

2021 Annual General Meeting Minutes – Draft June 6, 2022, 6 pm EST on Zoom

Item 1

Welcome and Land Acknowledgement: Raegan Swanson (RMS), Exec. Director, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

After some housekeeping reminders about where to find documents for tonight's AGM, Raegan reiterated The ArQuives' commitment to strive for LGBTQ2+ representation and stressed that this needs to be done hand in hand with work. Anyone with questions about what The ArQuives has been doing in this regard is welcome to enquire at any time. More information on how the organization responds to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action will be available and shared soon.

Raegan introduced tonight's agenda items.

Item 2

Minutes from previous Annual General Meeting: May 10, 2021 – Justin Hughes-Jones (JHJ) moved to approve, seconded by Ana Rita Morais (ARM). The minutes were approved. The draft will be available by request if anyone else needs access.

Item 3

Business arising – none

Item 4

Co-Presidents' address: Ana Rita Morais & Justin Hughes-Jones –

ARM: Thanks to Raegan for introductory remarks and thanks to Justin for the unconventional year and sharing leadership.

In 2021, we once again had every aspect of the work we do at The ArQuives be impacted by the ongoing global pandemic. Despite the adversities, the closures, and the many organizational changes throughout the year, we have continued our critical mission: to acquire, preserve, organize, and give public access to information and materials in any medium, by and about LGBTQ2+ people.

Regardless of the ebbs and flows of the pandemic, The ArQuives remained committed to the community it serves, facilitating several ongoing partnerships including the Inclusive Voices Collection Review and the LGBTQ Oral History Digital Collaboratory, as well as welcoming new partnerships with our newly launched LGBTQ2+ Inclusive Education Program and the

Salaam Canada Oral History project. Beyond key partnerships, we also held a series of exhibitions and events alike— including Abdi Osman's Shadowboxing in the upper windows of The ArQuives, the virtual Queerspawn Digital Storytelling Project, and a screening and discussion of *El satario*.

JHJ: Covid continued to impact our financial picture in 2021 more than we had expected. That being said, we remain proud of the team's ability to manage in times of uncertainty. Fortunately, through hard work and steadfast commitment, we finished the year with a surplus, once again. We increased our fundraising drastically with some one-time benefits not likely to reoccur annually and managed to keep expenses lower with The ArQuives physically being closed. As we look at 2022, our expenses are likely to increase in alignment with our reopening strategy— a moment we have long waited for, in order to better service the public. We will continue to focus on all aspects of fundraising to offset those increased costs.

We would like to express our gratitude and thanks to Raegan Swanson, our Executive Director (ED), as well as Sam Cronk who acted as Interim ED, and our amazing staff including Lucie Handley–Girard, Ariana Ho, Jordan Saroya, Deanna Bickford, and Nipun Kudalkar, who skillfully balanced working on-site and from home throughout the year. Thank you as well to our volunteers, who continued the work of so many of our committees, as well as to our Board.

ARM: Finally, and with much appreciation, we wish to thank our financial supporters, our Guardians of The ArQuives, and every single donor and community member who supported us financially and allowed us to continue to do the work our community needs now more than ever. Also, shoutout to everyone who joins events.

JHJ: As we look towards our 50th anniversary at The ArQuives in 2023, we remain committed to the global LGBTQ2+ community we serve, ensuring that we remain steadfast in our commitment to *Keep our Stories Alive*. Thank you very much.

The Co-Presidents invited questions from the floor. None arose.

Motion to approve Co-President Report – Dennis Findlay moved to approve, seconded by Beck Schaefer. The report is approved.

Item 5

Executive Director's address –

RMS: Getting a formal COVID policy in place was the first step to welcoming people into the building. This policy has been circulated to all volunteers and has been placed on our website so that researchers and the public can access it. You can find it on the "About us" page on our website.

Some volunteers have already come back to do shifts, but we are still working out the kinks in

scheduling. We will continue to operate on appointment/scheduled shifts so that we don't exceed capacity in the building (it was an issue before COVID, and we know it will continue to be an issue). The safety of our staff and volunteers is our priority, and many of us are or have people in our life who are immunocompromised or unable to get vaccinated. While I know that many are eager to start back again. We have already started packing up material that were donated during the pandemic to be moved offsite and we hope to have new desks put up so that folks can begin working.

In the summer of 2021, we began welcoming researchers back by appointment. We had, and still have, a waiting list of folks who would like to do research. Knowing that this backlog was keeping us from being able to fulfill our mandate of giving access, we have begun the hiring process for a Reference Archivist who will work for the next 6 months. Their main task will be assisting researchers, which will allow us to bring in more folks who want to do research. While we are still finalizing the schedule for the new hire, we hope to update the website (and social media) soon. Researchers will continue to require an appointment, however the number of days the reading room will be open will quadruple.

The policy will be reviewed after the summer and will take into consideration notes from the staff, researchers, public, and volunteers.

Priority 1: Diverse Fundraising for Sustainability

2021 marked several important grants, including: Documentary Heritage Communities Program funding and Ontario Trillium Fund. Thanks to the work of Deanna and the fundraising team for all their hard work.

Priority 2: Building our Collections through Building Relationships

The priority for 2021 collection building was our Collection Review which was done with Inclusive Voices. This immense project began in May and has just been completed. You will hear more about this project towards the end of the meeting. The final report is being proofread right now and will soon go to the board before it will be sent to volunteers and put on our website. We will begin the creation of a Collections Development Plan based on the findings of the report later this year for January 2023.

