

# **Minutes of the 2013 Annual General Meeting of QPIRG Concordia**

17 October 2013, 1500 de Maisonneuve W., #204

## **1. Introduction**

Tasha Zamudio facilitating.

Mary Foster taking notes.

Fred Burrill is Chief Returning Officer.

*Accessibility arrangements announced by facilitator:*

- Translators are Joël Pednault and Patrick Cadorette.
- The location is wheelchair accessibility.
- Gender neutral washrooms are available on this floor; gender assigned washrooms in the café on the first floor.
- Childcare provided by Oliver Fugler is in the library.

Facilitator also announced that a package of information for the AGM as well as the Annual Report are available at the door.

Facilitator asked media to identify themselves. A journalist from the Concordia Link is present. Facilitator asks those who don't want their photo taken to please tell staff members.

Facilitator explains the vote:

- A simple majority by a show of pink cards will be used to approve the agenda and adopt the 2012 minutes. Simple majority by secret ballot will be used to elect the new Board and the Conflict Resolution and Complaints Committee (CRCC). Only active members can vote.
- An active member is an undergraduate or graduate Concordia student who has paid their fees or an active volunteer of 10 hours or more to a QPIRG committee or working group or a community member who has paid \$10 membership fee prior to the AGM. Active members have been given pink cards at the door when they entered.

Question (Claude): Do we have quorum?

Facilitator: Yes, we do.

## **2. Approve Agenda**

The facilitator presented the agenda aloud. It is also projected on a screen and is in the printed package.

Motion to adopt meeting agenda.

***VOTE:***

YES: many.

NO: 0

Abstention: 0

Meeting agenda adopted.

### **3. Approval of 2012 Minutes**

Minutes are made available in package. They have also been on the website for more than six months. People are given some time to review them.

Motion to adopt 2012 AGM minutes.

#### **VOTE:**

YES: many

NO: 0

Abs: 0

AGM minutes adopted.

### **4. QPIRG and Core Project Reports**

#### **i. Board of Directors' Report**

Ian Bradley-Perrin gave the report for the 2012-2013 Board. He reported that the Board had a great year. The 2012 AGM elected 12 members. They began with a training, to learn about QPIRG's mandate and operations and get to know each other. The Board had a conflict resolution training in the fall. Board members took part in programming and working groups committee, as well as finance, alternative library, hiring, staff liaison, and policy development. Importantly, a new Accessibility Committee was created, to continue to implement QPIRG's commitment to accessibility. The year was also marked by the aftermath of the student strike, notably opposition to P-6, with QPIRG offering safe space and support to those resisting oppression.

The programming including Activism 101 workshops, Study in Action, various CURE events, as well as film screenings, skillshares and co-sponsored events with others. QPIRG also had two publications, School Schmool and Convergence.

Ian extended the Board's thanks to the Alternative Library coordinator, Anya Slavinsky, the School schmool coordinators (Ariel Wackernagel and Noam Lapid), CURE coordinator (Kyle McLoughlin), support staff Jessica Charest and Amir Al-Shourbaji, and full-time staff, Christina Xydous, Jaggi Singh, and Noah Eidelman.

#### **ii. Staff Report**

*From Volunteer and Administrative Coordinator, Christina Xydous*

This is Christina's first full year since Ashley left in April 2012. It was a busy year and a learning year for her. There was a full board of 12 for most of year, and they ended with 9, showing a very high level of commitment. The Board training in the fall was well attended. She organized subsequent trainings to help Board Members hit the ground running, to equip them with tools to deal with issues that arose during the year.

*From Finance and Fundraising Coordinator, Noah Eidelman*

Finances were up and down this year. The early part of the year was devoted to dealing with a cash flow crisis (or almost crisis). QPIRG had been overestimating global estimates for a few years, in part because of the fee levy. With the help of the Board, they were able to successfully scale-back and prevent a real cash flow crisis, and in fact ended the year with a surplus of \$18,000 (some of this is reserved for working groups until 31 October, the rest is a real surplus).

