

Minutes of the 2015 Annual General Meeting of QPIRG Concordia

15 October 2015, 1500 de Maisonneuve W., #204

1. Introduction

Tasha Zamudio facilitating.

Mary Foster taking notes.

Nathalie Cohen is Chief Returning Officer.

More than 60 members of QPIRG Concordia present at beginning of AGM, including 30 students and more than 25 community members.

Accessibility arrangements:

- Translator is Mathieu.
- The location is wheelchair accessible.
- Food in the board room.

Facilitator asked media to identify themselves. None present.

Purpose of the Assembly is to get the annual report and to elect a new Board of Directors and a Conflict Resolution and Complaints Committee (CRCC) for the coming year.

All voters should have red card. Non-voting members are welcome to stay as well but only red card holders will vote.

Open vote will proceed as follows: first yes'es, then no's, then absentions.

1.2. Presentation and Approval of Agenda

Agenda has been advertised in accordance with constitution. It is on website and is in the package distributed at the door. It is projected on the overhead with a few small typos corrected.

Motion to adopt meeting agenda by Andrea. Seconded by Elena.

VOTE:

YES: many.

NO: 0

Abstention: 0

Meeting agenda adopted by unanimity.

1.3. Approval of 2014 AGM Minutes

Minutes are in package received at the door.

Motion to approve the 2014 AGM minutes by Veronica (who was at the assembly last year). Seconded by Elena (who was also at the assembly last year).

VOTE:

YES: many

NO: 0

Abs: 3 (were not present last year)

AGM 2014 minutes adopted.

1.4. QPIRG and Core Projects Reports

2. [Please also see Annual Report online at www.qpirgconcordia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Annual-Report-2014-2015.pdf.]

i) Board of Directors Report (Otto) & CRCC Report (Milena)

Board: Otto is a returning board member this year. This year there were 12 Board members, 9 of whom were new. In addition, two joined during the year. The Board contributed to supporting QPIRG's working groups, staff, Core Projects and generally maintaining the space. As part of our work, board members participated in several committees: Programming and Working Groups Committee; Finance Committee; Policy Development Committee; the Accessibility Committee; and the now disbanded (since the visioning during the summer) Staff Liaison Committee. The reports of each committee are in the Annual Report. The Board hired four new part- and full-time staff this year: Adrienne, Andrea, Arash and Cassie. The Board wants to thank all volunteers who supported QPIRG's projects, as well as all QPIRG working groups, including the four new ones this year, for all their amazing work. Finally, thanks to staff, we are proud of them all: Adrienne, Andrea, Amir, Arash, Cassie, Christina, Elena, J., Jaggi, Noah, Swetha, and Xindi.

CRCC: Milena was on the CRCC during the past year. There were four people, and they participated in a training. The CRCC is only active if there is a problem. There were no complaints or unresolved disputes, so the CRCC was not active.

i) Staff Reports

a) Administration and Communications Coordinator (Adrienne)

Adrienne joined staff in June. Since then has been learning a lot, helping make projects happen, and learning how they happen, and getting to know people in the space.

a) Finance and Fundraising Coordinator (Noah)

The draft financial report is at back of a2014-2015 Annual Report, which is

available at the door along with a report of last year's Audit. Nothing very exciting to report budget-wise this year. There is no deficit to speak of (\$115). They are still struggling with the fact that over the past 2-3 years, QPIRG is operating with a reduced budget due to enrollment at Concordia, and hence their fee levy, not increasing; they dealt with this reality successfully this year.

Noah has also been working on accessibility. A sliding scale American Sign Language workshop was held in summer, one is now underway and hopefully there will be another in the winter.

a) Programming and Working Groups Coordinator (Jaggi)

b) Staff Report

The full Staff Report is in the Annual Report. To summarize: there was a transition to a new worker this year; it has been great to learn new things by beginning to work with Adrienne. Prior to Adrienne coming on, the staff was short for several months and this was a challenge. Finally, it is important to acknowledge outgoing staff member, Christina; QPIRG and other staff learned a great deal from her energy, warmth, intelligence and passion.

