

Board Attendees:

Amanda Eagleson

Holden Wall

Leslie Stark

Max Sumner

Staff:

Colleen Brown

Joseph Dandurand

Regrets:

Laura Beatrice Covaza

Meeting Began: 16:00 (4:00pm)

Meeting End: 17:27 (5:27pm)

Motions:

- Motion to approve the March Meeting Minutes put forward by Amanda. Holden Seconds. Motion passes unanimously
- Motion to pass the Interim board member voting process made by Amanda. Max seconded. Motion passes unanimously.
- Motion to Adjourn made by Holden Amanda Seconded. Motion passes unanimously

Action Items:

- Holden (and rest of board) to set up meetings with those who expressed interest in the board membership callout
- Review and post board summary of what we have been up to
- Board begin committee member list conversation on Basecamp
- Review the Pivot Grant
- Amanda ensure list of resources is in the admin file
- Board to start the hiring process for the Slam Coordinator position
- Look over 2018-19 Canada Heritage grant for an outline as to how to improve the Slam Coordinator position

Holden calls meeting to order at 16: 08 (4:08pm)

- Land Acknowledgement : *As we gather for this meeting physically dispersed and virtually constructed let us take a moment to reflect on the meaning of place, and doing so recognise the various traditional lands on which we do our meeting today.*
- Compassion Acknowledgement:
An exchange of empathy provides an entry point for a lot of people to see what healing feels like.--Tarana Burke

Agenda Item 1:

Approve Minutes March Meeting Minutes

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FVzvheL94_Oh1iuz960r_RA2hkJDN_HA8yG47Zdrfxc/edit

Amanda puts forward motion to approve the March meeting minutes. Holden Seconds, motion passes unanimously

Amanda: Quick check in with staff member involving Covid and if they needed support/help in any way.

Colleen: Some discussion regarding the situation and confirmation that help has been offered.

Amanda: Also a quick congratulations to Joseph for being shortlisted for the B.C. book prize.

Joseph: There are really good books nominated this year so humbled by the nomination.

Colleen: Asked about when winners are announced.

Joseph: Not until September

Colleen: After the promo for Verses is over we should post and talk about that.

Some conversation about the cover for the book East Side of it All and Kwantlen Artist Elinor Atkins.

Update action items:

- 1) Board will review the policy manual as well as the Vetting process for interim Board members and make sure there is no conflict.
 - a) Amanda did this, there is no conflict.
Max wondered about the order the process points are in. Holden states order makes no difference. At this point the board votes on process.

- 2) Motion to pass the Interim board member voting process made by Amanda. Max seconded. Motion passes unanimously.
- 3) After vote on the vetting process Holden (and rest of board) to set up meetings with those who expressed interest in the board membership callout. As vote had just taken place this will be the focus of Holden in the upcoming month/next couple of weeks

Colleen suggests the Arts Alliance as a place to seek out board members. This seems like an interesting idea as it reaches a broader audience. Holden agrees it's good to have a mix of people (some in the community and some not).

- 4) Colleen will continue to check-in regarding the layout (and cover art) of cotyledon.
 - a) Colleen asks Leslie about this. Leslie: Brad did acknowledge he had the info but I haven't seen a cover yet.
 - b) Leslie had also just sent a list of poets who have agreed to read. And has bios and most of the photos (there's a total of eight poets).
 - c) Colleen has put in for an ISBN number. Layout discussion is complete so it's just about adding the number. Really just waiting on the cover and are ready to print
- 5) Continued review of the Pivot and Canada Heritage grants and use these as an outline for planning courses of action regarding the work plan.
 - a) Amanda: I haven't done much with this but I have read it over and it's further in the agenda especially as there are aspects of the work plan I think we should discuss. As this was presented at the last AGM and there might be parts not able to implement before the next agm I thought those were worth conversation. And also the Pivot grant is worth a conversation as there will be dates that need to be shifted around based on when we are able to secure the services of EUPHONY (they are not available until fall).

