

**The People's Potato**  
Annual General Meeting Agenda  
May 6, 2020

**Table of Contents**

- 1. List of attendees**
- 2. Agenda for the Current AGM**
- 3. Introduction**
- 4. Approval of Agenda for the Current AGM**
- 5. Approval of Last Year's Minutes**
- 6. Annual Report**
- 7. Financial Report**
- 8. Presentation from Board of Directors**
- 9. Constitutional Changes**
- 10. Board Nominations**
- 11. Board Elections**
- 12. Varia**
- 13. Board Election Results**
- 14. Closing Remarks**

**1. List of Attendees**

Ella Kholmman- Student  
Gaby Pedicelli- Student  
Hanine Hanine El Mir - Volunteer  
Hiru Rodrigo- Board Member  
Iman Khailat- Collective Member  
Kimberly Ching- Volunteer  
Ishelle Macz- Collective Member  
Jules Galbraith- Student  
Karen Ounsworth- Collective Member  
Kylen Chang- Board Member  
Lisa Zhong- Volunteer  
Margot Drukker- Student  
Nadine Bazile – Volunteer  
Navid Reza- Board Member  
Phoebe- Volunteer  
Rachel Ochitwa- Collective Member  
Shalini Persaud- Collective Member  
Sosa- Collective member  
Rachel Boucher – Community Member  
Tate- Volunteer  
Coco- Collective Member

Becca- Facilitator  
Parker- Tech Support and CEO  
Tate- Volunteer  
Ana Brule- Volunteer  
Armando- Volunteer  
Benno Hart- Volunteer  
Caroline Alince- Board Member  
Boris Restrepo- Collective Member  
Gustavo Rodriguez- Volunteer (minute-taker)  
Jenny Cunningham- Student  
Carter Fredericks- Collective Member  
Donald Armstrong- Volunteer

## **2. Agenda for the Current AGM**

- Introduction
- Approval of Agenda for the Current AGM
- Approval of Last Year's Minutes
- Annual Report
- Financial Report
- Presentation from Board of Directors
- Constitutional Changes
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## **3. Introduction**

- Becca welcomes participants and states some rules.
- a) Write your name and role in the chat (staff, volunteer, board member).
  - b) Always state your name before you talk.
  - c) You can write questions in the chatroom and Becca will address them.

## **4. Approval of Agenda for the Current AGM**

- Becca presents this year's AGM agenda and motions to accept it.

- AJ seconds the agenda.
- The agenda is approved unanimously.

## 5. Approval of Last Year's Minutes

- Becca presents last year's minutes.
- AJ motions to accept last year's AGM minutes.
- Karen seconds the motion.
- Minutes are approved with one abstention.

## 6. Annual Report

- Sosa presents the annual report

a) Garden: The People's Potato garden, located at Loyola, is a community space whose aim is to grow and distribute herbs and vegetables to the community while also providing an educational space where people can learn how to garden. Last year we organized a few workshops/events for people to get familiar with the abc of small scale gardening. After ending our collaboration with City Farm School who grew our garlic on their land for a number of years we started growing our own garlic. In the summer of 2019 we were able to grow ourselves a considerable amount of organic garlic that was later used in our kitchen. As of 2019 we decided to up the total hours of garden work to 50 and have two workers to be able to increase production but make garden work easier. This year due to restrictions linked to the Covid-19 pandemic we had to make the difficult decision to close our garden to volunteers and shifted our focus to distributing most of our harvest to food banks and organizations serving marginalized communities.

As restrictions loosen we hope to be able to welcome volunteers again in the safest possible way.

b) Volunteer Coordination: The Potato is able to exist and fulfill its mandate because of the countless hours dedicated by our many volunteers. Our volunteers and Stagiaires help make it possible to serve over 400 people every weekday. Volunteers are welcome anytime between 9-3 during our workdays to help with our daily preparation of meals. This can be veggie preparation, serving and cleaning up. Additionally, volunteers are a crucial help with our emergency food basket service. This year, we continued receiving student interns from schools and organizations such as John Grant, Summit, Venture High, and Innovation Youth, who complete their placement with us. On our part, we hold volunteer orientations at the beginning of the fall and winter semesters to familiarize new and potential volunteers with the layout of our kitchen, outline kitchen safety and to take suggestions that may improve the general functioning of our kitchen. We also hold volunteer appreciation events at the end of each semester where we get the chance to give back to our volunteers for all their hard work and dedication. In 2020, we hope to continue establishing a strong base of motivated volunteers despite this pandemic.

c) Education: As always, the Education portfolio is committed to offering free and accessible workshops to the community, where people can learn about making food and food politics in a safe and fun environment. These workshops represent also a great opportunity to have volunteers and/or community members share their skills.

