

April 5th,2020.

Board Attendees:

Amanda Eagleson

Holden Wall (chair)

Frankie McGee

Leslie Stark

Staff:

Carol Shilibeer

Regrets:

Meeting Began: 14:10 (2:10pm)

Meeting End: 14:58 (2:58pm)

Motions:

- 1) Motion from Holden to pass the March 11th minutes (with edits). Seconded by Frankie. Motion carried unanimously.
- 2) Motion from Holden that the previously approved decision (on March 11th) not to extend loans be included in the policy manual. Seconded by Frankie. Motion carried unanimously.

Action Items:

- 1) Focus on fundraising. Leslie to take point on the auction.
 - a) Frankie will assist in reaching out to poets regarding gathering chapbooks (as bundled prizes)
 - b) Frankie to ask about possible handmade pencil boxes (as donations)
 - c) Someone to reach out to Joseph regarding the medicine bags which were going to be presented during Verses (are these appropriate as auction prizes?) as well someone to ask him about plays / books of his work he may be willing to donate. Drums(?)

Meeting Starts at 14:10 (2pm)

Agenda Item 1:

- Land Acknowledgement (Holden Wall): *This is a remote meeting so we are in different areas, I am on the unceded Indigenous land belonging to the Musqueam Skwxwú7mesh and Tsleil-Waututh People. Participants are invited to consider their own position with regard to the land where they are, that these are unceded occupied land. And consider what brought us to this point.*
- Compassion acknowledgement (Holden Wall): *During this time there is a lot of pressure to be productive, with work, interests, hobbies etc. It can be actually more difficult to achieve anything under this pressure. We should try to practice compassion with ourselves as well as others. That this is a difficult time. We should try to approach expectations with that understanding (for ourselves) and exercise kindness/care.*

Edits suggested to last meeting's minutes include clarifying what BOSS is for the notes

- Motion from Holden to pass the March 11th minutes (with edits). Seconded by Frankie. Motion carried unanimously.
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Agenda Item 2:

Financial Report:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dn_Zr_tCkNNhCtrc7o3HltA4EJkInqdnFs6BxphRBGE/edit

- The retainer of \$2,500 has been paid and all the requested documents have been uploaded to Avisar. Shanna Vincent is our primary contact this year.
- Havana has stopped sales and started the refund process. They have said that they would include any revenue left as a credit in the invoice they will send us for the venue space. That invoice won't be due until end April.
- The Cultch has agreed to initiate the refund process, but as of yet I have not heard an update on when that will be complete.
- In the worst-case scenario the total cost of Artist Fees was listed as \$25,000. After creating a detailed pay-out schedule the figure is actually \$28,175. This means we will need an additional \$3,175 as a result of our fundraising efforts.
- Joseph sent letters to all Verses artists that had been booked to perform. This occurred near the end of March. Each letter offered to pay the artist and asked if they had ideas about creating digital programming so that VPH could present their work on a virtual

Verses stage. While not many responses have yet come back, all that have are extremely positive in tone and promising work.

❖ *The complete financial report is located in the Appendix*

Agenda Item 3:

Other Business:

- ❖ Leslie points out that we should address the action items (though these may be moot due to COVID)
 - Amanda did not reach out to Sonya regarding the award (as point not pressing due to the festival being cancelled)
 - Revised response letter from community member concerning board response on issues of historic pattern of institutional racism within the organization was sent.
- ❖ Discussion about fundraising. This should be primarily a board initiative given the current workload of staff.
 - First Focus: Auction idea. Leslie is willing to be the point person on this as very much likes idea (Amanda also very much liked the “name that poet” game idea)
 - Prize Ideas: Chapbook bundles (Frankie offers of reach out to poets), Workshops, Pencil boxes (as an example of a handmade item “opening up” possibilities), perhaps medicine bags, Joseph’s plays or other books he may be willing to donate, drums, Our Verses notebooks/journals.
 - Beyond this (looking forward) there should be a callout for funds.
 - Carol brought up creative solutions: such as (with regards to training avenues) utilizing industries which would not have had a downturn (specific example given was tech). Many times there are team building days etc. for which services may be of use.(Wordplay market)
 - Holden brought up conversation with Sam regarding wanting to familiarize themselves with other platforms (Bluejeans and Google meet) and run through possibilities before the next slam
 - Brief discussion of the We Show Up model and if would work for slam

Meeting End: 14:58 (2:58 pm)

Appendix

Financial Report

Leslie Stark, Treasurer
Carol Shillibeer, Financial Coordinator

Board Meeting: April 5, 2020

Review Engagement 2019

The Review Engagement for the 2019 financial year has begun. The retainer of \$2,500 has been paid and all the requested documents have been uploaded to Avisar. Shanna Vincent is our primary contact this year.