In general, as usual staff were involved in a lot of day to day work to keep the organization transparent and accountable to its members: financial; training and meeting with new board; compiling Annual Report; making the constitution and other key documents and minutes available to members; and communications by website; hassle free opt-outs; email and phone. Also staff kept space welcoming, open, functional and accessible to members and community; this year prioritizing replacing and repairing computers for student and community use. Over the summer, QPIRG had a visioning process. One result was that the Staff Liaison Committee (SLC) was disbanded.

The staff wants to acknowledge all Board members over the past year, all of them made amazing contributions: Alyce, Dan, Farhana, Idil, Jess, Kwaku, Laura, Otto, Sanjeevan, Sarah, Shaina, Shayla, Sophia and Thien.

The staff also supported Core Projects: : Disorientation, School Schmool, the Alternative Library, the Community-University Research Exchange (CURE Concordia), Convergence and Study In Action. We also supported a Summer Research Stipend by PINAY. Staff continued to work with and liaise with Qpirg McGill, Grip Uqam, participate in FLAC, and work with other allies such as Solidarity Concordia, SPHR, WSSA and others.

This is the report of the core staff, but it is important to acknowledge contributions of our part-time, work study and contract employees over the past year: J. Charest (bookkeeping), Amir (off-site tech), Arash (on-site tech), Elena (Alternative Library), Swetha (Grassroots Resistance Archive), Gwen (CURE), Cassie (CURE) and Xindi & Andrea (School Schmool). Thanks to all of them.

Programming and Working Groups Coordinator

In terms of programming and working groups, the highlights this year were several emergency mobilizations, programming such as workshops, book launches, walking tours, bike tours and more, support for Core Projects, and support for working groups. Working groups are a big and invisible part of QPIRG's work; this year there were 26 and QPIRG and QPIRG staff support these working groups in numerous ways.

i) Core Projects and Other Activities

a) CURE (Cassie)

Cassie is the current CURE coordinator. Previous coordinator was Gwen; and the two briefly co-coordinated. Cassie has worked since July. CURE expanded a lot last year. They finished updates to the CURE website and updated outreach materials; did lots of outreach to community groups, and have recently participated in tabling fairs and made classroom visits. As of today, CURE is its own incorporated non-profit; as such, they plan to ask students for fee levy in November. They are currently organizing a new initiative this year: a Radical Research conference - including a film night, panel, and workshops – which will take place 9 to 12 November. There are more details on CURE in the Annual Report.

a) Study in Action (Noah).

b) Every year in March, QPIRG organizes together with QPIRG McGill, and this past year for the first time GRIP UQAM an undergraduate conference linking students with community activism. This past year, the ninth annual conference took place on 21-22 March. Opening panel was co-presented with Hip Hop Week organized at McGill by QPIRG McGill, "Fight the Power: A Panel on Hip Hop, Activism and Revolution". The conference consisted of two days of workshops and panels by undergraduate and community groups. The closing panel was "Lack of Girls, Public Schools, and State Violence" and featured speakers d'bi young anitafrika, Nantali Indongo, Rachel Zellars, and Frances Waithe. More details in the Annual Report. There are not many undergraduate conferences, so Study in Action is quite unique. In addition, Study in Action often has presentations of CURE projects and the workshops are sometimes also published in the *Convergence* journal, so all these projects all work together.

c) Art in Action (Jaggi).

d) Art in Action is linked to Study in Action. It was not as active this year although there were some art contributions to *Convergence*. There is a call out coming for this year, linked with the CURE Radical Research Project. Art in Action is meant to express social justice and struggle through art. CURE wants to grow, and with that, art practices can be more present.

e) School Schmool (Andrea). This annually produced agenda tries to connect daily activities with organizing. There were some changes this year to the cover (now perfect binding), additional space, and changes to the order of the content. In addition there is a 13th month this year, so people are not stuck without an agenda while the new

one comes out. More details in the Annual Report.