Leslie: Just did a 3-part antiracism workshop with Adrian Smith through touchstone theater (another board Leslie is on). They as a facilitator are fantastic. Highly recommend their workshop if we are looking for further training. Putting that out there.

Colleen: EUPHONY quote will come in High because they want to work with someone. And she thought we could start with getting basic HR stuff out of the way to start preparing. Quote in at \$15,000.

Amanda: Sounds about right that's about what I arrived at with our last conversation. The starting point was \$10,000 and then if we wanted to include any mediation it was going to be more---and I thought it was a good thing to include if we are going to do this.

Colleen: Look at the pivot budget, I did shoehorn in cleanup of communications. My thought there being that this would be a good way to encourage/assist with staff collaboration. But we could do that not -- change the order (website and social media is messed up and that adds work).

Amanda: We can/should look at the order...I did provide a link as well...

- 6) Laura will look into **Profit and Loss Projected Vs Actual** for February as Admin. Salaries appear to be missing from actuals (though were paid) and get back to Leslie on this
- a) Leslie : Laura did send Colleen and I some updated financials . which I haven't had much time to look at. (Colleen places link in agenda).
Leslie: I did sign the financials for the review engagement.
- 7) Holden and Joseph communicate with Colleen regarding the FB blurb
- a) Went "out modified form as a press release"
- 8) A "what have we been up to" blog post to be written, posted to Facebook and a redirect to go up on the VPH Facebook page
- a) Amanda: Regarding Messages on Facebook concerned about responding as they seems to bring it back to life.
I wrote the post but Colleen made the point that the post was more suited for members. I thought it was good to have on the site one of things we have been criticized for is accessibility. Wondering how everyone felt about this. It is in wordpress as a draft.
Holden suggests Action Item review and post.
What are people's take (feel more appropriate as an email blast or website?)
Colleen clarifies she was speaking of social media. Amanda clarifies for Social Media only wanted some messaging to get people away from the VPH FB page. But we are still around and "here's a link to the blog".
Issues with social media: We need a profile VPH is like a "person"... so we are allowed to have a page and a group. But had a presence for a while due to staff miscommunication. What is up now is a "please don't come here image" but if anyone is messaging we should respond...but yes absolutely respond to messages.

Know not a good time ("because of the festival") but the website doesn't get a lot of traffic which is fine. We can send traffic there through those accounts but people who know us and want to know news about what the board is doing should become members.
Amanda: Ok ... FB only in terms of message, and "here's where you go and please visit the site"
Colleen: And right after Verses would be a really good time to do that (and also invite membership) because normally we would do that during the festival but currently we don't really have a "place" for that.
- 9) Leslie will share any workshop resources (from other anti-racism workshops she is attending)

Basecamp Vote:

Date: 03/29/21

Time: March 29th, at 4pm

Attending: Via Virtual vote Amanda Eagleson Holden Wall Leslie Stark Max Sumner
I (Amanda Eagleson) move to approve that Vancouver Poetry House submits a multi-year application to the Canada Heritage Arts Presentation Fund for the years of 2022 and 2023 in support of Verses Festival of Words and Vancouver Poetry Slams weekly series of featured

performers and community stages and that Colleen Brown serves as the contact person and has signing authority for this application.

Leslie Stark Seconds the motion

Motion carries Unanimously

Agenda Item 2:

1) Financial report.

Laura is not here (which is ok).

Leslie: Presumably we are on target budget wise for Verses.

Colleen: Laura and I need to teach each other what we need. We have never really had a month by month budget. It's done by year and by project and Laura would like to see month by month budget(s).

The problem is lump sums grants and my being unsure how to attribute these lumps per month. So for now I've randomly said "divide them by 12" as I'm working on the festival. Neither of us are satisfied with that particular solution but we have yet to come up with another.

Verses is \$3000 over budget which the team informs me "that's always how it is".

