.....boat loads of people.....the image of a child lying lifeless on a beach.
- The world has never experienced a Refugee Crisis of this scale in most people's lifetime.... unfortunately, it isn't as new as many think.
- LGBTQ Refugees have been in global crisis for decades. Seeking safety, acceptance and hoping for a permanent home. Today's Refugee Crisis has increased pressure on LGBTQ communities to flee for their safety and that of their families.
- One of The 519's largest programs Among Friends Refugee Support welcomes LGBTQ Refugee Claimants from 100+ countries. Annually, the program provides group and one-on-one settlement services to an average 4000 claimants. In the last 6 months Settlement staff has oriented 525 new claimants to the Among Friends Refugee Support program, a 33% increase over the same period in 2014.

Crisis

- Claimants whose existence has been criminalised in their home countries are

extremely vulnerable and isolated from family and community supports. Many are victims of years of psychological repression and physical as well as sexual violence. Moreover, increasing failure rates of refugee claims in Canada contributes to high levels of stress, anxiety, depression and suicidal actions while navigating the application process. The only statistic I can share from The Immigration and Refugee Board is from 2013 when only 45% of refugee claims were successful; I don't feel confident that this percentage has increased.

Support

- The 519 is the only organisation in the GTA providing comprehensive and dedicated services to LGBTQ refugee claimants. Many get referred to the 519 by Legal Aid Attorneys for support with case proof and end up with a bonus system of support that includes nutritious meals, supportive volunteering, housing help, counselling, social and professional networking in a safe positive space.
- With a growing and excessive demand for one-on-one settlement counselling, programming, the provision of testimony at Refugee hearings; combined with increasingly complex client needs, sadly, existing funding does not cover the true cost of program delivery.
- The difference support makes is stunning! In the past 5 years, members of Among Friends have experienced an 85% success rate at the Immigration and Refugee Board! Compared to the last given stat of 45%, it is very clear that we must continue to offer the same levels of support; not only as an agency, but as a community as well...this is a shared effort.
- I'd like to thank everyone in this room for your continued contributions, your donations, your time, your prayers, and your presence here today.
- At some point Refugee Crisis will cease being buzz words. People will stop talking about this issue...but we can't forget.... together we will ensure that no one forgets.
- I'd like to leave you with a perfect James Baldwin quote:
- *"One must say yes to life, and embrace it wherever it is found - and it is found in terrible places... For nothing is fixed, forever and forever, it is not fixed; the earth is always shifting, the light is always changing, the sea does not cease to grind down rock. Generations do not cease to be born, and we are responsible to them because we are the only witnesses they have. The sea rises, the light fails, lovers cling to each other, and children cling to us. The moment we cease to hold each other, the moment we break faith with one another, the sea engulfs us and the light goes out".*
- Thank you

Maura introduced guest speaker Fiona Cream of the City of Toronto:

- Prior to this new post, Fiona was an Assistant Deputy Minister in the Ontario Government, responsible for managing significant organizational change in the correctional system.
- She established the Ombudsman's role at York University and was Executive Director of the Ontario Ombudsman's Office. She was an investigator at the Ontario Human Rights Commission.
- Multilingual and trained as a teacher and mediator, Fiona has done development and

governance work for civil society organizations and governments in South America, Eastern Europe and southern Africa. She has worked extensively in First Nations and Inuit communities in Canada.

8. Guest Speaker

- Fiona Crean, City of Toronto Ombudsman applauded the work and contribution to the community through the staff, board, volunteers, donors and partners of The 519 such as: responding to needs of community, offering community employment and training needs, the education and training work for Trans Inclusion, parenting, GreenSpace, newcomer, refugee and trauma programs. Fiona spoke to:
- The tremendous impact of hundreds of lives through the work of The 519 staff Karlene Williams Clarke serving newcomers and refugees.
- The 519 helping to address realities where rights are in jeopardy, discrimination occurs and people are denied fair and equitable treatment.
- The significance of building a culture of defending rights in a world of competing interests and polarization such as economic class, race and gender. That accommodation and compromise to advance improvement for all will come with progress and to remember that government is accountable to people.
- The significance of ensuring equity offered in our services; providing accessible services; serving and trying to help improve the lives of marginalized and therefore looking to serving not just people capable of helping themselves but those who need more help than a good system to navigate.
- How everyday demonstrates that we all need to be reminded of equity and appreciate the principle that equity means we are different with different needs and this is not one direct path.
- That achievement is short lived or swallowed up by other events if we focus only on our goals – together we can achieve more by advocacy for an equitable society – so we win and society wins.

