



**The Depot Community Food Centre  
2023 Annual General Meeting  
June 15, 2023, 7pm  
In person at the Resto Depot**

**Minutes**

**Chair: Peter Guay, Chair, Board of Directors**

**Members present: 71 including staff**

**Non-members present: none**

**Welcome**

Peter welcomed all to the AGM. Members were polled for language of the evening. Consensus to conduct in English predominantly with Whisper Translation available in English and Spanish. Members were also asked if they did not want to have their photo used in publicity to raise their hands. No one objected.

Peter read the Land Recognition Statement.

Peter outlined the challenge of balancing the short-term needs of The Depot, manifested by the growing numbers at the Marché Depot, versus the long term work of nurturing healthy habits, building a more resilient, inclusive community and advocating for equitable public policy. Peter then gave an update for the past year. 10,000 emergency food baskets were provided to over 2000 households; 31,416 meals served and 40,516 snacks provided for afterschool programs. In total, over 5,200 individuals were reached through The Depot's programs. By the end of 2022, we were providing about 1,200 emergency food baskets per month with up to 144 new families registering with us monthly.

Peter then thanked the incredible team at The Depot for the dedication, passion and innovation.

**Adoption of the Agenda, Appointment of Chair and Secretary and Ballot Counters**

Motion to adopt the Agenda.

Proposed by Maurene White and seconded by Steve Karook.

***The motion was carried unanimously.***

Motion to accept Peter Guay as Chair of the meeting, Janet Burtch as Secretary and Karima Dajani and Caitlin Hayward as Vote counters  
Proposed by Ingrid Hings, seconded by Micheline Gosselin  
*The motion was carried unanimously.*

### **Approval of minutes from the 2022 AGM**

Barbara Levick moved to accept the 2022 AGM minutes and the motion was seconded by Steve Karook.

*The motion was carried unanimously by those members who were present at the 2022 meeting.*

### **Board Report and Ratification of Acts Committed – Peter Guay, Board Chair**

- The Depot's board of directors met 6 times this year.
- We remained very active in ensuring we were doing all we could to support the organization as we continued to grapple with the challenges brought on by the steadily increasing demand caused by increased cost of living and many newcomers to our community.
- As a Board, our role is mainly one of oversight and strategic guidance and so we continued to do our best in this year of transition and pivots.
- As a Board, we also spent time growing and strengthening our committee structure. In this way, we can deep dive into specific files, while also engaging community members outside the board.

### **Anti-Oppression Commitments following consultations last year – 9 commitments**

- In order to minimize barriers to our programs and services we continue to critically assess our work and learn to further embed anti-oppressive and anti-racist practices in our work. and to make The Depot the most inclusive organization at all levels.
- The process has included working with two sets of consultants, consultation with various stakeholder groups – many of you probably participated in our focus groups and event last May.
- It is very important to us to report back on this work and to let you know where we are at, that we are still evolving in our work, and that this is an ongoing process of learning and unlearning as an organization.
- Through this process, and what we heard through the consultations and learned through the trainings, we created a set of anti-oppression commitments which will help guide our work and inform an action plan.
- Tasha and Peter then read the 9 commitments to members.

Pierre Zariffa moved to ratify the acts committed and the motion was seconded by Bonnie Soutar.

*The motion was carried unanimously.*

### **Executive Director Report – Tasha Lackman, Executive Director**

- Tasha thanks all involved in the past year of The Depot – the participants, volunteers, donors and partners.
- This support from all allowed The Depot to respond to the exponential increase in demand throughout the past year. December 2022 was the busiest month in the history of The Depot.
- Tasha diagramed and explained The Depot’s core values – social justice and solidarity, equity, dignity and respect, openness and care.
- Tasha also reiterated the need for the community to put pressure on our governments for structural change needed to address food insecurity.

### **Report of the Nominations Committee – Caitlin Hayward, Staff member and Nominations Committee member presented the report in Bernicy Fong’s absence**

- Caitlin announced that Robyn Dalton and Pierre Zariffa have finished their mandates as per the bylaws. She thanked them for their many years of leadership and devotion to the growth of the Depot.
- Samuel Oslund, Debra Brind’Amour and Alexis Katsansis are not continuing on the Board for another term. She thanked them for their commitment and years of service.
- Janet Burtch’s term has ended and she has agreed to continue for another term.
- According to our bylaws, we must have between 9 and 15 Board members. 7 spots will be filled by current Board members. The Board decided to make a call for 4 additional members.
- There will continue to be openings on committees as a way to bring in new individuals.
- The four candidates are presented.

### **Board Elections:**

- Re-election of Janet Burtch
- Election of Philippe Arnold, Carolyn Della Rossa, Ronald Rudin and Quynh Vu

Motion to accept new Board members proposed by Barbara Levick and seconded by Maurene White.