- f) Alternative Library (Elena). This past year, focused on setting up website to have a new unified platform for the alternative libraries at QPIRG Concordia and at the UGE, Qpirg McGill, and the CGA. It was a difficult project to complete but important because the website will allow all of these libraries to be accessed on one platform, whereas previously they had separate websites. In addition, the library received donations of books on prisons, zines; new members were signed up and the space reorganized. Elena is leaving and someone else will come on but project proposals for coming year include a mother-daughter reading group, nomad libraries on campus, and a launch event for the new online database. More in Annual Report.
- g) Convergence Journal (Kristin). Brought out the previous year's edition (edition 5 in March), then helped out with Study in Action and then brought out 6th edition of Convergence in September. This year's edition features lots of artwork, local, national and international. There were no articles from CURE published this year.
- h) Disorientation (Adrienne). Disorientation is an orientation event to reach out to new folks at Concordia. This year's five days of programming in September featured several events such as the Visualizing Resistance workshop (to make photoshop more accessible); Solidarity not Charity workshop; a CURE 5 à 7; two radical history tours of the city; and more. There was also a tabling fair. More than 200 people participated in Disorientation this year. More details are in Annual Report.
- i) Grassroots Resistance Archive. (Jaggi). This year came up with a formal name. This is a work study project coordinated by Swetha; with Vince and Jaggi actively working on it. It features storage space for posters, flyers, documentation, banners, buttons, etc.; this material is also being digitalized on a website. There will be reach out to ask people to submit their archival materials on four themes: indigenous, migrant, queer, international struggles. The mandate is to provide easy public access to social justice archival materials, a memory of past struggles, and make materials available so they can be reused in current struggles. They are working on logo. Swetha will be continuing this year and an intern from John Abbot archiving programme will be joining as well.

j) 5. Questions about Reports

Question about optimizing visuals, for the archival website, to make it accessible? There isn't at the moment, but there will be an attempt to make it more accessible in the future.

No further questions.

1.6. Candidates and Elections for Conflict Resolution and Complaints Committee (CRCC)

Process

Chief Returning Officer explains process: there are 4 positions on CRCC. First we will have nominations. Can nominate self or someone else. Then we need a second, and the

person must accept the nomination. Then we will hear presentation of candidates (some are also in the package). Then we will vote by secret ballot; voting cards will be explained in detail immediately before voting but in general those with red cards can vote and, if it not a competitive election, a simple majority wins. If competitive, the top candidates win with a simple majority.

Nominations

Three of the four people who are running are not present but have indicated in advance that they want to run.

Elena nominates Kayle Towsley. Milena seconds.

Annie nominate Taylor Lewis. Elena seconds.

Milena Gioia nominates herself. Veronica seconds.

Alyce nominates Farhana Haque. Grace seconds.

Call for additional nominations. None. Floor closed.

Presentations

Farhana, Taylor and Kayle are not present. Jaggi presents them: Often CRCC members are former board members because they have some knowledge of the organization. Farhana, Taylor and Kayle all have Board experience. In addition, both Kayle and Taylor are part of the Childcare Collective. Farhana is a Concordia student and part of Solidarity Across Borders, as is Kayle.

Milena presents herself: She was on CRCC for the past two years and previously on QPIRG Concordia Board. She is active in Mad Pride, a QPIRG Concordia working group.

Questions

What is process of CRCC? There is a detailed policy, with many steps. It has never been used. It only requires three people but four are elected to ensure there are enough people.

Why are all the CRCC members listed as returning in the info package? Clarification: Taylor and Milena are returning. The other two are not returning, but were previously on board. It was an error in the info package.

Elections

Decision to do elections with the Board elections.

1.7. Candidates and Elections for QPIRG Concordia Board of Directors

Process

There are six community members and six student members. The same electoral process will be followed as for CRCC for each set of Board members.