*From Programming and Working Groups Coordinator, Jaggi Singh*

There is more in the Annual Report, but briefly, he worked with the Programming and Working Groups committee to carry out programming initiatives and support Qpirg's Working Groups, of which there were 30 this year. They worked to provide a welcoming space to people who are new to activism through, for example, the 'solidarity not charity' workshop, a workshop on community-based research, open-houses to make the space more accessible, and bike and walking tours. They were also invited into CEGEPs to give talks. In addition to one-off events, they actively supported core projects, such as Disorientation. Through co-sponsorships, they worked with other groups on events such as the Anti-Colonial Thanksgiving with the Frigo Vert, Israeli Apartheid Week, two anti-capitalist Teach-ins with the CLAC, and Art in Action. QPIRG's thirty working groups represent an incredible amount of organizing, including less visible work such as corresponding with prisoners, childcare, and skillshares. The outgoing Board has already approved returning working groups and selected several new working groups, including Accessibilize Montreal, Assemblée populaire et Autonome de Montréal (APAM), 8<sup>th</sup> March Committee of Women of Diverse Origins (full list in Annual Report).

In general, staff felt it was positive year, less hectic than the previous year, mainly because the strike was over. Part of the staff's work is to make sure QPIRG is accountable to membership through audited financial statements (next audit will be available in a few weeks), hassle-free opt-outs, Annual Report on the QPIRG website, and more. QPIRG Concordia worked closely with Qpirg mcgill, and appreciates outgoing staff Degane and Andrea while welcoming new coordinators Kira and Kama. QPIRG also contributes to student life on campus and the community through its participation in Fee Levy Advocacy at Concordia.

It is really great to work at QPIRG, to thrive on the great things people are doing; its a great environment because of the Board and what the broader QPIRG community does.

### iii. Core Projects and other reports

## *CURE*

See CURE website for more details. CURE is the Community-University Research Exchange, to facilitate collaborations between university students and grassroots community groups on environmental and social justice initiatives. It has been a core project at QPIRG for five years. Grassroots community groups submit research requests and are matched up with students at Concordia, McGill and increasingly UQAM. There are currently nine active projects. This year, Kyle was the coordinator from September to April. Among the challenges this year is that there was no summer coordinator and the second is that it is growing and is limited by capacity and funding. A big decision this year was that CURE Concordia will go for a fee levy in the coming year, in order to become independent group. They are in process of writing a constitution and are seeking support.

## *Study in Action*

QPIRG organizes an annual undergraduate conference, promoting a grassroots approach to research and the idea that research is a lot more than how it is narrowly defined within academia but is the production of knowledge by anyone for everyone. The conference usually takes place in March and last year it was 16th and 17th. It is cosponsored with QPIRG McGill and most of it takes place at Concordia. Undergraduate students and community organizations are invited to submit proposals for talks and workshops on relevant issues. The theme last year was indigenous sovereignty, focusing on Idle no More; the opening panel featured Melissa Mollen Dupuis, John Cree, Ellen Gabriel, Clifton Nicholas and Khelsilem Rivers. All the workshops are listed in the Annual Report. This year it was very well attended, comparable to previous year, and the response was generally excited and happy, interest in future participation. It is one of only a very few undergraduate conferences. Plans are already underway for next year, get in touch if you want to be involved.

(Art in Action is no longer a core project, but a cosponsorship. Art in Action grew out of Study in Action, and has become autonomous with fall and spring exhibitions. The concept is to put art in daily spaces, such as the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of the Hall Building. All are welcome to get involved.)

## *School Schmool*

School Schmool is an alternative agenda produced annually with McGill QPIRG. The coordinators, Ariel and Noam did a great job this year of compiling the three sections: Issues, together with a resource listing; Groups; and the Agenda. It features a stone paper cover and returns to a smaller format this year.

