**The Youth Project: Extraordinary General Meeting**

The Glitter Bean Café, 5896 Spring Garden Road

November 24, 2018

5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Minutes:

* Land acknowledgement
  + Attention to colonization and queer identities. Acknowledging the grief tied to this process but also the hope for going forward.
* Welcome and introductions
  + Bios of members of the board of directors
  + Introductions of youth board members
  + Introductions of staff
* Meeting principles and guidelines
  + 1 diva, 1 mike
  + Be respectful
  + Support the experiences of others
  + Center youth voices
  + Speak from experience
  + Be aware of the amount of space you’re taking up (time space, not physical space)
  + Center yourself and take time if you need it
  + Be aware of potential triggers for others
  + Center your needs
  + Respect YP by-laws
* Review agenda
  + Member brought up issue of whether we were following our by-laws by confirming new directors tonight. They felt this was not announced 30 days ago. Chair disputed, citing when publication was announced.
* Current context: presentation of joint board visioning session
  + Chair and youth board member presented
  + Strengths/aspirations:
    - Barriers: diversity and representation, accessibility, age restrictions (reach out to younger youth), money/funding and finances, policy and structure, burnout and staff capacity, roles/power/trust, regional connection, outreach partners, evaluation/accountability/safety
  + Discussion of powerful words (power/trust, white supremacy). Chair explained that she can’t speak to the specific words written by YB or BOD members. Chair spoke to the issues of power and trust. Youth board member said these words are indeed powerful but that the work we’re doing is powerful as well.
  + Discussion of board member departures in October and whether this ties into the power/trust issue. Chair stated that they left for very different reasons, not able to speak to that due to people’s privacy.
  + Discussion of the term “white supremacy” and its connotations. Youth board member stated they couldn’t speak to that person’s experience or how BIPOC people feel but it could be argued that white people dominating culture is a form of supremacy.
* Presentation of survey data
  + Mirrors the issues brought up in the board visioning. Might be redundant but want to restate due to importance.
  + More than 200 responses since October from the community.
  + General consensus that the YP’s existence is essential
  + Some stats:
    - 70% of survey participants have accessed YP space/services.
    - 40% identify as youth
    - 86% identify as member of community
    - 26% identify as allies
    - 4.4% identify as African NS
    - 7.8% identify as Indigenous
    - Newcomer/recent immigrants 2.9%
    - Disabled/neurodiverse 6%
    - Many respondents were living in rural communities
  + Priorities
    - Physical accessibility of YP space 48%
    - BIPOC issues 45%
    - Staff retention
    - Transparency 35%
    - Community input 33%
    - Programs for younger youth
    - Volunteer support
    - Advocacy
  + Comments included:
    - Issues of racism, cultural relevance, accessibility (both physical and geographical distance).
    - “Not queer enough”: non-binary, gender diverse support is not on par with lesbian and gay support. Ace spectrum feeling unsupported.
    - Need for more mental health, trauma-informed lens
    - Need for transparency, consistency
  + Discussion of ways to access the survey, accessibility considerations. Chair stated that it wasn’t sufficiently accessible but will fix for next time.
  + Discussion of the reliability of the survey since it was possible for people to fill out survey more than once. Alternative was the survey wouldn’t be anonymous. Board decided to prioritize anonymity and hired an external professional to create the survey.
  + Comment from member: as a former youth/volunteer thank you for trying to get this tangible evidence, thank you for not letting this crash and burn.
    - Chair: this is only the starting point. It was live for three weeks, we did the best we could. She acknowledges that all societies deal with these issues. No org in Halifax doesn’t deal with these. But we are trying to be intentional moving forward.
  + Question from member: did anything positive come out of the survey?
    - Yes. Lots of fantastic feedback. Every single person said they loved the YP. It is integral to them, to someone they love, to their community and to Nova Scotia.
* Discussion of accessibility issues being considered at the YP house.