We usually aim to offer around three workshops per semester - unfortunately this year, due to the pandemic, we were able to only host two workshops in the winter semester. Our last workshop for this semester would have been a collaboration with Midnight Kitchen and would have centered around urban agriculture especially for BIPOC communities. In the time we did have, though, we managed to offer wonderful workshops on bread making, vegan and raw pies and vegan empanadas! All of our workshops were well attended and participants seemed quite satisfied with the results. We hope to be able to hold workshops again in the upcoming semester, depending on the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

d) Outreach: This year through the work of the Outreach portfolio we continued to offer solidarity catering to groups whose values aligned with ours, solidifying our relationships. As other years, alongside Frigo Vert and Midnight Kitchen, we served food for the Anti-Colonial dinner that takes place in November at the Native Friendship Centre. In addition, we built on our decision to offer monetary support to community groups and organisations who are struggling, choosing to make a donation of 500\$ every two months during our work year. We have donated \$350 to AGIR: Action LGBTQ avec les ImmigrantEs et RéfugiéEs, an autonomous non-profit organization, by and for the LGBTQ migrant community living in Montreal. We have donated \$350 to Solidarity Across Borders, a migrant justice network based in Montreal. We have donated \$250 to the safrrr.space workbook development initiative by a former collective member. And we have donated \$350 to Taking What We Need, an informal Montreal community group dedicated to helping low income transwomen get what they need through discretionary funding. As soon as COVID hit, we saw a large need for funding from front-line groups supporting marginalised communities; for this reason, we decided to offer 2000\$ each to Solidarity Across Borders and Projets Autochtones du Québec. In addition, we have partnered with Midnight Kitchen and the Concordia Food Coalition to continue offering food while our kitchen and offices remain closed. In these last few weeks we have also started working on revamping our website - stay tuned!

e) Organizational Development: The organizational development portfolio's main responsibilities include searching for grants to further organizational goals and attending Fee-Levy Action Committee (FLAC) meetings. FLAC is a committee of different fee-levy groups who have banded together to support one another in a changing political climate that may threaten their independence. In 2019, there was a referendum to develop an online system for opting-out of fee-levy groups. Due to this, much of the organizational development portfolio's work was focused on FLAC during the 2019-2020 academic year. In response to the referendum, fee-levy groups came together to create a "Vote No to Online Opt-outs" campaign to proactively limit the potentially harmful impacts of this system. The organizational development portfolio worked with the collective to support the "Vote No" campaign by making announcements in the lunch line-up to raise awareness about fee levy groups, how their funding works, and the challenges and risks of having an online opt-out system. The referendum to make an online system for opt-outs was passed and is in the process of being developed by the CSU and Concordia Administration.

In developing the system, the CSU consulted with some fee-levy groups to get their input on features they would like to be included in the online opt-out system. The organizational development portfolio created a list of what should be included to ensure students make an informed decision prior to opting out and shared these demands with the CSU.

Future projects of the organizational development portfolio will include:

- Leading collective discussions on creating and updating the organization's values and priorities for the upcoming academic year and for hiring processes
- Applying for funding of Potato positions through the work study program as needed
- Assisting collective members with grant applications for new projects that further the organization's goals