9. Elections to The Board of Management

- Hi, I am Luc Levasseur, Chair of the Nominations Committee. I'd like to introduce the Board of Management of 2015-2016: Margo Foster, Jacob Porpossian, Michelle Walker, Tom Lewis, Dan Boyer, Paul Bent, Nicki Monahan, Nadia Bello, Wesley Watson and myself, Luc Levasseur
- I would like to acknowledge the following retiring members for their contributions and leadership in supporting The 519. Their dedication, passion and actions have advanced the vision and mandate of The 519 as it strives to meet the needs of our community.
- In gratitude for their work and commitment to The 519, we are very pleased to present each of them with a limited edition print of a detail from Daryl Vocat's Personal Fitness, a work that was installed on the outside of The 519 for PrideHouseTO.
- Margo Foster, who is our current Chair and Chair of the Executive Committee, and

- retiring after serving 4 years.
- Paul Bent, who is a member of the Human Resources and Resource Development Committees and retiring after serving 2 years.
 - Dan Boyer, who is a member of Strategic Program and Planning, and Human Resources Committees, and retiring after serving two years.
 - I'd like to introduce the Nomination Committee which is myself with Nicki Monahan and Nadia Bello.
 - The Nominations Committee is a standing committee of the Board of Management of The 519. The Committee is responsible to manage the recruitment process and recommend candidates to the membership to fill vacancies on the Board. The Committee is also responsible to ensure that the process complies with The 519's by-laws and other governing documents including the City of Toronto's Public Appointments Policy.
 - All candidates to the Board of Management must meet minimum eligibility criteria of being over the age of 18; being a resident of the City of Toronto; not being in a restricted category as defined in the Public Appointments Policy; being a member of The 519; and, at least 6 of the Board members must be within the catchment area of Bay, Bloor, Parliament and Gerrard Streets.
 - In addition to these minimum requirements, the Nominations Committee evaluates all applicants in relation to identified diversity and skill / experience priorities. For 2014-2015, the Committee focused on the following Board approved priorities to increase representation:
 - Women and trans people
 - Individuals from a cross-section of age groups
 - Members of diverse racial and ethno-cultural communities

And, the Committee recruited with the following skill and experience priorities in mind:

- Fundraising / Resource Development
 - Diversity Planning / Development
 - Government Relations / Public Affairs
 - Expertise with Refugee and Newcomer Services and Issues
 - Sport and Recreation Management and Inclusion
 - Community and Neighbourhood Development
-
- For the 2014-2015 Candidates for The Board of Management the Nomination Committee received and interviewed 12 applications and tonight there are 9 candidates seeking election in one of 7 available positions.
 - 6 of these positions are for 2 year terms and 1 vacant position for a one year term.
 - 3 of these positions are catchment and 4 are non-catchment
 - During interviews, candidates answered questions to give demonstrate their knowledge / experiences with diversity, their professional skills / knowledge, and their potential contributions to The 519's priorities / future development.
 - Each question had a pre-established answer key and rating system to ensure candidates were evaluated fairly and consistently.

- The Nominations Committee thanks all applicants who put their nominations forward to the Board. I invite invites each candidate to stand up for acknowledgement (in alphabetical order):

1. Jon Kastikainen
2. Alwin Kong
3. Tom Lewis
4. David Morris
5. Jacob Porpossian
6. Ron Puccini
7. Tasnim Rehemtula
8. Michelle Walker
9. Nichola Ward

- I invite each candidate to present themselves for up to 3 minutes. Thank you Kelly Sinclair, Legal Counsel who is volunteering as scrutineer with Monica Notaro.
- According to The 519's constitution, at least 6 Board members must live within the catchment area and 5 Board members may live outside the catchment area and be Associate Members. (There is one ex-officio position filled by the local Councillor).
- The ballots are numbered and are issued with each registered voter. The ballots are marked with an * to indicate the candidates living in catchment.
- A ballot is disqualified or considered spoiled if it left blank or if there are more than 7 votes indicated. The scrutineers will collect ballots if once complete and count the results in a separate room while the room takes a break. Prior to results being motioned to finalize, there will be a vote on the tie for the one year term.
- Ballots will be issued to registered voters and the scrutineers will collect ballots for the count and report on results.
- I motion to start the election process, and I motion to destroy used and unused ballots after the elections.
- Motion to elect successful candidates to the 2015-2016 Board of Management of The 519: Alwin Kong, Tom Lewis, David Morris, Jacob Porpossian, Tasnim Rehemtula, Michelle Walker, Nichola Ward

MOVED BY **Nichola Ward**

SECONDED BY **Jacob Porpossian**

THAT **the election process be opened**

DECISION **Carried**

MOVED BY **Ronald Fotherangham**

SECONDED BY Nevin Bruseker
THAT all election ballots (used and unused) be destroyed
DECISION Carried

MOVED BY Paul MacDonald

SECONDED BY Nadia Bello

THAT membership elect the following candidates to the Board of Management: Alwin Kong, Tom Lewis, David Morris, Jacob Porpossian, Tasnim Rehemtula, Michelle Walker, Nichola Ward

DECISION Carried

10. Announcement of Election Results

Luc announced election results:

2 year term, 2015-2017:

- Nichola Ward
- Tasnim Rehemtula
- Jacob Porpossian
- David Morris
- Tom Lewis
- Alwin Kong

1 year term, 2015-2016 to fill a vacancy: Michelle Walker

Adjournment

Margo motioned to adjourn the Annual General Meeting.

MOVED BY Jacob Porpossian

SECONDED BY Alwin Kong

THAT the Annual General Meeting be adjourned

DECISION Carried