

OPIRG AGM (September 2014 – August 2015)

Meeting Minutes

24 February 2016

[5:09] Meeting comes to order. Check ins and introductions from all present.

[5:14] Meeting facilitator selection. Board member Yasmine nominated.

[5:15] beginning with presentation of Annual Report. Starting with celebrating our successes and talking about our research.

Madeleine: In 2014, OPIRG re-invigorated our focus on research. People's History Project has been around for many years (explanation of what PHP is). New stories on Prisoner's Justice Day, rice conflict, expulsion of med students, the Grey House, amongst other subjects. PHP continues traditional OPIRG research. What's new is the two research grants to Queen's students to focus on relevant issues: Kingston Community Gardener Census and We Believe in a Campus Free of Sexual Violence

Yasmine: We'll be keeping a speakers list so raise your hand if you have anything to add.

Brea: More discussion on PHP stories. Possibility of reaching out to artists who are connected to prison justice.

Public Interest School was more broadly skill oriented. Organizers often do not get to grow skills, building capacity was focus of fostering campus and community movements.

Not Just Cisters, new working group. Work with SACK, Queen's Pride. Tries to challenge transmisogyny and the exclusion of trans women.

More resources available for working groups/organizations moving forward.

Board Member: By the way, we are recording this. For CFRC. [no concerns noted by members]

Libby: Action section of Annual report, talking about working groups. Looking forward to continuing work of Working Groups. Alt-Frosh 2014, KASSI, etc.

Question from member: Where is Lakeside community garden? **[answer]** Days and Front.

Libby: If anyone has ideas for a working group, you can approach OPIRG, we have support.

Member at large: Reelout is a former working group, now incorporated, all thanks to OPIRG.

Brea: Other working groups: Loving Spoonful, Yellow Bike, Positive Space, all started as working groups. The working groups collectively raised \$17000 this year.

Yasmine: We'd like to thank all of our contributors. The Board, all of our volunteers, staff, and research fellows. We appreciate all the time they have given us. A very special thank you to Brea for bringing the organization from the ground up.

Madeleine: We'd like to thank Emily as well. Critical to referendum. Not noted in annual report as this was in the 2015 year.

Emily: Can we add referendum updates for the AMS and SGPS? [discussion added to end of agenda]

Yasmine: Moving on to the presentation of the previous year's budget.

Brea: No accountant statements this year, no funding available this year. SGPS fee has been increasing, opt-in rate is increasing. We can continue this trend, maybe we'll also see it in AMS fee next year. By doing more work. Grants/donations are straightforward line. Equalization fund is provincial network's offer to help Kingston get on equal footing, help sustain our work. For the record, some money raised by working groups is found in the grants line.

Programming line- programming means events open to everyone. Organizational development section is for particular group, is for board, volunteers, members. Are there any questions about expenses? [none from members]

The deficit we ran this year is funded from our historic surplus. Following basic non-profit standards for having a contingency fund. We spent money to really show Queen's students what we're doing, not just tell them what we're doing or what we could be doing.

Madeleine: OPIRG's financial year goes from September to August. AGM is being held now because of busy things, namely referendum. Bylaws say AGM must be held within 6 months of fiscal year end. Next AGM probably in the fall.

[5:47] election of new directors for the board.

Brea: Explaining the process for how board members were nominated. Call for applicants to join the board, asked people to submit applications, were reviewed by board. Board is now nominating applicants, who must be elected by this floor.

Madeleine: Things to note about the board. It is a combination of students, community members. That representation has fluctuated. Looking forward to having a good representation of all groups after this election. Board is consensus based, promotes politics of anti-oppression.

Every applicant had to submit resumes, statement of anti-oppression. Members' choice to ask questions of board nominees.

Question from member: how many board members can there be? **[answer]:** It ranges. Currently 6, looking at having 8 at the moment. Four are coming to end of term. Bylaws allow for up to 9. Want continuity between boards, don't want entire board to turn over all at once.

[Voting for Board! 😊 4 new board members successfully elected.]

Our next AGM will be in October. New members may also be elected there to take the max of 9.

Brea: before we move on to the neverendums, thank you for all coming.

[5:57] discussion of data/insights from referendum data.

Brea: OPIRG has historically had student fee, is the biggest line. All AMS fees have triennial review. First time fee was lost in January 2012. Year after we had no undergrad fee. Have had several attempts to get fee back, which were unsuccessful, this year we were successful.

Madeleine: Organization against OPIRG is barrier, the No campaign called NOPIRG. OPIRG is in state of defense to some extent, does not stop us from doing great things.

Brea: Having great programming is critical. We played by the rules, won some respect from parts of the university.

About the SGPS referendum. We were up for referendum, it was sprung on us. Changed from 6 year review to 3 year review. Opening email was "sorry you weren't told about this, but you're on the ballot." Disqualified for post on website. We contacted the CRO several times without a response. Did not get any communication back. AMS is very good at communicating rules, SGPS was not. Reading week delayed appeal committee.

We don't know the results until the end of the appeal.

Question from member: how does the SGPS vote? **[answer]:** about 10% higher than the AMS. Low voter turnout is a concern. Opt out rates are declining.

Member at large: I looked at SGPS ballot, all passed. Faith in OPIRG.

Member at large: Since 1999, SGPS has never voted against OPIRG. Online opt-out changed numbers, became more accessible to opt out.

Member at large: Membership is based on fee. Complicates membership because of term opt-out? For example, you could end up only paying half the fee.

Yasmine: Challenges with communicating with the SGPS because Brea is not SGPS member. Pressure could be impactful as well.

Member at large: There are options for the OPIRG website, could reformat the posts.

Brea: SGPS members shared a lot of the images on our website without us knowing, which was allowed. Us making the post: not allowed. We were forced on this ballot with very little notice, right after AMS referendum.

[6:14] check-outs.

[6:33] Meeting concluded and adjourned.