

Minutes for 8/20/23 Policy Town Hall.

38 people attending at 9 a.m.
Lisa M.- Chair
Wendy C - recording
Stephen - Timekeeper

The agenda was read by Lisa.

Vivienne moved to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Rene.

Lisa gave some background information for why this policy is being addressed at this time. For the second time in six months, SMR has received a complaint about predatory behaviour.

Wendy read the first sections of the working document: The Policy Title, The Purpose, and The Policy.
Lisa then read through the Process, explaining that we particularly needed input on the Processing of the Complaint section.

The floor was then opened for discussion.

Rachel: a concern regarding the number of instances that are considered repeat behavior. Three instances in six months is gives a second and third chance at predation.

Alisia asked if the rude comments at end of the meeting constituted predatory behaviour.

Chris M asked if first incident is egregious you do not need to do it 3 times to have consequences?

Wendy: every incident is reported and dealt with in some fashion. The three times in six months was to give the accused person clarity about their behavior being predatory.

Rene: can there be some sort of timeline from time the complaint is made so we know this is not a 6-month or even 2-month process. She also asked to make sure it's clear the complainant gets to bring a support person to the meeting with 2 members.

Wendy: we would make sure both the Complainant and the Accused person know they can have a support person/witness at any meeting with the Safety group.

Sarah: how we are going to deal with conflicts of interest in relationships of people who may be a friend of someone on the committee—had we redressed the issue of recusal? Also a concern about predatory behaviour on outreach calls, people dumping their issues. This she perceives as predatory behaviour. Concern about the number of instances. Two is enough.

Charlotte: How many chances? Why should three people be harmed in order to teach? Also, in the section regarding who will be entrusted to serve on this safety group and how the information is recorded. If person who is harmed could write out what happened as they see it and how it harmed them it would be more clear to the small group. There would be no changes between the first hearing of the complaint and the small group interaction.

Chris M returned to the question of how many times constitutes repeated behaviour..

Lisa: we can specify what information needs to be emailed to the trusted servants.
She brought the conversation back to who is the small group?
If the group is large enough, recusal is easy. This is if we have a volunteer group.

Wendy liked the elected servant idea but how do we do that?

Jim likes then idea of having a stand-by safety council of 3-5 elected people.

Christine wondered about support for the complainant. Do they have to be in breakout rooms with their perpetrator?

Lisa: we'll make sure breakout room policy allows for complainant/perpetrator not in the same room.

Macy M commented regarding the line "Should email ANY trusted servant." There are currently no safety email addresses and possibly there should be with preferred method of contact. There's nothing on the Contact list.

Lisa M: We could have a safety email that is distributed to the safety group.

Vivienne asked whether complaints could be made to any trusted servant? What does a room host do if they have received a complaint or noticed behavior in their group. Should they be responsible?

Wendy felt that was asking too much of room hosts but there could be information during the room host training on how to handle situations.

Jim: along with a timeline, we could have a scenario or two about how it might work.

Sarah: some issues of predatory behavior are very sensitive to women as they are more often the targets of predation. Men may not have the same sensitivity. Can the safety committee have it in mind that men might not understand in the same way just as white people may not understand issues an African American may be aware of.

Lisa M : one of the other things we've talked about is cultural differences. Whoever is elected could go through some sort of training which is helpful.

Motion to extend the meeting was made by Macy and seconded by Sarah.

Charlotte asked that we change the wording from any fellow to any individual.

Lisa M: Search and replace for fellow

Jim: Complainant allowed to bring a safety person. Jim received a request from the board. The person who was a focus of that procedure was asked to bring a witness to that. 2nd: the board of WSO had a policy written out about communications among the board. Chat can often be misinterpreted and emphasized speaking directly to people

Chris: Women being more sensitive to men, the gender issue involved. Feels strongly the committee of trained elected people ought to be both men and women in the group. Also adds weight and credibility to the committee. Men might respond better to a man saying "knock it off"

Wendy: which 2.A.

Jim: not thrilled about elected. Rather see a word like approved, saying they have been approved.

Lisa: likes group conscious approving because if a person is not in by group conscience it becomes problematic.

WC: can we use website to approve people.

Sarah: Build on what Jim said. We don't like authority figures and elected smacks of that. Likes idea of people interested in participating on this committee. The more people involved in this, the better.

Max: could you fill out the form and then take the class on how to handle this? Then they would be able to be put forward in this position. Taking the class first would solidify their commitment and interest in doing this service.

Rene expressed a concern about a timeline. Can all of this happen in a timely manner? Maybe something has to be put in place to keep a person connected to the issue. We have to move this process along. She loved the idea of having an orientation to state expectations and give a sense of what kind of issues might come up. Mindful of balance of genders, but keep in mind most of the people being harassed are women.

Chris: Nominate or toss out: An approved list of trained volunteers 2Aii

Vivienne: we have something on the table that needs to be dealt with. Also thinking about the one in the past - a really egregious situation. Our hands were tied. Worried about a tedious process of putting volunteers in place. Things that come up have to be dealt with quickly.

Lisa: We have talked about at GC on 8/27 to have vote on policy and a vote do deal with this specific issue.

Chris: The process for long-term is beautiful. A separate vote would be to have a start-up group that can be created immediately interim. We vote on creating an interim group before the long term group is up and running.

WC: question regarding number of complaints

Vivienne: Once we have a complaint, there are probably numerous complaints

Sarah: Thank you

Sarah made a motion to adjourn
Max 2nd

14 people at end of meeting.