

AIDS Committee of Ottawa

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes: Wednesday, February 23, 2022

Present: Khaled Salam, Jason Brophy, Brigitte Charbonneau, Saina Beitari, Ali Sougou, Edward Barbezat, Jasmine Mwanga, Andrea Prajerová, Zara Fadoul

Regrets (r) / Absent (a): Sahazia Ouédraogo (r), Bello Mansour (r), Agness Nalwamba (a), Dare Abdullahi (a).

1. Welcome and Call to Order

*Jason called this meeting to order at 6:11 PM; **Quorum was met (8/12).***

2. Approval of agenda

*It was **MOVED** by Brigitte and **SECONDED** by Ali that the agenda be approved.
Motion Passed.*

3. Welcome new board member

Official welcome to Jasmine, our newest board member. We had a Board member resign after the last meeting, and our reserve Board member, Jasmine Mwanga, was invited to join the Board and she accepted. Jasmine works in finance and has a background in HR. She expressed her interest to join both the Nominations committee and the Policy committee.

4. Nominations Committee report

There were no new updates from the Nominations Committee. Peter suggested that it was good timing to do a Board assessment and map the current composition of the Board. He also mentioned the need for a strategic recruitment and invited other Board members to share with him any connections they may have. The committee expressed interest to recruit particularly folks with legal and fundraising expertise or lived Trans, non-binary or Two-spirit experience. Last meeting of the nominations committee was held in January and another one was planned for the beginning of March.

5. Ray's report

There have been no major changes in the financial report from last time. The ACO is well on-track with the expected funding. Funds received from the MOH, City of Ottawa, WAGE, Food Bank etc., are all in place and available to be spent. Regarding expenses, the ACO is also where the organisation should be at this time of the year. There were higher expenses spent on the advertising and promotion of

the AIDS Day celebration. But they will be balanced out in the upcoming months. The ACO has also spent a bit over on education and prevention activities these past months. Ray also talked about the depreciation rate and how the value of the fixed assets bought in the past is being reflected in the budget. He expects the depreciation number to be smaller this year. The ACO is running a minor deficit of \$11,000, a sum which can be mitigated depending on the donations the ACO receives this year and other fundraising efforts. Overall, there has been a significant improvement in ACO finances. There is additional funding coming from the City of Ottawa and the Ottawa Community Foundation to be spent by the end of March, 2022.

6. Approval of minutes

The Draft of January minutes was *MOVED* by Edward and *SECONDED* by Brigitte. **Motion passed.**

There are still no draft minutes from the meeting in November 2024, 2021. Jason will try to have them ready for next months' meeting.

7. Committee Reports:

- **Finance Committee**

Given Ray's detailed report, there was no need for a report from the Finance Committee. Zara as Treasurer to meet with Ray in the coming weeks to set a time/date for the Finance Committee to meet. Zara was not present.

- **Executive Committee**

Jason reported that the EC met at the beginning of February, the main point of discussion was the board matrix, other part was welcoming Andrea to the Executive and going over roles and division of labour for her position. As also discussed during the EC meeting, Khaled asked other Board members about their preference to receive Ray's financial report either before or just at the meeting each month. Most Board members expressed their preference to receive the report in advance of each Board meeting. Given the technicalities of the reporting, now Ray's report will be sent out by the Secretary to the rest of the Board each month two days prior to the meeting (typically on a Monday if the meeting is held on Wednesday).

- **Policy Committee**

Jason provided updates and mentioned that in the past, it was the Secretary who would also assume the position of the Chair of the Policy Committee. Because of the fair amount of work to be done in both positions, a decision has been made to split

these two roles. Sahazia is now assuming the role of the Chair of the Policy Committee and will plan and lead the upcoming work and meetings of the group. Andrea will stay on the committee as an active member together with Brigitte, Saina and Jasmine who have all expressed their interest to join. There has been no meeting of the Policy Committee held in 2022 yet, but the first one is planned for the beginning of March.

8. Executive Director's Report

Khaled updated the Board on the following matters:

- *Max is leaving ACO. The position of Men's Outreach Worker is currently vacant. We will be posting for the position in mid March and hope to have it filled by early April.*
- *Annual Funding Submission to the City of Ottawa was due on Feb. 15th. It was successfully submitted by the deadline.*
- *AIDS Bureau 2021-22 in-year reallocation request was submitted by the deadline of Feb. 15th*
- *ACO is currently working on the AIDS Bureau 2022-23 program plan (Schedule A) and proposed budget (Schedule B) which is due on Feb. 28th*
- *Our 2021 property tax relief application for registered charitable organisations was approved in the amount of \$16, 003.11, we will receive half of the approved payment on April 1st and the other half on May 31st*
- *Month of February was busy with Black History Month and Winter Pride events organised by ACO and partners. The highlight was the event organized by ACO in partnership with the Canadian Council of Muslim Women to commemorate Canadian ACB HIV Awareness Day on Feb. 7th. The event was a Digital Anti-Racism Education workshop focusing on addressing Islamophobia and Countering Cyberhate, and discussion on how that all creates vulnerability to HIV. There were over 70 people who participated, and everyone received a certificate upon completion of the training*
- *ACO staff team participated in 2 psychoeducational sessions this month facilitated by Sheila Norquay. The focus was on mental health, healthy communication, boundaries, conflict resolution etc. 2 more sessions will take place in March.*
- *Jason asked how the ACO was coping with the current omicron related restrictions and the lifting of restrictions expected in the near future. Khaled explained that the ACO has resumed in-person gatherings with smaller groups of 25 people and less. Looking ahead to spring, most restrictions are going to be dropped (including the mask and vaccine passport mandate). There is an on-going discussion among Khaled and staff on how to go about it. They also plan to shift focus on skill-building programs and relevant topics such as immigration, housing...etc. Following the public health guidelines, the*

ACO will be open as before, 4-5 hours a day. Any other operations and procedures will be adjusted based on what happens.

9. Other business:

- *Board Retreat - The Board discussed the yearly Board retreat and its possible activities and timing. Ali suggested that all Board members should participate in the DARE workshop, an anti-racist training organized by the Canadian Council of Muslim Women. Brigitte agreed and added that a workshop on dementia could be beneficial as well. Jason suggested exploring [the Positive Brain Health Now study site](#) and their toolkit for community-based organisations. Since new members have joined the Board, Khaled also suggested that outside of the anti-racist and anti-oppression learning component, the retreat should cover governance of the organization and include a presentation about the structure of ACO, its governance policy as well as how the organisation runs and is financed. He will explore the options offered by the Volunteer Ottawa. Jason added that it would be a great idea to learn more about fundraising at the retreat, something that has been talked about for a while. Time-wise, the retreat will be held on a weekend possibly in May or early summer. Board members agreed it would be worth trying to come together in person.*
- *Board Matrix - Andrea discussed with the rest of the Board the idea of creating a Board matrix, an assessment tool which would help evaluate the current composition of the Board. As mentioned by Peter, having this information is necessary for the ACO's recruitment and strategic goals. It was agreed that it could be also beneficial to establish an ad-hoc Equity and Diversity group/committee for this purpose. Several Board members, including Saina, expressed their interest to take part in it.*
- **Next meeting(s) (to be convened by Zoom):**
 - **Executive Committee** March, 21, 2022, at 5:00 PM
 - **ACO Board of Directors:** March, 30, 2022, at 6:00 PM

10. Adjournment - Brigitte MOVED to adjourn at 7:33 PM.