## *Alternative Library*

The Alternative Library is entirely volunteer run, though sometimes a coordinator has been hired through a work-study grant. The mandate is not to replicate info and texts in

more conventional libraries but to provide a space for marginal voices, reflecting QPIRG's anti-oppression social justice mandate. It focuses on zines. Thanks to Anya, who coordinated it last year, there were regular committee meetings, the poster archive was updated and book contributions were sorted. Part of the library is a poster archive project to create a memory of social movements. Significant amount of funding from the Sustainability Action Fund for a Montreal alternative libraries database, including libraries at the UGE, DIRA, etc., has allowed the outdated database to be overhauled by Cleve Higgins. A launch of the online database should take place shortly.

### *Convergence*

Convergence is a journal of undergraduate and community research. Issue 4 is currently at the printer and is coming out soon. QPIRG McGill played a large role in making it happen. The various articles/issues are listed in the Annual Report. The production of next year's edition will be starting again, please get in touch if you want to be part of it.

### *Disorientation*

This year's week of alternative orientation events, from 23 to 30 September, was smaller than past Disorientations for a number of reasons. It included Mad Pride, an outdoors tabling fair, workshops, a walking tour and more.

## **5. Questions about Reports**

Question: A member of the Board of the Centre for Gender Advocacy asked what kind of financial audit QPIRG did.

Noah: A certified third party audit; it's a second level audit. It is the same as we do every year. We had the same auditor for many years, but had a new auditor this year. This year's audit will be completed in a month. The previous audit is in the Annual Report.

No more questions.

## **6. Candidates and Elections for Conflict Resolution and Complaints Committee (CCRC)**

Facilitator explains that the CCRC is very important as a mechanism even if it doesn't end up doing a resolution. It is useful to have candidates who know QPIRG and are familiar with its policies.

Chief Returning Officer Fred introduces the CCRC elections: first, we will ask for nominations. We will hear presentations from each candidate or a proxy, and have a chance for questions after each one. After that, Fred will explain voting procedure.

**Milena Gioia**. Nominated by: Ian. Seconded by: Karina.

Milena's proxy: Milena has been involved in QPIRG for the last two years and is familiar with its policies and mandate. She would like to help out and to further her mediation skills. She is bilingual and is committed to QPIRG's anti-oppression mandate. Milena is a returning candidate.

No questions (she is absent). Please refer to AGM booklet, where there is more information about Milena on p. 15.

**Carolyn Huang**. Nominated by: Emma. Seconded by Cassie.

Carolyn's proxy: Carolyn was part of the Board last year and was involved in QPIRG since 2010. She is active in Solidarity Across Borders, a QPIRG working group. She brings experience on staff liaison committee. She sees conflict as part of broader social structures.

No questions (she is absent). More information on page 16 of booklet.

**Tania Magni**. Nominated by: Karina. Seconded by Taylor.

Tania's proxy: Tania can't be on the board but wants to remain involved in QPIRG. Her board experience would be useful on CCRC, particularly her experience as part of the staff liaison committee for two years. She has been on the Board for three years and is involved in QPIRG working groups.

No questions (she is absent). More information on page 16-17 of booklet.

**Kayle Towsley**. Nominated by Taylor. Seconded by Cassie.

Kayle's proxy: Kayle is enthusiastic about QPIRG and believes that a functional conflict and complaint resolution process is very important. She would like to contribute QPIRG by being part of this process. She has been on the board of QPIRG for one year and is a returning candidate. Her proxy (Taylor) speaks to positive experience of working with her.

No questions (she is absent). More information on page 17 of booklet.

***No nominations from floor.***

Fred asks for assistants and Guillaume and Francois volunteer as Electoral Assistants.

Fred explains that ballots are numbered 1 to 90, that people should check for numbers. Fred explains that this is a non-competitive election. There are four lines on the ballot and people should write the four candidates' names on the ballot, one per line, and then circle yes or no for each. Fred reminds non-members not to vote.

Electoral Assistants hand out ballots to members. Completed ballots are placed in the ballot box by the members.

