



PRIDE CENTRE OF EDMONTON

A Statement from
The Pride Centre of Edmonton's
Board of Directors
Thursday, April 18, 2019

Over the past month, a lot has happened in our community. It has been emotional for all of us. As the Pride Centre of Edmonton Board of Directors, we have wanted to take the time to hear all points of view before responding. We have been listening to and learning from those who have reached out to us in anger, concern, disappointment and worry for the future of the Centre. We are thankful to those who have reached out to us, and we recognize the emotional and time investment that you made to do so. Your voices have helped us recognize the changes that the Pride Centre needs to make, and we, the Board, are now entering the conversation to share with you our commitment.

The Pride Centre recently reviewed its mission and vision and core values, which were adopted by the Board on April 16, 2019. Our **mission** is to “provide supports that respond to the needs of people of diverse sexual, gender identities and gender expressions, as well as the people in their lives.” Our **vision** is to contribute to the creation of “a strong and vibrant community of Edmontonians, who take pride in their diversity and ensure belonging for everyone.”

In order to fulfill our mission and vision, the Pride Centre's core values are that:

- We are non-judgmental
- We create safe spaces
- We are collaborative
- We are intentional and responsive so that our programs and services are always relevant
- We are accountable and transparent

It is from this framework we acknowledge that the Pride Centre's past actions have caused harm to many members of our community. We offer our sincere apology. There are many challenges in finding leaders and developing a governance model that can truly and authentically represent those in the community who most need what the Pride Centre can offer. We know we have failed in some significant ways, but recent events have heightened our awareness and strengthened our resolve to find ways to make it right. The Board of Directors has a responsibility to implement structural changes that affect all aspects of the Pride Centre's future operations. The Pride Centre of Edmonton welcomes dialogue and partnership. In the process of developing and implementing the required structural changes the Pride Centre will rely on many voices, from many people and from many groups.

This is what we've heard and understood:

1. There are many people living in Edmonton and around the world who face discrimination every day because of gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, abilities, mental health, socio-economic status, and other intersecting experiences of systemic barriers;
2. Racism, cisgender and heterosexual normatives, and other deeply entrenched systems of patriarchy and oppression, including the favouritism of white voices, the silencing of racialized or dissenting voices, micro-aggressions, dismissiveness, and even hate-motivated violence, have real, ongoing, and measurable harmful effects. These effects can be perpetuated by institutions, like police systems, community organizations, and as well, within whole groups of people, like the broader 2SLGBTQ+ community. Whether it is advertent or inadvertent, the damage is the responsibility of the perpetrator.
3. We acknowledge that when people are advocating for equity, they must do it on their own terms, not on ours.
4. We know that safe spaces for marginalized people are essential and that the Pride Centre must be the one place where safety is guaranteed.

We have heard your suggestions on how to make the Pride Centre's activities and structure relevant for everyone who needs us. We believe that ongoing community engagement is necessary and will shape future directions for the Pride Centre.

Our Immediate Action steps:

1. The Pride Centre will host its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on June 22, 2019, 12–3pm. (location to be determined);
2. The Pride Centre will undertake a voting member recruitment process; it is voting members who decide who will become Directors on the Pride Centre of Edmonton Board;
3. The Pride Centre will undergo a Board member recruitment process with the hope of filling some or all of the nine current vacancies. Our aim is to expand the Board so that it better reflects the diversity and intersectionality of the community. This process will include offering information sessions to potential candidates so they can learn about Board Directorship before committing to it;
4. Because the Executive Director has resigned effective April 12, we will appoint an interim Executive Director to support current staff, to keep the Pride Centre doors open, and to assist the Board to prepare for the upcoming AGM;

5. The current Board will immediately start the process of recruiting a new Executive Director. We will undergo a broad search and will invite input from community leaders;
6. The Board will hire a third-party consultant to review the Pride Centre's policies, procedures and by-laws to make them more inclusive and to serve the voices and needs of our service users;
7. We will develop positive relationships with key community groups in order to further develop our understanding of how we can support QTBIPOC folks; and,
8. Together we will create an action plan for the incumbent Board Directors and Executive Director to guide them in the process of making additional meaningful structural changes.

If you would like to contact us and/or work with us, as we further develop our plan for the coming months, please reach us at: board@pridecentreofedmonton.ca

We are:

- Ricki Justice (she/her), Acting Chair
- Stephanie Booth (she/her), Vice Chair
- Ali Aasie (he/him), Secretary
- Clayton McCrea (he/him), Treasurer
- Sean Malden (he/him), Director at Large
- Thais McKee (she/her), Director at Large



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