Travel Funding

Per Board agreement March 11, 2020 the remaining debt from the CFSW loan of \$453.03 has been written off. The Policy Manual has been amended to indicate that no more loans will be made.

Policy Manual

Material added includes:

Lending

By agreement of the Board of Directors, as of March 11, 2020, VPH will not loan funds to membership, teams or staff.

Ticket Refunds

Brown Paper Tickets has sent emails to all ticket purchasers giving instructions to ticket holders how to 1) make their ticket purchase a donation to VPH and 2) how to get a refund if they don't want to do that. Any funds that are left unclaimed at the time the event was to be staged will be sent electronically to VPH. That means we won't see those funds until the end of April.

Havana has stopped sales and started the refund process. They have said that they would include any revenue left as a credit in the invoice they will send us for the venue space. That invoice won't be due until end April.

The Cultch has agreed to initiate the refund process, but as of yet I have not heard an update on when that will be complete.

Post-COVID-19 Payments to Staff and Artists

Staff

Verses staff short-term staff have been offered a pay-out of their contracts. The rate is 100% so all this means is that instead of spreading out the payments from March until the end of May these contractors will receive the value of their remaining contractual time at the end of March.

All have agreed to this when asked. Email responses have been saved as proof of agreement. All have also been asked to continue helping VPH where possible.

Some staff members have already donated back some of their fee.

Artists

Joseph sent letters to all Verses artists that had been booked to perform. This occurred near the end of March. Each letter offered to pay the artist and asked if they had ideas about creating digital programming so that VPH could present their work on a virtual Verses stage. While not many responses have yet come back, all that have are extremely positive in tone and promising work.

Joseph also sent a letter to all Canadian artists (Verses) giving them the links to alternative funding help that is being offered in Canada. That letter went out on March 27, 2020.

Error in Worst Case Scenario Budget

In the worst-case scenario the total cost of Artist Fees was listed as \$25,000. After creating a detailed pay-out schedule the figure is actually \$28,175. This means we will need an additional \$3,175 as a result of our fundraising efforts.

This does not take into account those who will donate back to VPH.

Grants

Canada Council has approved Vancouver Poetry House to enter the Engage & Sustain stream and our 4-year funding application has been approved. This means we know for sure that we will have at least \$45,000 per year. Unfortunately COVID-19 hit before final agreements were made about potential increases. We had asked for a substantial increase since we plan to expand youth programming and outreach as well as staffing.

According to our program officer we might not be notified about the success or failure of our request for an increase until the end of April. COVID-19 is slowing things down.

UPDATE: March 30, 2020 Canada Council announced that those receiving core grants will automatically receive 35% of our grant (based on last year's base amount). That funding will be directly deposited to our account by May 4. For VPH this amounts to \$15,750.

BC Arts Council sent an email announcing that there will be an “Arts and Culture Resiliency Supplement” that we should receive by the end of April. We don't have to apply. There is no announcement of the amount yet.

The City of Vancouver met on March 31, 2020 to approve the Culture Department's suggestion that Vancouver Poetry House be given \$8,800 in April for the funding year. Last year's grant was \$7,500.

Deferments and Changing Strategies, Letters to Funders

Telus was contacted with regard to the forced change of plans to Word Camp 2020. No reply has come back as yet.

The Youth Engagement Project (Chris Gilpen of British Columbia Arts Council) was contacted with regard to the forced change of plans to Word Camp 2020. A reply was received from Chris on March 30 saying that he is no longer in charge of the Youth Engagement Project and that he has forwarded Joseph's email to Anissa Paulsen and Erin Macklem who are now in charge of YEP. Chris also said “I appreciate hearing all the interesting and new projects that Vancouver Poetry House is undertaking. Word Camp is a fabulous concept and should make for an impactful youth engagement project.” Anissa emailed on March 30, 2020 and we have permission to adapt as necessary.

Metro Vancouver regional cultural grant program was contacted about our outstanding grant of \$3000 received to provide youth slam to other cities in the Lower Mainland. We have an interim report due and what programming was scheduled had to be postponed. A reply was received on March 30 saying that the email update has been counted as the necessary interim report and that in light of COVID-19 our change of plans is approved, even welcomed.