f) Kitchen Portfolio: Our kitchen is busy almost every day of the week. Not only do we prepare a daily lunch service Mondays through Fridays, our kitchen is also used for solidarity catering for student, community, and grassroots organizations. We also host regular free workshops in our kitchen space and use it as a pick-up point for emergency food baskets. Every month or so, we at the Potato like to prepare servings in order to profile causes that we support or offer some differently yummy! Winter Semester of 2019, we were able to prepare a different Indigenous inspired food for First Voices Week including Three Sisters Stew and Bannock! We also had a Yemeni serving seeking to raise awareness of and raise funds for the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Yemen. And to celebrate our last day in our old kitchen space, we prepared a Loaded Nacho Poutine that was \*chef's kiss\* awesome! As we settled into our new kitchen space in the Fall Semester of 2019, we had three special servings. The first, a welcome back to campus burrito special serving. The second, the Burri(no!) serving was a mobilization campaign to fight against the implementation of an online opt-out system, which we see as detrimental to Concordia Student Group's ongoing work. We were able to prepare over 400 burritos to serve our line as well as handing out burritos and promotional materials in the JMSB Building. And to finish off our semester, we served Vegan Burgers and Fries. Our last semester in the old kitchen space was stressful due to the construction constantly changing how our space functioned and how we could access it, but we are grateful for having had access to that space for so long (almost 19 years!) We are also grateful we were able to secure a new space through negotiation with University as well as the Concordia Student Union. Since our move in the summer, we had been working on optimizing our space for our regular daily servings. So we have not been able to lend out our kitchen to external groups with similar mandates as we are internally negotiating how best to support other groups while securing our kitchen space for the years to come. In light of the current pandemic, we are hopeful of returning to the kitchen to continue our mission of feeding Concordia students and the community at large healthy food, be it through a food bank service, or our previous meal distribution style.

g) Questions

Navid- What happened with the refrigerated food?

Sosa- It went to a homeless shelter.

## 7. Financial Report

- Iman- The financial portfolio keeps tracks of all the revenue and spending and creates yearly budgets in collaboration with the collective. They also deal with financial transactions with Concordia and the bank. Also take care of revenues and salaries as well as all expenses. All of this is done with the consultation of a professional accountant to make sure that everything follows provincial and federal regulations. This year's budget was created without anticipating a global pandemic, that being said, there have been a lot of changes to it in order to adapt to this new reality. There's a surplus of \$60,000. That's because it's always hard to anticipate enrolment, opt-outs, inflation rates, and unforeseen circumstances. That's why the People's Potato always make conservative projections.

This year's budget significant increases:

- Fresh produce

- Salaries

-The potato doesn't know how the online opt-out system will impact its finances. They are projecting a significant blow to the funding which they are prepared to deal with.

## 8. Presentation from the Board of Directors

- Kim presents the board report for the 2019-2020 report.

This year, the board members were involved in plenty of activities.

- a) They have volunteered prepping food and serving;
- b) They have volunteered with the Potato food bank;
- c) Tupperware initiative: the Board bought tupperware (around \$500) and sold tupperware during meals;
- d) Some of initiatives did not work out: such as providing community utensils and dishes for meals but the utensils and dishes kept disappearing;
- e) The Board took part in a Board training workshop;
- f) Some members of the board helped at solidarity events such as the Anti-Colonial Dinner;
- g) Some members helped with Moisson pick-ups (Moisson Montreal is where the Potato gets the bulk of their food for meals and the foodbank);
- h) Some of us participated in amending parts of the Potato constitution;
- i) Help prepare for the Volunteer Appreciation Party

Questions:

Ixel- Can you explain what Grands Exchange is?

Kim- They spent the day with other kitchen groups and got to see how to gather data about their users in order to have an idea of how many people benefit from the services provided. They also learned about how Moisson Montreal works in terms of dealing with managing their food.

Sosa- To add a bit of context, Grands Exchange is an annual event organized by Moisson Montreal. They do a “Hunger Count” which is a data gathering project to see how many people use all the different foodbanks and soup kitchens in the island of Montreal.

## 9. Constitutional Changes

- Karen presents the changes. The first two topics relate specifically this Annual General Meeting

a) *Allow for an online AGM due to the COVID-19 physical distance restrictions.*

**Motion approved with 23 votes in favour**

b) *Allow for a one time annual general assembly one week after the general dead-line. This is due to the unforeseen circumstances with COVID-19.*

**Motion is approved with 23 votes in favour**

- Karen continues presenting the changes. The next changes pertain to the constitution in general:

a) *Remove any reference to “minimum number of board members,” as board size can’t legally be established this way for nonprofits incorporated in Quebec.*

Hanine: why?

Karen: To make the language more clear and in accordance with Quebec Law.

**Motion is approved with 22 votes in favour**

b) *Change the wording of the definition of “Concordia Student” to include graduate students.*

**Motion is approved with 22 votes in favour**

c) *Move the subsection on “Election Procedure” to the top so it makes more sense.*

**Motion is approved with 22 votes in favour**

d) Separate the paragraph about “appointing” board members into its own subsection.

**Motion is approved with 22 votes in favour**

e) Remove any reference to an “allowed minimum” of board members in the “Board Appointment” subsection.