Student Nominations

Alyce nominates Shayla Jean. Sanjeevan seconds. Nomination accepted.

Madeleine nominates Sophia Sahrane. Myriam seconds. Nomination accepted.

1. Rebecca nominates Kaiza Graham. Jasper Seconds. Not present but texted to accept nomination.

Elena nominates Stéphanie Dufresne. Otto seconds. Nomination accepted.

Alyce nominates Emma Lightstone. Sophia seconds. Nomination accepted.

Shayla nominates Laura Macdonald. Josh seconds. Laura not present but known to accept nomination.

Elena nominates Amal Kenshil. Rana seconds. Nomination accepted.

Call for additional nominations. None. Floor closed.

Student Presentations

Shayla Jean was on the Board for last two years. She is also involved in several working groups; Sound Team and Open Door books and was involved in CURE in the past. She is a student at Concordia.

Sophia became involved in QPIRG through Solidarity Concordia. Has only recently become involved in community organizing and loves it. Sophia hopes to continue doing it through QPIRG.

Kaiza is sick. Becca is presenting Kaiza; there is also a presentation in the info package. Becca worked with Kaiza recently organizing for Women's Studies Student Association (WSSA) strike. Kaiza is calm in tense situations, listens very well to different points of view and is very kind.

Stéphanie is a women's studies student involved in multiple on- and off-campus organizing which have brought her into contact with QPIRG or its working groups. This made Stéphanie realize that Qpirg is important in sustaining and kick-starting groups and in creating relations between campus and community. Stéphanie has received from Qpirg and wants to give back and wants to be active in maintaining it.

Emma. Alyce speaking for Emma: Emma was on Board two years ago and involved in CURE. Emma is not entirely sure she wants to be board.

Laura is not present. Jaggi presenting Laura: Laura is a Concordia student in accounting but is a social justice activist as well. Laura is a returning Board member, and has been helpful with finances because of accounting studies. Laura is actively involved in the queer scene. Laura wants to contribute to Qpirg and believes that it is helpful for Qpirg to have an accounting student involved.

Amal is studying urban planning. Amal is involved in community organizing and

interventions by community in Urban Planning. Amal volunteers at Project Genesis and the South Asian Women's Community Centre and is a member of Missing Justice where for example was involved in fundraising to send people to participated in the Toxic Tour.

Questions

Question about balancing new and returning board members; does former Board have any thoughts on that? Question will be taken later. No questions for candidates.

Community Nominations

Grace nominates Otto Buxton. Elena seconds. Nomination accepted.

Sanjeevan nominates Sophia Salem. Amal seconds. Nomination accepted.

Amal nominates Rana Salah. Otto seconds. Nomination accepted.

Annie nominates Gregg Prevost. Becca seconds. Gregg not present but confirmed in advance.

Elena nominates Sanjeevan Tharmaratnam. Otto seconds. Nomination accepted.

Grace nominates Alyce Dressner. Sophia seconds. Nomination accepted.

Sanjeevan nominates Malek Yalaoui. Rana seconds. Nomination accepted.

Call for additional nominations. None. Floor closed.

Community Presentations

Otto wants to rerun to make sure that, now that the Staff Liaison Committee has been dissolved, the changes are implemented in a way that is supportive to staff, makes sense in policy and is sustainable. More in info package.

Sophia was previously on Board of Simon Fraser pirq. Sophia hopes to bring perspective of another pirq to Qpirg Concordia. Sophia was on Qpirg Board last year, learned a lot and the experience was valuable. Hopes to continue learning and contributing and to carry on the projects that were started last year.

Rana is a community activist who has been involved in organizing Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) and appreciates Qpirg's support for IAW. Rana wants to contribute to Qpirg and support its projects. Rana likes QPIRG anti-oppression mandate and also wants to gain more experience. More in information package.