Priority 3: The Right Space

The pandemic and the lockdown have further aggravated our space concerns. We received a large amount of donations that piled up without being able to have the staff and volunteers in the building to process them and move them. We are working to make sure the space that we have is ready when more volunteers are coming into the building but we continue to look for new space that will meet the needs of the collection, the community, and our volunteers and staff.

Priority 4: Improved Programming

Thanks to Community Engagement Committee we were able to continue to host the Queer Trivia in 2021. We thank them for their hard work. Events were held virtually, and digital exhibitions were created. We worked with Salaam Canada to collect material and will be able to create an exhibition this year with the work that was done in 2021. We look forward to being able to resume even more activities, possibly in person, and hope that folks will continue to join us virtually until then.

Priority 5: A Diverse and Vibrant Team

Priority six of our Strategic Plan is A Diverse and Vibrant Team - something that we have been working seriously on. In 2021 I took parental leave just after the 2020 AGM and The ArQuives welcomed Sam Cronk as Interim Executive Director. I want to thank all the staff who worked in 2021: Lucie, Ariana, Jordan, Deanna, Nipun, and of course Sam.

As we move into 2022, we have some great new hires who will be working with us, including a collection specialist to work on the artifact collection, an education researcher, a Young Canada Works student, and a marketing and development coordinator.

Thank you to volunteers and staff who worked in 2021. 2022 will bring new challenges but we are excited to prepare for the 50th anniversary of The ArQuives and the creation of our new strategic plan for 2023-2027.”

Motion to accept ED Report - Ana Rita Morais moves to approve, seconded by David DesLauriers. ED Report is approved.

Invitation for questions:

Elsbeth Brown (current member, former Board member) asked about the building itself, the space and events. Anticipates it may be difficult to host events at The ArQuives either because of COVID or because it can be challenging to remove stuff from the Gallery.

Raegan explains that the volume of material in the gallery is bigger than it has ever been. Some material will be shipped to offsite storage. Should have a better idea by July if we are able to use the gallery space in the fall or whether the need to have spread out workspaces means we might need to create more space. Also notes an increase of staff. Also reminder that COVID Policy will be reviewed again after the summer.

Item 6

Officers' Report(s)

Nathan Hoo confirms there is no report from the **Secretary**.

Treasurer's report: **David DesLauriers (DD)**

DD introduced the budget and general issues in 2021. Introduced the auditors, Alex Briganti, and Alexandra ten Kortenaar, from the firm Hogg, Shain & Scheck.

Alex Briganti presented the audited financial statements. He explained that The ArQuives received a good review and are in a sound financial situation. Procedures did not uncover issues, complications, or disagreements.

Received great assistance from management, external bookkeepers, and Board. Thank organization for assistance and membership allowing to be of service for the past year.

Invitation for questions – None.

Item 7

Review of Financial Statements and Appointment of Auditor – Dennis Findlay moved to appoint Hogg, Shain & Scheck to continue as The ArQuives' auditors. Ana Rita Morais seconded. No objections. It was passed and Hogg, Shain & Scheck will continue their work with The ArQuives.

Item 8

By-law Amendments – Received no amendments by email, but invited membership to propose on the (virtual) floor. No amendments were proposed.

Item 9

Election of Directors

ARM explained the process of finding new Board members:

- Did a call for board members which focused on the right complement to the current board members and the needs of The ArQuives.
- We received 11 applications (one withdrew prior to interviews) — candidates were interviewed by board members and staff.
- We then aligned the skills of the candidates against needs of the organization, including but not limited to leads for Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, Communications, Community Engagement, and Collections Committee, alongside previous board experience.
- The board then shortlisted the top five candidates.
- Notices were sent out to those recommended and not recommended by the board. All those not recommended were made aware that despite not being recommended they were told they could still stand at the AGM, given our current bylaws.

Should anyone in addition to the Board's recommendations wish to stand, we will now be opening up the floor for that.

Opened floor – Open now and later when those asked to stand will provide a short speech and bio.

Explanation of voting process. Nominees are asked to speak.

Justin Hughes-Jones (current Co-President) – detailed his background and professional work (previously 19 years at RBC). Now COO at Switch Health. Background supporting ER resource groups to create better environments for LGBTQ2+ and foster career development. JHJ expressed his desire to continue.

Kelvin Kung – applicant – works as an architect and has worked to build community centres. Deep love of history and architectural history.

Courtney McFarlane – applicant – Visual artist with deep connections to the Black LGBTQ community in Toronto. Background in activism. Work with The ArQuives during Legacies in Motion Black Queer Archival Project. Has worked in the Community Health Sector for 2 decades and has frontline knowledge of community development. Looking forward to supporting work at The ArQuives.

Lauren Pragg – applicant – Works in community nonprofit research and community engagement. Background doing equity work with various organizations.

Kelly Riback Small – applicant – creative director, writer, and designer. Professor of design ethics. GG gold metal ethics of commercial creative work.

Michelle Schwartz – applicant – Background in library and archives. Volunteered with The ArQuives on the Operations Committee and through involvement with Lesbian and Gay Liberation in Canada. Currently an Educational Developer at the Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson) – focus on inclusive space design. Very passionate about inclusion and creating welcoming spaces for everyone.

Raegan calls for anyone who wishes to run from the floor. No one puts their names forward.

Actual voting – as there are 5 applicants and 5 spots, they are elected by acclamation. Reagan welcomes the new members.

Elsbeth Brown –Thanks to the Board members because it has been a difficult time with lots of change. Particular thanks to ARM and JHJ for stepping up as copresidents. Also, thanks to Nathan Hoo, secretary, who is stepping down, to Renee Saucier as VP and David DesLauriers for work with financials.

Item 10

Questions from the floor/other business – none.

Item 11

Meeting Adjourned at 6:51 pm.