**Motion is approved with 23 votes in favour**

f) Update "Board meeting" section to allow for online meetings and conference calls

**Motion is approved with 26 votes in favour**

## **10. Board Nominations**

- Parker explains election procedures. At least half of the members have to be students. This shouldn't be a problem today because most candidate are volunteers. You can only vote for each member once. You can vote to block someone. If a candidate is blocked by more than one third of the voters, they cannot run for the board.

### **Candidate #1:**

Armando: Student of fine arts. Their whole time in Concordia they have been a volunteer. The potato has been very important for them. The potato is a space that they've come to really love and they would love to continue being a part of it. Being a board member would be a really interesting experience for them.

Parker: What would you bring to the collective as a board member?

Armando: Likes planning out activities and coming out with ideas. Is not experienced working with a board but is excited to learn about it.

### **Candidate #2:**

Tate: Being at this AGM is the most fun thing they've done since the pandemic. Being at the potato is legendarily fun. It's always been a great experience and really enjoys working with collective members and volunteers. Has a lot of experience volunteering in different community organizations such as an organization that works with people with physical and mental disabilities. Could bring a lot of information about that to the People's Potato.

### **Candidate #3**

Caroline: Is there representing William and will read their statement.  
Starts with a land-acknowledgment. William has helped with the food prep as well as food bank. Has even helped even with removing snow from the van and is really eager to continue providing help as much as they can.

#### **Candidate #4**

Donald: Loves working at the potato. Has the time and experience and is excited to continue helping out this time as a board member.

#### **Candidate #5**

Nadine: Has volunteered with the potato for about three years and wants to continue doing that. It's a very important place for them. They are willing to continue contributing to making the potato a great place. Wants to help spread the word so that more people can benefit from the services provided by the potato.

#### **Candidate #6**

Kylen: Has volunteered for a while and the potato has really changed their life. Became a strong independent person thanks to the potato. The potato is a very special place for them. Has been with the potato for almost half a decade and wishes for many more years to come. Has helped with a lot of things at the potato, especially physical work. Wants to learn a bit more about the administrative side and is willing to continue committing time an energy to such a special organization.

#### **Candidate #7**

Gaby: Loves eating as well as cooking. And loves doing that with people. Has worked at the potato in the past and currently works at Concordia. Thinks that her politics are in line with the potato's philosophy. Is interested in campaigning against on-line opt-outs.

Gaby's written statement: I was a collective member and worked at the Potato for 7 years. During that time I had various portfolios including kitchen, volunteer, education, finance, board rep among others. I believe that I have a good understanding of the workings of the Potato as well as the mission and mandate. What I hope to bring as a board member is my previous experience working at the Potato coupled with my interest and involvement in social justice initiatives which are in line with the Potato's mandate. I have been involved in prison abolition for the past 30 years and am co-founder and collective member of ReCon, a prison group for lifers, for the past 21 years. I have also published a book on police killings and have been involved in anti police brutality initiatives. I am available once a month for meetings but I work from 9 to 5 Monday to Friday. I can also help with special events and projects and would enjoy facilitating cooking workshops.

#### **Questions:**

-Benno Hart- Any candidates have future ideas as to where the potato is going?

-Tate would try to create different positions at the board so that specific members can tackle projects and challenges that relate to their skills.

## **11. Board Elections**



- Parker (CEO) explains the voting procedures: You can only vote for one candidate at the time. So there are seven candidates, this means you can only vote seven times. If you don't vote for a candidate this counts as an abstention. You can also vote to block a candidate. A candidate cannot be elected if more than one third of voters block them.

## **12. Varia**

- AJ announces that there will be a game of taboo after the AGM if people want to play afterwards. Everyone is invited.

## **13. Voting Results.**

-Parker: Every candidate got elected!

## **14. Closing Remarks**

- Becca: Congratulations to all the new board members and good luck to you all in the next year!

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- Sosa presents the annual report

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a) *Allow for an online AGM due to the COVID-19 physical distance restrictions.*

**Motion approved with 23 votes in favour**

b) *Allow for a one time annual general assembly one week after the general dead-line. This is due to the unforeseen circumstances with COVID-19.*

**Motion is approved with 23 votes in favour**

- Karen continues presenting the changes. The next changes pertain to the constitution in general:

a) *Remove any reference to “minimum number of board members,” as board size can’t legally be established this way for nonprofits incorporated in Quebec.*

Hanine: why?