## **7. Candidates and Elections for QPIRG Board**

Christina introduces the board elections. She notes that the Board has two types of seats: students and community (both students and non-students), and there are six of each. Both the student and community seats are the same constitutionally (that is, they have the same voting rights) but it is a question of representation.

*See page 18 and on in booklet for more info about nominees who presented their candidacy in advance.*

### **i. Candidates for Student Seats**

**Karina Chagnon**. Nominated by: Ian. Seconded by: Casssie.

Karina: I am a graduate student in translation studies and was on the Board last year. QPIRG is very important to the university, making links to community organizations, supporting more radical groups which don't get other funding. I agree with QPIRG's mandate and think I did a good job on the Board last year, while learning a lot. I was on the finance committee. It was hectic but we worked hard and got it settled; it was a good learning experience. I wish to continue working on the finance committee since properly managing QPIRG's finances is vital to the health of the organization and its ability to support smaller groups. I would like to continue the work I started with the Policy Committee to set objective, consistent policies.

Questions? No.

**Leelee Davis**. Nominated by Karina. Seconded by Pat.

Leelee's proxy: There is more in the written presentation but will just go over the highlights. Leelee has been involved in community work. This year Leelee wants to work on outreach and finance committees and is interested in elevating the conversation of inclusivity. Leelee's idea of social justice is the right for all to have access to health care, education, well being to be self-determined and have the ability to express what is of importance and interest to themselves, supporting transition to a more inclusive society and quality of life that all are entitled to. Environmental justice comes from commitment to the planet and future generations. As a queer trans identified person of colour, survivor of abuse and violence, Leelee's lived experience reveals a passion about the possibility of people living beyond survival into the realms of what is possible, a great life, which may be different to everyone. Leelee is an artist, a community facilitator and has been on the Board in the past, bringing an institutional memory, as well as transparency and authenticity.

Question: What is Leelee studying?

Answer: Leelee is a dance student.

**Lael Kim**. Nominated by Cassie. Seconded by Karina.

Lael: I was a volunteer for Study in Action in the past. I am interested in running in Board this year, and in being involved in SIA, CURE and Convergence and would like to engage more students in these projects.

No questions.

**Thien Viet Quan**. Nominated by Tasha. Seconded by Pat.

Thien: I am an undergraduate at Concordia, a photography student. I am involved in Artivistic and Howl!, two art collectives, and was part of Art in Action last year. Thien was involved slightly in two QPIRG working groups last year, and wants to participate more and learn more about anti-oppression and grassroots activism, and get to know the Concordia community better.

Question: do you have a website for your photography?

Yes: <http://justtherefortheviolence.tumblr.com>.

**Keara Yim**. Nominated by Badr. Seconded by Thien.

Keara's proxy: Keara is a Concordia student who has been involved in organizing student demonstrations during the strike. Keara made a contribution to Convergence this past year and was also involved in Study in Action. There is more about Keara in the AGM kit.

No questions.

***Call for nominations from the floor for student seats.***

**Ian Bradley-Perrin**. Nominated by Ian. Seconded by Lael.

Ian: This would be my third year on board. Last year, I was a community member . I am doing a Masters in History, working on the history of AIDS activism in Montreal and specifically the impact of state money being pumped into community groups. In organizing, my focus is on the criminalization of HIV. Last year, I enjoyed being on the finance committee. We had a rough go of it and made some positive changes. I would like to work on it again this year, supporting the finance coordinator, figuring out how support for staff members can be put in place.

Fred calls three times for nominations, no more forthcoming.

## **ii. Candidates for Community Seats**



**Jessica MacCormack**. Nominated by Shayla. Seconded by Marie.

Jessica's proxy: Jessica is an artist and a former professor at Concorida. There is much more in the AGM booklet. Jessica would be excited to support QPIRG's work. Has in the past worked in prisons and queer community plus centres for marginalized youth and women. Jessica wants to learn more about QPIRG and to use her art and facilitating experience to contribute. Jessica's approach to social and environmental justice is a belief in community organizing and building, protest and speaking out against systemic violence and oppressions.

