

# PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY OF VICTORIA (OccupyVictoria)

## General Assembly (GA) Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> 2011

### MEETING MINUTES

#### **1. TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

#### **2. READING OF THE GROUND RULES**

#### **3. POSITIVE PRESENTATION**

- tying the movement in with many other parts of the world. 2355 Occupations are happening throughout the world!
- general strike in Oakland was a great success
- Occupy Calgary is holding their ground
- credit given to Victoria City Council
- this movement is big, it's about the future!

#### **4. SUMMARY OF THE CONSENSUS REACHED IN THE PREVIOUS ASSEMBLY MEETING**

- re-strategizing and re-mobilizing.
- work groups are tasked with preparing proposals specific to their groups to bring to the GA.
- rallies will be held Saturdays Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>.

Summary of proposals tabled in the previous assembly:

- passing the hat at general assemblies.
- finding a home for all the homeless folks who are camping in the square.
- having a contact list at the Media tent.

Description of how Proposals differ from Announcements.

#### **5. ASSEMBLY FORMAT**

Proposal → clarifying questions → consensus check (yes, abstain - if more than 20% → take speaker's list, block).

#### **6. EXPLANATION OF GROUP DYNAMICS**

- hand signs explained

#### **7. WORKING GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

##### Food group

- apologies for serving food all day long because the kitchen has become overrun with people not involved with the Occupy movement. Will go back to strictly serving 12 noon and 6 pm meals so as to remedy this situation.
- We are trying to set up a water station – asks for donations of large water containers with spouts.

##### Public Engagement group

- rallies this Sat. Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> on Social and Economic Justice, also rallies on Environmental Justice on Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> and on Political Reform on Nov. 19<sup>th</sup> – see occupyvictoria.ca for schedule and speaker info. After the Nov. 5th rally there will be a flash march to mark international Bank Transfer Day, with the Raging Grannies.
- Need volunteer(s) to make a big banner announcing the Social Justice rally: Tim and a team of others offer.
- Asks for help to get the word out!! Via facebook, twitter. A pile of 8.5 x 11 posters is offered to post around town.
- there are lots of sign-making materials in the kitchen area. A bag of markers just got donated.
- David Suzuki is in town on Sat. Nov. 12th, the day of our Environmental Justice rally – who knows him to ask him whether he can address our rally?
- a volunteer offers to pick up a big speaker system for Nov. 5th.
- CHEK TV and CBC have been contacted.

#### **8. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS (brief statements no longer than a minute)**

- Friday Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> from 7 -10 pm: Campers' Art Show at the Ministry of Casual Living, 1442 Haultain St. Proceeds are going to PAOV. Q: can that be posted on our website? A: we usually only post PAOV events on our website but as the proceeds go to PAOV it should be posted.
- Sat. Nov. 5th: Bank Transfer Day – move your money to credit unions.
- Sun. Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> 4:30 – 7:30 pm – Music concerts for the Revolution, in the square – is on the paov.ca site.
- Wednesdays in November at 4 pm: Nonviolent Communication training with Renee Lindstrom offered in the square.
- Maggie posted a list with CRD contacts on her facebook page so we can ask why the CRD cut the power yesterday, and to restore it.
- Public Engagement group is asking for more input and volunteers.
- Thurs. Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 - 9 pm, 932 Balmoral Rd, public forum and discussion hosted by MP Denise Savoie on the Omnibus crime bill.
- Sat. Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>, 2 - 4 pm at Denise's constituency office, regarding Victoria's priorities on the federal budget.
- All candidates meeting tonight at 1240 Gladstone.
- A pile of posters for Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> available.

## 9. WORK GROUP PROPOSALS / CONSENSUS

**Proposal#1:** Finance work group:

To amend the previous consensus decision that stipulates that work groups needing expenditures over \$100 need to go through the GA for approval. Proposal to change the amount from \$100 to \$300.

No consensus: so speakers FOR and AGAINST:

FOR:

- we have \$1,500 – we can spend some of it. We can always raise more money;
- as to what happens to expensive items we purchase if the PAOV disbands, we have the GA process to decide on that;
- if we need medical or “emergency” supplies over \$100, we may not be able to wait till the next GA.