Karen: To make the language more clear and in accordance with Quebec Law.

**Motion is approved with 22 votes in favour**

b) *Change the wording of the definition of “Concordia Student” to include graduate students.*

**Motion is approved with 22 votes in favour**

c) *Move the subsection on “Election Procedure” to the top so it makes more sense.*

**Motion is approved with 22 votes in favour**

d) *Separate the paragraph about “appointing” board members into its own subsection.*

**Motion is approved with 22 votes in favour**

e) *Remove any reference to an “allowed minimum” of board members in the “Board Appointment” subsection.*

**Motion is approved with 23 votes in favour**

f) *Update "Board meeting" section to allow for online meetings and conference calls*

**Motion is approved with 26 votes in favour**

## 10. Board Nominations

- Parker explains election procedures. At least half of the members have to be students. This shouldn't be a problem today because most candidate are volunteers. You can only vote for each member once. You can vote to block someone. If a candidate is blocked by more than one third of the voters, they cannot run for the board.

**Candidate #1:**

Armando: Student of fine arts. Their whole time in Concordia they have been a volunteer. The potato has been very important for them. The potato is a space that they've come to really love and they would love to continue being a part of it. Being a board member would be a really interesting experience for them.

Parker: What would you bring to the collective as a board member?

Armando: Likes planning out activities and coming out with ideas. Is not experienced working with a board but is excited to learn about it.

**Candidate #2:**

Tate: Being at this AGM is the most fun thing they've done since the pandemic. Being at the potato is legendarily fun. It's always been a great experience and really enjoys working with collective members and volunteers. Has a lot of experience volunteering in different community organizations such as an organization that works with people with physical and mental disabilities. Could bring a lot of information about that to the People's Potato.

**Candidate #3**

Caroline: Is there representing William and will read their statement.

Starts with a land-acknowledgment. William has helped with the food prep as well as food bank. Has even helped even with removing snow from the van and is really eager to continue providing help as much as they can.

**Candidate #4**

Donald: Loves working at the potato. Has the time and experience and is excited to continue helping out this time as a board member.

**Candidate #5**

Nadine: Has volunteered with the potato for about three years and wants to continue doing that. It's a very important place for them. They are willing to continue contributing to making the potato a great place. Wants to help spread the word so that more people can benefit from the services provided by the potato.

**Candidate #6**

Kylen: Has volunteered for a while and the potato has really changed their life. Became a strong independent person thanks to the potato. The potato is a very special place for them. Has been with the potato for almost half a decade and wishes for many more years to come. Has helped with a lot of things at the potato, especially physical work. Wants to learn a bit more about the administrative side and is willing to continue committing time an energy to such a special organization.

**Candidate #7**



Gaby: Loves eating as well as cooking. And loves doing that with people. Has worked at the potato in the past and currently works at Concordia. Thinks that her politics are in line with the potato's philosophy. Is interested in campaigning against on-line opt-outs.

Gaby's written statement: I was a collective member and worked at the Potato for 7 years. During that time I had various portfolios including kitchen, volunteer, education, finance, board rep among others. I believe that I have a good understanding of the workings of the Potato as well as the mission and mandate. What I hope to bring as a board member is my previous experience working at the Potato coupled with my interest and involvement in social justice initiatives which are in line with the Potato's mandate. I have been involved in prison abolition for the past 30 years and am co-founder and collective member of ReCon, a prison group for lifers, for the past 21 years. I have also published a book on police killings and have been involved in anti police brutality initiatives. I am available once a month for meetings but I work from 9 to 5 Monday to Friday. I can also help with special events and projects and would enjoy facilitating cooking workshops.

**Questions:**

-Benno Hart- Any candidates have future ideas as to where the potato is going?

-Tate would try to create different positions at the board so that specific members can tackle projects and challenges that relate to their skills.

**11. Board Elections**

- Parker (CEO) explains the voting procedures: You can only vote for one candidate at the time. So there are seven candidates, this means you can only vote seven times. If you don't vote for a candidate this counts as an abstention. You can also vote to block a candidate. A candidate cannot be elected if more than one third of voters block them.

**12. Varia**

- AJ announces that there will be a game of taboo after the AGM if people want to play afterwards. Everyone is invited.

**13. Voting Results.**

-Parker: Every candidate got elected!

**14. Closing Remarks**

- Becca: Congratulations to all the new board members and good luck to you all in the next year!