

The Landing Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, February 22, 2017  
4:00pm – SUB 0-31



Present\*: Batul, Ben, Christine, Cody, Francesca, Laura, Matheus, Rebecca, Sirina.  
Absent: Selena

1. Call to Order, Check In
  - Call to order at 4:03pm.
2. Approval of the Agenda
  - Motion to approve, passed.
3. Approval of Minutes from February 15, 2017
  - Motion to approve, passed.
4. Open Forum for Volunteers
  - Q: Volunteers feel left in the dark. They appreciate the emails, but they feel that it's unfair to ask volunteers to continue to act as normal despite lacking an ED. It risks both the volunteers and the students who access the services.
    - A: Decisions can be abrupt, but it is the reality of employment relationships. In terms of support, we want to discuss this today to establish the needs of volunteers. We hope to discover what kind of tangible and emotional support can be provided. Rafiki is in a position to handle volunteer concerns and Colleen is prepared to handle emotional aspects. Hard discussion will be on which services are essential and which ones would be limited for the remainder of the term.
      - We are going to move ahead and post the position for ED. We are determining the timing, but this isn't meant to say that all services are meant to stop. We are seeking input for the length of contract, potential temporary hires.
  - Q: Why was there no immediate support provided from the board following the ED termination?
    - A: There was discussion that volunteers wouldn't feel supported with the board there, so more effort was made to allocate more resources to Colleen and Rafiki.
    - Christine mentioned that she would have felt like she was intruding by making an appearance, considering her limited availability to provide

knowledge. The most important aspect was to convey a message that showed support to students.

- Q: With hiring the new ED, we have lost an ED, but also an individual who has formed personal ties. Is that person going to get the same anti-O training within a certain time constraint.
  - A: With the time frame taken for hiring, we may not hire a new ED until April and May. Relationship building is a key factor for hiring an ED and we are aiming to find one that is compatible with the Landing work style. There are aspirations to have volunteers to be more involved with the board, so more direct input would be available.

Q: For the volunteer position on the board, how will it be picked and how can we combat the fact that outside factors have more of a voice than ones who directly work within the space

- Many of the board positions were determined in the DFU referendum. There are 3 student representatives, 2 of which are determined by the students and the other is a volunteer. We have 3 positions for queer serving organizations, guaranteeing one to iSMISS, one to OUTreach, and a third which is currently a vacancy. Two members from the greater Edmonton community, occupied by Selena and Laura. One U of A staff members, rotating 2-4 by department. The Students' Union is dedicated to have three seats, one VP, one council member, and a SU staff members. We have a set structure, but no formal policy for how those are selected within each category. For the volunteer position, Emily Marriot had filled the spot, but once her term was up, the staff communicated to us that it was not the best use of efforts. There was a conversation that the board needs to do more in facilitating better participation for engaging volunteers in that position. Moving forward, a contested election among volunteers would be held to determine position, following board approval.
- The board is structure based off the language of the referendum and it is binding and voting on by the students. Any changes to the broad board structure must be approved by the board and by the Student's Union. That being said, the number of positions are not determined by the board.
  - The Landing is governed by SU bylaws. Section 6000 describes that if the Landing were to collect money from DFUs, it must obey SU bylaws. The Landing must abide to a certain level of SU bylaws.
  - An audit committee run by the Students' Union examines whether or not the organization that receives DFUs following their mandate

from the referendum.

- The referendum was posed in 2015 to determine whether or not the Landing would receive DFU funding.
- Q: For picking a rep, is voting better than a consensus style? There is a risk to have a power structure.
  - If that's what the volunteers decide that what suits them best, we can discuss consensus style election.
  - Comment added from volunteer that it can help volunteer relationships. Meeting minutes are limited on the website and contact has been made with the chair, with some having gaps between discussion points. The lack of clarity has led to uncertainty around discussion surrounding the role of a volunteer representative on the board.
  - Another volunteer made comment about the need to have more transparency on the board and their communication with the volunteers and other external actors.
  - General comment to make the language and format more accessible, more consistent of attendance, positions, regrets, no mention of voting number and in-camera. A document can be made to provided added clarification. Also introduce time stamps.
  - Volunteers should have more communication with the board and a greater understanding than the remainder of the general public.
- Q: Why is there only 1 volunteer rep and 3 SU reps?
  - This was based off of previous DFU model structures and the current chair.

## 5. Brainstorming Activity

- Photos will be attached for this portion.
- General comments/questions:
  - Why was the exercise conducted the way it was? There were only a limited amount of volunteers here and we are operating with a majority vote and power dynamic.
    - We must single out the most significant/support items to allow for some progress to move forward. The documents will be transcribed and allow for editing and comments on Google Docs as well.
    - There can be the possibility of also engaging volunteers through a town hall to respond to direct communication and more open engagement.
  - Volunteer calls for the board to a more tangible commitment to an

anti-oppressive practice. There is an interest to take place in anti-O training and to have a longer/more sustained discussion about this topic.