Leslie: No that's not at all unusual.

Colleen: There were bonuses for Verses staff because of how much work they are doing and tech. help. And everything we've said we would pay for artists fees has been paid out which is important

\$60,000 in the bank account this month. We got the Pivot grant. Everything we asked for. There is a \$14,000 as Canada Heritage ask out there. To that topic \$30,000 in resiliency funding and a \$95,000 grant request to Canada council (across 5 years).

Agenda Item 3: General Manager Report

- Frog Hollow is DONE Sonya Brendan Anjalica did vids. With extra money wouldn't mind making another. Madha now has social pointing to poetry shorts in the next two weeks.
Leslie (in response to news her students work would be up): I had them do video poems as a class project and encouraged to submit so that's great.
- Burnaby literary arts program summer opening up their houses on park land (artist projects in residence can be there... yard workshops outside). Colleen will look into this. Regarding Poetv Brad grant going in on the 28th and we have a verbal agreement that will be backed up with a letter. VPH will have 15% of administration of that money and we would be responsible for payment and contracts and added funding if we are given opportunities to do programming. This is a potv consortium VPH/ Write Bloody/ and "other larger poetry organizations in Canada". We can Come together to run this poetry channel.
 - As mentioned, I spoke with Naomi.

- Final reports Broadway Youth are done

Writers Fest partnering with us. We spent a bit on ads (not lot) dogwood rose sponsoring an event which is good. Lee Maracle story written. And there is packed social media every day scheduled to go out on all of our channels (except twitter which just isn't done yet). Sales are much better

Hire slam coordinator. This needs to at least be started in May. Wordplay and Volunteer Coordinator July and August (hiring). Included internal and external communications person as part of pivot grant.

Outstanding insurance problem turn mind to in June.

By September need liability insurance if our poets are going to \$31,000 funding \$31,000 2020 and 21 covid...grand compendium.

Agenda Item 4: Artistic Director Report

We discussed and decided that we will not charge for events.

Amanda: All or just workshops?

Joseph: Across the board, just the way it is right now it will help attendance we decided not to charge this year.

J: (An Aside) Thank you Leslie and Amanda for the minion and gift card congratulating me. ASL is coming along Johnny has been helping a lot. And I've been in contact with Liz and Isabella Wang.

Colleen: I got a msg from Liz saying almost everything (except hulla and mashed) is over budget but that 's fine it should be two and a half thousand but we had for 2017 and 2018 but not 2019.

Amanda: I think 2019 was because of the lateness in which that process was started. Rabbit was the coordinator at that time and I remember that being the issue.

Holden: It was..at the time we started almost disrespectful to ask for interpreters (as it was so last minute) given the prep time needed. I think it's great we have them this year and we should build the service into the budget.

Colleen: Asks about ads aimed at the asl and deaf community.

Amanda: The interpreters, Liz would have a great idea where to put that messaging in. It's a small community in Vancouver.

Holden: There is a deaf school in Burnaby "why we have events"

Colleen: We should reach out nationally

Joseph: I've attended 7 readings and workshop in two days. With open mics I leave info in the chat "who am what do and Verses link" in each one. Made a promotional video. The one with the Raven Mask on

Colleen: It was just perfect.

Joseph: Leslie, one of your students did Lumus...I loved that video. I really wanted to use it for promotional stuff (maybe next year) it was so good and worked with the theme 'breaking barriers'.

Colleen: Currently this is pinned at top of the Verses page but we can repromote it whenever you would like.

Agenda Item 5: A conversation about the work plan/grant/restructuring the work plan

Holden: Good to revisit, The Work Plan which was put together around the time of the AGM

Amanda: It was for the AGM so smart to revisit it because we did present it to people at the AGM and there are aspects which we won't be doing as outlined, so we should provide reasons.

Specific Components: The oversight committee. We had discussed this a bit as we received feedback that wasn't enthusiastic about the idea, and it's the largest part of the plan where I think it's likely we would not follow through (at least not before the AGM).

