



EVRD League meeting Minutes
 Meeting Date: Thursday March 28/2024
 Meeting Location: Slovakian Canadian Association Hall
 Meeting Start Time: 7:00pm

Board of Director Attendance:			
Chair: Grace Bones (Erika Olbey)	Co-Chair: Mary F'n Sunshine (Tracy Primc)	PR Director: vacant	Administration Director: Magic Wanda (Bonnie Richards)
Athletics Director: Emsky Hammer (Emma Goodall)	Games Director: Resident Weevil (Rachel Keglowitsch)	Finance Director: Hoochie (Lesley McDonald) (ABSENT)	Junior Rep: Curvicious (Nerissa Hymers)

#	Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Item
	Attendance	In attendance: Emsky, Weevil, Curvicious, Cheeky, NHOJ, Mary, Wanda, Tuf, Spittany, Caalla, Switchblade, Grace, Killerina, Cryology, Smacks	
	Call to order	Grace called the meeting to order at 7:12pm	
	Mary read the survey feedback (this was also posted in slack)	<p>Open Gender Policy Survey Feedback</p> <p>Open-Gender Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roller derby is supposed to be for anybody. - It puts the league at risk of sexism and negative outcomes while having to choose who is included based on gender identification. - If the league hopes to grow and be able to play in the wider arena of derby overall, WFTDA gender or not, we will be always playing with people who are bigger, stronger, and potentially more aggressive than us. - Personal responsibility and accountability in sport is based on the decisions of each player. Anyone who is feeling unsafe may need to reassess if they are fit to participate in a specific practice or game. <p>Mixed Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All male skaters have been knowledgeable and helpful across all leagues but would prefer the option to have WFTDA practices and scrimmages. - Prefer WFTDA-aligned skaters for contact drills and scrimmages, but comfortable for skills practice. - Comfortable having open-gendered scrimmages (With options to separate lines) but would prefer practices separate. - WFTDA Practice 	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on booking WFTDA games currently due to composition of league and comfort levels. - Scrimmages that allow for variety of lineups (x2) <p>WFTDA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unsafe environment/safety concerns (x5) - Uncomfortable/lack of trust in an environment with mixed genders. - Switching to WFTDA-aligned practice nights reduces the number of practices for the majority of members. - There is another league that is open-gendered which would give men a place to skate and those who wish to skate WFTDA-aligned only would have a space at E-Ville. - Believe we have lost sight of the reason E-Ville was formed, to empower women through sport. - I think restoring a safe space for women and gender diverse people in derby would help with recruitment and the growth of the league. (x2) - Only have been skating with men to be kind when they would prefer to only skate with women. (x2) - Men have 100% opportunities in sports – and women aren't given the same considerations. 	
	<p>Statements from Skater Relations</p>	<p>Three statements - one anonymous read by Cheeky: "I wanted to echo the comments regarding derby being a sport to empower women and gender diverse athletes, and men having every single other sport 100% available and geared towards them. Also, the point about E-ville's original purpose being to empower women."</p>	
	<p>Trip - staement</p>	<p>Statement from Trip: "I feel very grateful that I have been given the opportunity to express my position in this reassessment of the gender policy at E-ville considering that I am not a league member. I have become very invested and involved in this organization and one of the reasons I have not become a full league member is because of the gender policy. Having said that I do hope that the people participating in the vote tonight will consider the wider community in their decision. Folks that have maybe not returned or not joined because of this policy or folks that may be participating but not feeling comfortable. I think that it should always be our responsibility to consider the marginalized and the vulnerable in the choices that we make. I feel strongly that we can and should provide spaces for ourselves in a world where there are so few places for women, non-binary and trans folks to take up space and step into positions of leadership and mentorship. If I were in a</p>	