- What is the most effective way to reach volunteers who were not available to make it today?
  - Placing the sheets in the space of the Landing to allow for most volunteers to access this information. There was limited notifying of volunteers about the timing of this meeting and only 25 minutes of discussions for volunteers. The activity chosen is limited to actually engaging volunteers and potentially showing lack of disrespect towards volunteers. Moving forward, we can look into modify the questions posed for other volunteers, but also provide questions for visitors to respond to as well for a certain period of time.
  - Call on the board to take more time to make decision making. The White Supremacist culture handout has been useful in dismantling the sense of urgency, which limits individual voices, specifically the volunteers in this certain process. A harm reduction model should be looked into being adopted in the future can allow for more contributions.
  - This exercise allow for the chair to pick questions and volunteers are forced to answer in a certain way.
  - There is a concern that board members are not associated with the Landing volunteers, with the timing of the termination being “fucked up” and there is an uncomfortable relationship between the volunteers and the board.
    - The foundation of the organization has been rocked following the ED’s termination, which certain projects being held in uncertain places. Board members are having discussions about dismissing Emily, with none of the board members having appeared in the space, to see what her impact on the organization truly is.
    - The ED has impact the majority of the volunteers outside of their role of ED. The decision has affected the volunteers outside of their roles, with the communication and general handling of the situation goes against the Landing values. It risks limiting the capacity of volunteers to aid visitors. The actions that have been taking have caused questioning about volunteers roles within the space.
    - The Landing is anti-O and volunteers work actively to goes against this rhetoric, specifically within the university. The

ED represented certain beliefs that have now been removed from the Landing, specifically the role of the status quo. From the volunteers perspective, the board is very removed from the situation of the Landing, include the actions of the ED.

- Following the review of the minutes, minus the January and February minutes, they do not reflect any kind of discussion surrounding Emily's position. There is mention of a recently approved contract and many discussions of committees. Where are these decisions happening? Why are they not reflected in the board meeting minutes?
- If decisions are going to be made in so many ways, board members need to be accountable to their decisions and to show up to the space to discuss actions taken.
  - Certain volunteers have also communicated to the chair that they do not want to see board members in the space. In response, there was a board member who had entered the space and then left rapidly, showing lack of support for the emotional disconnect at the time. Volunteers needed time and available information to process the decision and to open up the relationship between volunteers and the board. If board members want to show up, it would be recommended to contact Rafiki and to allow for emotional preparation to have conversations with the board.
- There are ways to be accountable that is outside of the space, such as providing time for volunteers to communicate board members and ask questions for clarification. It was not made clear to volunteers that they were able to sit in on meetings and moving forward, this need to be further clarified.
- Moving forward, it would be beneficial to have the date and times of meeting better publicized. Potential to have a monthly or semester meeting to discuss with the board about events from both sides.
- Impression is giving that there are two people on the board who are from OUTreach. If there are two students at large positions, they should not have association with this

associations. More clarification and discussion needs to be had about connections. There needs to be updates on the website about roles and representation.

- Clarification from Matheus: Matheus was brought on as the student at large, with Selena being the OUTreach. there were changes of positions, with Matheus taking the OUTreach seat and Selena being the non-student/community-at-large member.
  - When people are on the board representing other organizations, are they permitted to have discussions with their organizations about the activities of the board.
    - For open portions, the information is public knowledge, the large part of meeting were open. The closed/in-camera sessions are not able for discussion.
    - Closed portion is determined by the context, mainly personnel.
    - For groups that are being represented, there is the risk of having biases against our role. To balance this out, the addition of additional volunteer seats can be discussed. There can also be the discussion of volunteers being included in committee work as well, further utilizing future volunteer reps.
    - More sharing of the agenda with the volunteers, similar to the style of board members that we currently see.
  - Desire from the volunteers to present questions to board in similar style to exercise seen today.
6. Open Board Meeting - Portion was delayed or moved until the next board meeting.
- Immediate Steps/Pride Week
    - i.
  - Plan for Rest of Term
    - i.
  - Executive Director Hiring Timeline
    - i.
  - Volunteer/Staff Supports
    - i.
  - Volunteer Rep Seat
    - i.

7. Closed Board Meeting - Portion was delayed or moved until the next board meeting.

8. Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 6:09pm. A meeting will be planned in the future to discuss the open and closed board meeting topics.
- Thanks was giving to the volunteers for attending the meeting today to share their thoughts about the current situation. There needs to be an increase in volunteer participation in the future and greater understanding from both the volunteers and the boarding the future.

\*7 volunteers were in attendance, both in person and over the phone.