What classifies as an “emergency”?

We could amend the proposal to exclude medical supplies.

AGAINST: we have 2 general assemblies a week – don’t see why we can’t still approve expenses over \$100 at the GA;  
- people could buy things that cost under \$100 to stay under the cut-off limit, but do it several times, e.g. if we spend 5 x \$99 it’s only \$500, but if there were expenses 5 x \$299 they could take too big a chunk of our total bank account balance without having the GA consent.

Q: can you give an example of the kind of expenses that could be over \$100?

A: Light bulb for projector costs over \$100 and we’d need it if we were to start film screenings.

**Decision#1:** To table the Proposal, to be re-worked. **No consensus reached.**

**Proposal#2:** Process group:

That we use the human mike when appropriate. An example is given. If we’re using the human mike, we won’t use the electric mike. We would hammer out when to use it.

**Decision#2: Adopted with consensus.**

**Proposal#3:** Process group:

Agree on which decisions can and can’t the process group make.

Can: meeting format, roles for meeting facilitators etc., hand signal showings.

Can’t: changes to the consensus model, who can make a proposal, what constitutes a GA, when GA’s are going to be held.

For a future GA: have a big board with territory acknowledgement, ground rules and hand signals on it so it doesn’t need to take up meeting time in every GA.

**Decision#3: ?**

**Proposal#4:** Process group :

That the Process group create a definition of what a GA is.

GAs are structured meetings with an emphasis on decision-making. Discussions should be based on finished proposals that have been brought forward to the assembly. GAs are not a venue for ideological discourse. Thus we can free up MORE time for the issues that draw people to the movement. This may help reduce frustration and keep people engaged longer.

Daily assemblies (9 a.m. and 7 p.m., except Sun.) are spaces for discussing important issues, working on proposals and planning actions - these are vital to the movement.

**Decision#4: ?**

**Proposal#5:** Logistics:

That the tents move from the skating area by Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>, 5 days ahead of the opening of the rink.

Re-engage the Logistics group. Volunteers step forward.

Clarifying Q: wasn’t there already an idea to move the tents around town, like flash camps? A: Nothing definitive has been decided yet.

The Logistics group would notify the City if this proposal is adopted. We want to facilitate collaboration with other square users.

Small groups discussed, then shared results:

- make space for the rink– it’ll bring people into the square and this will spread the word about the Occupy movement.
- good to support the small local businesses who will set up in the square so as not to draw shoppers to the big box stores.
- let’s discuss where we will go from here – make a plan b.
- it’s important to tell the city what day the tents are going to move. A volunteer offers to phone the City to find out what is a good day to move.
- collaboration with the City will help the movement.
- good for the movement when families with children come into the square to skate. Shows that this is a safe environment.

Proposal amended to: That the assembly encourages the tent dwellers to move their tents in time so as not to interfere with the creation of the ice rink.

**Decision#5: No consensus.** Bring this discussion to the daily assembly tomorrow (Friday) at 7 pm. Ask campers to be there! Create a new proposal to bring to Sunday’s GA.

**Proposal#6:Security:**

To move the food into a lockable storage container so that it doesn't need to be watched 24/7. Put out the call for a used or free locker.

**Decision#6: Adopted with consensus.**

Note: Proposal for a future assembly: getting a locker for all the Media/Tech gear as well.

**Proposal#7:Technology:**

That if we haven't found a light bulb for the projector for free by next Thursday we allow Tech to go out and buy one for \$175.

**Decision#7: Proposal abandoned. Reason:** The use of a fully functional projector was offered.

**Proposal#8:General (no specific work group)**

That we start looking around for indoor meeting space.

It is getting too cold outside. Speak to churches around town (St. John, First Metropolitan, St. Andrews, and maybe also the BCGEU), about meeting space by donation, or in exchange for offering speakers on the Occupy movement to the congregation.

Clarifying questions: will you check around who will rent us space?

The use of a nearby venue was offered, once or twice a week, with minimal charge. Can seat 40-50 people – film screenings etc.

**Decision#8: Adopted with consensus.**

**10. TABLED PROPOSALS**

- None.

**11. CLOSURE OF OFFICIAL BUSINESS**

9:20 pm.