  + Discussion of the term "crisis" and what kind of crisis the YP is facing.
    - Large staff turnover is indicative of operational problems that need to be addressed.
    - Many staff left due to some the same reasons highlighted above: burnout, race issues, capacity expectations.
    - Current staff discussed the fact that programming was suspended in September, due in large part to staffing issues. Positivity about new staff and what lays ahead for the Youth Project, reiterating need for support.
* Group exercise and feedback
  + Why are you here?
    - Going to camp helped them realize they were trans.
    - Someone who came out as trans and was greatly helped by the YP wants to see this continue
    - Someone who lives where outreach isn’t, and wants it to continue/grow.
    - The YP saved their life. YP is home, wants it to continue. Needs to exist. Here because they care.
    - Came out as trans. Worked for YP and raised money. YP is essential. Saved their life at 27, needs to center youth going forward.
    - Youth participant for 7 years, summer events coordinator/summer student. YP was a paradise when wasn’t out or knew what trans meant in junior high.
    - Chair: cares deeply, has trans/non-binary child. Didn’t have a space like this as a queer youth, knows how much this has to exist.
  + What advice do you have for the organization?
  + Comment from member: Speaks about Kate. States her not being there is the elephant in the room. Need to acknowledge it.
    - Chair: Kate was a part of the decision to suspend programming, and the visioning that needs to happen moving forward will include Kate.
  + Advice for the Youth Project:
    - Member: reopen the space, reevaluation about accessibility of the physical space, get a volunteer coordinator, develop a policy program to support youth to progress towards volunteering and being involved.
    - Youth board member: Need to re-center the youth in the YP, and in the discussions regarding the YP.
    - Member: Priority needs to be dealing with the staff burnout and turnover and then move on to bigger issues.
    - Member: we need to be celebrating the work that we have accomplished in order to focus on the things we need to do.
    - Member: for big meetings, can we have somewhere that we can sit in a circle?
    - Youth member: thank you for what you have done. As a young trans man, wants to see trans femme voices amplified. Need to make spaces more accessible to these women. Center the youth and center the youth who haven’t been centered yet (trans feminine youth and youth of colour).
    - Member: Kimberly Crenshaw speaks about intersectional failures. Trans feminine youth are being left out. Binder and gaff program is great but it doesn’t help everyone. Maybe we aren’t seeing these people because we aren’t looking to try to find them. Need to intersectionalize the binder/gaff program.
    - Youth board member: youth voices need to be centered. The youth board doesn’t represent everybody. They need to reach out to other communities, like rural communities. Youth board needs to do outreach as well.
    - Chair: we will take this back and use it. We will move forward in a better and stronger way because of this.
* Confirm new Directors
  + Members asked questions and got to know the new directors more. Directors provided background on themselves.

**Motion**: Sean Wood motions that each potential director be voted on separately. Seconded by Clark MacIntosh; motion carries.

**Motion**: Olivia Jacquard motions to accept Rhiannon Makohoniuk as a member of the board of directors. Seconded by Clark MacIntosh; motion carries.

**Motion**: Jay Roy motions to accept Frank Heimpel as a member of the board of directors. Seconded by Hannah Gorsline; motion carries.

**Motion**: Clark MacIntosh motions to accept Kelly MacNeil as a member of the board of directors. Seconded by Olivia Jacquard; motion carries.

* Olivia Jacquard motions that we adjourn the meeting for tonight with the board to be able to add members as per the by-laws, to be confirmed at the AGM in June. Kevin Kindred seconds; motion founders. Argument about Robert’s Rules of Order.
* Adam Reid suggested that a future EGM take place in order to allow membership to confirm the remaining two spots on the board.
* General agreement that that EGM could be part of a visioning session.

**Motion**: Olivia Jacquard motions that we meet again as a membership during an EGM in January (as part of a visioning session) to fill the two remaining open board member positions. Sean Wood seconds; motion carries.

Motion to adjourn made by Kyle at 8:17pm. Motion carries.