*The motion was carried unanimously.*

### **Presentation and Approval of the 2021-2022 Audited Financial Statements (for the year ended March 31, 2022) – Pierre Zariffa, Treasurer**

Pierre Zariffa presented the annual Financial Statement to the members and highlighted the following:

- Administratively, our financial year runs from April 1 to March 31st
- Pierre introduced Carolyn Della Rossa as incoming Finance Committee Chair.
- Financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2023 have been audited with satisfactory results by our auditor Ron Amstutz.
- Overall The Depot is in very good financial shape

- Another solid financial year at The Depot as it continues to grow to meet the evolving needs of the community.
- The Depot is very fortunate to have a very generous ecosystem of volunteers and donors from government to foundations and individual donor; a thank you for the continued support was expressed by Pierre.
- From a governance standpoint, the Finance Committee met 6 times during the fiscal year and on-boarded 2 new professional accountants to the committee during the year (Carolyn Della Rossa / Quynh Vu)
- The year ended with an operating deficit of \$133,601 which was a lower deficit than expected in our budget for the year.
- Revenues stand at \$3.1M for the year, an increase of \$400K over prior year, representing almost 15% improvement.
- Expenses came in at \$3.3M for the year, above budget mainly due to the increase in demand and cost of emergency food.
- Overall administrative expenses as a percentage of overall expenses are at 11.5%
- The Depot has a very healthy balance sheet with \$1.9M in cash at March 31, 2023, of which \$630k continues to be earmarked for the future building.

Susan Kessler moved to approve the 2023 Auditor’s Report and the motion was seconded by Robyn Dalton.

*The motion was carried unanimously.*

#### **Appointment of Auditor for 2023-2024 – Pierre Zariffa, Treasurer**

Jan Burtch moved to appoint Ron Amstutz as Auditor of the Depot for the 2023-24 fiscal year and the motion was seconded by Robert Louson.

*The motion was carried unanimously.*

#### **Report of the Strategic Committee – Robyn Dalton, Board Member**

- Robyn detailed the work of the Strategic Committee, which includes board member and staff. She outlined the concern about a permanent home and desire for The Depot to support the creation of a community hub bringing together many organizations who are aligned to best serve the community. The strategic planning process will also help us find the balance between these three competing, yet complementary priorities:
  - Responding to immediate need (which is growing)
  - Being a catalyst for change (facilitating change, political influence and advocacy, strategies to address poverty, long term determinants of health, demonstrating what is possible)
  - Long term goals of building and facilitating a “nourishing community” (at the intersection of food security, food sovereignty and resilient communities): belonging, connection, knowledge exchange, solidarity, food justice, voice, network building, accompaniment
- We are continuing this thinking and reflection, and the Strategic Committee continues to meet regularly to help move the process forward.
- A strategic planning process will be launched this fall.

## **Governance Committee Report** – presented by Peter Guay in the absence of Peter Riddell.

- New committee was created this year.
- Met 2 times, plus a number of informal working meetings among members.
- Terms of Reference for the Finance & Audit Committee and the Governance Committee were created.
- Terms of Reference for the other committees are being implemented as well as an overview of the general governance of the organization
- In addition, training on governance for staff and Board was held in February.

## **Community Appreciation**

Peter invites key staff members to express their appreciation for different stakeholders in our community who have made such a difference this year in building community and in keeping things running smoothly through a difficult time.

- Marguerite Kinack thanked the staff for their tireless work during another challenging year;
- Jennifer Moran thanked the countless volunteers;
- Julie Kourakos thanked the donors for their continued support;
- Kim Fox thanked the participants;
- Renate Betts thanked the community partners;
- Kristin Perry thanked the gardeners and the City for their growing partnership;
- Nicolas Braesch thanked the farmers, bakeries, and other partners

Peter then thanked the outgoing board members, with Robyn Dalton presenting a certificate of recognition to Pierre Zariffa for his service as Treasurer.

## **Community Question Period**

There was lively interaction with the audience members and many questions. Some of the topics raised were the possibility of asking food basket participants for copies of their tax returns and whether The Depot had considered developing a skills training program for participants. Answers were handled by Tasha and Peter.

## **Meeting Adjournment** – Peter Guay

Chair Peter Guay closed the meeting by thanking the team for tirelessly preparing for a smooth meeting and thanked the members for speaking up and their commitment to the organization.

A motion to close the meeting was proposed by Caitlin Hayward and seconded by Susan Kessler.  
*The motion was carried unanimously.*

**Meeting adjourned at 8:34pm.**

Minutes taken and respectfully submitted by Janet Burtch.