No questions.

**Akki Mackay**. Nominated by Dee. Seconded by Heidi.

Akki: I moved from Toronto last January. I have gotten involved in a bunch of groups, the childcare collective, and the prisoners correspondence project. I am interested in prison abolition, movement building theory, and queer liberation – the liberation of all people.

Questions: What organizing initiatives have you been involved in since coming to Montreal?

Answers: I organized Montreal against Misogyny, a study and action group on involving cis men to become better feminist allies, and accountable.

**Amanda McLeod**. Nominated by Amanda. Seconded by Badr.

Amanda: I am a student at Concordia in sociology. I want to take action, to help people; I was involved in an initiative to save green space in St. Henri. I'd like to get involved to realize my goals of making change happen; QPIRG is a great stepping stone to learn how to do that.

No questions.

**Lindsay Nixon**. Nominated by Ian. Seconded by Badr.

Lindsay's proxy: Lindsay moved to Montreal in January. Lindsay is indigenous and just started a new working group at QPIRG McGill called the Indigenous Women and Two-Spirit Harm Reduction Coalition. Lindsay is excited about Indigenous solidarity possibilities. Lindsay is very responsible according to the proxy and according to Lindsay, wants to learn how QPIRG works. (More details in the AGM kit.)

No questions.

**Cassie Smith**. Nominated by Ian. Seconded by Badr.

Cassie: I was on the board last year and involved in staff liaison, finance, and policy committees as well as CURE, which facilitates student-community interactions. There is a very big learning curve to being on the Board; she would like to continue the work that she started last year.

No questions.

**Badr Takriti**. Nominated by Thien. Seconded by Kd.

Badr has been involved in issues that QPIRG has been involved in and in initiatives complimentary to QPIRG but hasn't yet been involved directly in QPIRG. This year he would like to get involved.

Question: What did you study?

Answer: Geography.

Question: what are your community involvements?

Answer: Tadamon. Also in support and outreach for Centre for Gender Advocacy.

**Shayla Chilliak**. Nominated by Shayla. Seconded by Taylor.

Shayla has been involved in CURE as well as QPIRG working groups Soundteam and Open Doors Books, among others. QPIRG is an important space and resource for initiating anti-capitalist projects. Shayla would be interested in being part of the inner workings of QPIRG.

No questions.

***Call for nominations. None. Floor closed.***

Fred explains the process:

- Green ballot = candidates for student seats. This is a non-competitive election. On this ballot, write the names of all the candidates, one per line and write yes or no beside their names.
- Red ballot = candidates for community members. This is a competitive election. Write up to six names on the ballot, one per line.

Fred reminds non-members not to vote.

Staff explains that when people run but are not elected during a competitive election, traditionally, these people are invited first to fill a vacant spot if elected members step down during year.

## **8. Community Event Announcements**

A wide variety of events are announced including a film as part of an HIV lecture series, a vigil for justice for victims of police killings, march against the Xenophobic charter, solidarity marches with the Mikmaq blockade in Elsipogtog, childcare needed for conference of black writers and artists at McGill, a benefit show for California prison strike, silkscreening workshops.

## **9. Adjournment**

Proposal to adjourn AGM and to delegate the Chief Returning Officer, Fred Burrill, to provide the results of the elections to staff, to post them on the website and make them known generally.

Proposed by: Jaggi. Seconded: Ian.

No questions.

### **VOTE**

Yes: 20

No: 0

Abs: 0

***Proposal adopted. Meeting adjourned.***

### **Election Results**

#### **CCRC**

Milena Gioia, Carolin Huang, Tanya Magni, and Kayle Towsley.

#### **Board**

*student members:* Karina Chagnon, Leelee Davis, Lael Kim, Thien Viet Quan, Keara Yim, Ian Bradley-Perrin.

*community members:* Jessica MacCormack, Akki Mackay, Lindsay Nixon, Cassie Smith, Bader Takriti, Shayla Chilliak.