That was the main thing I wanted to talk about as we had received that feedback but I couldn't find the original conversation.

In addition we have received a large variation in responses to the survey. Those were the 2 points I would bring up regarding the plan.

Holden: I do think an oversight committee could be a valuable thing to have. At least some group of people for the board to be accountable to while we do this work. I think last we spoke there was interest in **names community member** being on such a committee but I'm opposed to that as the person's been very clear about wanting to step away and it would be valuable to respect that. But we also had trouble coming up with other names to approach to see if they would want to be on the committee.

Colleen: Can I make a suggestion? There are a lot of organizations who are doing this work (or have started doing this work) in PARK and it might be valuable to have people in the arts community but outside of the VPH community. Do you have any interest in reaching out to PARK (wouldn't have to be them as they do have a visual arts focus) but they are helpful, perhaps something similar in Theatre or Literary communities. And if you tell them what the commitment will be (let's say 5 hours now and 5 hours four months from now as an example) this is clearer (for setting expectations).

A: I think that's a good idea and see the benefit of having a more diverse group of people on the committee. By which I mean people outside of the community.

Leslie: The theatre community is doing a lot of this work and worth looking into.

Holden: I think having people from outside is good in addition to one or two from within. And someone familiar with VPH's history who can bring that to the table that would be good. A mix would be good.

Colleen: It's also the opportunity for BIPOC people who have experienced harm (not directly from this board but others) to use their experience but without it being personal. This is something that Naomi Gracechild brought up "how personal will this feel?" It is the reason we will have two consultants.

Amanda: So we are thinking we want to keep the committee aspect to this? Cause I do see the benefit as well but if we are going to we should start on that. At least in terms of getting a list of names together.

Colleen: And what was the committee to do specifically

Amanda: Oversight. *Here's an outline of what we are planning to do (and seek input) and then a check-in, "here is what we have done" (and seek input).*

Leslie: We can reach out to Former Board Members or volunteers. Would be a good starting point if we are thinking of people for a committee.

Colleen: This is a bit the role I wrote up for Janice. We did the Workshop--but also invite as a summative and so we should invite Janice back somewhere in between I mean that's another way to have oversight (as a paid position).

Amanda: Continue conversation on basecamp?

Agenda Item 6: Free Resources On Diversity, Fundraising, and Arts Management

Amanda: While not written down as an action item this is something I remember saying I would do. So --- though we got the grant--- this is a list of alternatives. Free Courses etc..to help in meeting goals. Charity Village and Coursera courses list. Link to Digital Ladders.

Colleen: Would be good to review the Pivot Grant as there is money set aside for board and staff training. Also brought up Digital Ladders (as we really need this).

Some conversation about the website.

Colleen: Would like to take \$3000 and throw it at a communications / design person. It's mostly taking away (from the site). We could have a whole new site populate with our old content, we would still own the IP address and it would be 'forwarded to'. To prevent the duplication of work.Plus it's confusing for the public.

Amanda: I will put the resources in the board or admin file.

Joseph leaves meeting.

Colleen: I will be going dark for all of May and I would like it if the hiring process was started by the time I get back.

Suggest this job 'Remain open until filled'.

2018-19 Canada Heritage grant is a great reference point model for what people might do. It reminded me of how we really wanted to institute visiting curators because we want diversity of experience. And also you're asking someone to schedule 50 events in a year. Which really is brutal. This allows for a month off and they can choose a visiting curator for months they are not comfortable programming for. *Slam coordinator would still get paid during this month.*

Holden : Also for the Guest Curator they are gaining experience valuable for a future Slam Coordinator.

Colleen: Pre-Covid BROADWAY Youth offered youth slam in the basement. We could maybe do 4 in a year.

A: I would love be able to do that again.

Some conversation about the Wordplay coordinator job
Board agrees with potential internal hire option

Meeting Adjourned: 5:27pm