Greg not here. Annie presenting for Greg. Greg has organized as part of Recon, a QPIRG working group, for ten years. Recon is a group half of whose members are in prison. Greg served 31 years of a life sentence and was released on parole last July and is now seizing the day. Greg wants to give back to community who gave to him. He wants to expand skills, learn more from Qpirg and would make an important contribution to Board. He is passionate about prison system and anti-poverty work. Greg can't be here tonight because he's in a half-way house. For first four months he wouldn't be able to go to evening

meetings all the time. Annie can't think of a better way to take down the prison system than by welcoming a lifer back into the community.

Sanjaveen is motivated by Qpirg's mandate and projects to be on the Board. Sanjaveen is finished school and has more time to contribute now. Lots more in the info package.

Alyce is rerunning in order to be able to wrap up things that were started last year. Alyce thinks it is also important to get new people on board. Would like to be able to perhaps work on policy or staff support and to do more on accessibility committee. Cares about health and collective care and wellbeing. Good at performance art with glitter. More in information package.

Malek is not here. Sanjaveen presents: Malek was on board at Qpirg McGill and other SSMU position and CKUT steering committee. Is into antiracism and migrant justice and is eloquent on those issues. Malek is not afraid to say to uncomfortable things. Rana adds: Malek is good at reading and simplifying things.

Questions

What are some of the acronyms that were used: Pcp, Sab, Wssa? Prisoner correspondence project, Solidarity Across Borders, Women's Studies Student Association. Also "res project" is a series of mandatory workshops for all first year students, introduction to gender, sexual assault, race and colonialism.

Question to Alyce: what did you mean by performance art with glitter. For example in a grad ceremony, shaking hands with the man who congratulates you, with a handful of glitter so the man and everyone after is beglittered.

Question to Annie: tell us about Recon. Recon works with lifers; it has been a working group of QPIRG for 16 years. It is quiet publicly, but extremely active. Greg has been an inside member for a very long time. He has made it out of prison, and it would be great to have someone on Board to liaise with Recon and be a link between Recon and Qpirg.

Question about returning and new Board members. Otto responds: returning members bring knowledge of staff and also of patterns. Having repetition is important.

Elections

Chief Returning Officer asks for volunteers to help distribute, pick up and then count the secret ballots. Irmak and Mathieu volunteer.

1.8. Community Event Announcements

Midnight Kitchen is having a volunteer orientation from 3 to 5 tomorrow. Welcome to all.

Res project. For the first time this is mandatory in residences so it will bring difficult dynamics. But it is a great opportunity. The project needs strong facilitators capable of giving 101 workshops on these topics. A call out will be sent out.

Open the Borders Teach-In on Saturday. At Concordia from 1 to 5 and then 6 to 8 dinner.

Solidarity Across Borders general assembly on Sunday at 2pm at Lorne Centre in Point St. Charles.

Book launch at Qpirg at 6 with snacks.

Mad Pride first meeting at Qpirg this coming week.

Women of Diverse Origins are holding first IWD March 8th organizing meeting on 28 October.

Qpirg and Frigo Vert are holding an anticolonial fall feast on 12 November.

SPHR is organizing a BDS week starting October 23rd with speakers coming from all over.

To stay in touch with many of these events, join the Qpirg list and facebook.

1.9. Motion to Adjourn

2. Motion to adjourn meeting with understanding that election results will be posted by Qpirg staff by email, website and facebook.

Grace proposes the motion and Annie seconds.

Yes: many

No: 0

Absentions: 0

Motion passes by unanimity. Meeting adjourned.

1.10. Election Results

CCRC : Milena Gioia, Kayle Towsley, Taylor Lewis, Farhana Haque.

Board student members: Shayla Chilliak. Sophia Sahrane. Kaiza Graham. Stéphanie Dufresne. Laura Macdonald. Amal Kenshil.

Board community members: Otto Buxton. Sophia Salem. Rana Salah. Gregg Prevost. Sanjeevan Tharmaratnam. Malek Yalaoui.