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		<p>position to vote tonight I would vote for E-ville to return to its WFTDA gender policy.”</p>	
	<p>Clancy - statement</p>	<p>Statement from Clancy John, read by Wanda: “Hello League,</p> <p>I'm sorry that I couldn't be there tonight to say these things to you in person, but I think it's important that they're said.</p> <p>I want to thank the league for the last six months of roller derby. It's been fun and I've appreciated the opportunity to get my skate legs back and really figure out whether I can still do this. I really treasure the opportunity to skate with Caalla. I'm really happy that they have gotten back to derby.</p> <p>Hearing that 30-35% of E-ville skaters are not comfortable skating with men astounded me. That is a *lot* of skaters. Too many. Too many if it were even two or three, but that number is unconscionable.</p> <p>I don't feel like I can take the track, knowing I'm taking the track away from anyone else. E-ville traditionally has been for WFTDA-gendered skaters, and changing that to open has made derby inaccessible to too many people. The answer to what direction E-ville should take is clear, at least to me.</p> <p>Regardless of the way that the league votes, I am leaving E-Ville at the end of the month. I can't choose the way that the league decides, but I can vote with my feet and my conscience, and I hope that this will make it easier for the league to make the decision that I think is the right one.</p> <p>With a nod to the non-binary skaters in the league, and in understanding that the term can be seen as diminutive, I'll just close by saying, It's been a slice, girls.</p> <p>Clancy John”</p>	



	Explanation of voting - Mary	Three possibilities: WFTDA gender, mixed gender, open gender. Within those there can be many logistical ways to do practices/scrimmages/games. Ie, community-wide events would remain community-wide if we go back to WFTDA.	
	Open sharing	<p>Weevil suggests keeping scrimmages open but with open gender and WFTDA lines - this would also apply to boot camps etc when inviting others to attend.</p> <p>Spittany requested a reminder of the voting options - Curvicious explained: via email, anonymously, with a ranked ballot with the three options: WFTDA, mixed, and open. All results will be shown for each round (if more than one round is necessary). The email vote will be open for 24 hours - Mary will be available to troubleshoot by email if needed. There are currently 18 members in good standing, with 17 eligible to vote (Grace does not vote except to tie break, as chair) and quorum being 11.</p> <p>Cheeky wants to make it clear that this vote is not personal - she leans toward the original intention of the league as strong powerful women but does support other ways as well. Whatever we vote on today is not forever or set in stone - this can be an ongoing conversation.</p> <p>Killerina says that E-Ville was founded for women but for her, the derby community is more for people who don't feel a sense of community in other ways, or have experienced toxic spaces. Derby can be for men and boys too.</p> <p>Curvicious reminds everyone that the juniors will remain open gender, as a member league of JRDA.</p>	
	Grace - address from Chair	<p>Over the past weeks, I've done lots of listening and reflecting, and the collaboration, openness, and guidance you've all offered truly inspires me. I've done my best to be neutral in recent discussion, but the truth is I feel very strongly about this issue. You have entrusted me with so much over the past year, and I believe you all deserve some insight into my hopes for the future of this league that we have worked so hard to build and rebuild.</p> <p>People have told me that we did not do a good enough job consulting the league thoroughly when we made the policy change in 2023, and in hindsight, I do not disagree. There were assumptions made about the state of derby in Edmonton, and I believe we got ahead of ourselves thinking</p>	



	<p>we could be a big tent for the sport, instead of focusing on our purpose and what was truly best for our members.</p> <p>In many mainstream sports, female athletes must perform femininity in a very traditional and narrow way to be considered women. Rigid notions of sex and gender limit women and trans athletes, but these stereotypes and biases do not impact men in the same way. Men have so many opportunities to take up space in sport at all levels, and roller derby gives us the chance to challenge the status quo by truly centering women, trans, and gender expansive athletes.</p> <p>There is a need for a Safe Space in derby. We do not live in an equal society.</p> <p>It is important that marginalized groups have spaces to socialize and organize. When we changed our policy, we began to see people self-exclude, and I see that as the clearest reason to try to restore E-Ville to the space it was pre-2023. The Board can attempt to make safe spaces, but ultimately, it's the people who actually use the space who get to decide if it's safe or not; we should honor and respect those that have been brave enough to come forward and say they don't feel safe.</p> <p>To quote the Canadian Women in Sport 2022 Rally Report: If we're going to be successful in building a better, safer sport system where sport lives up to its potential to foster body confidence and support positive mental health, we must consult women and girls. It is our responsibility to ask better questions, listen intently and value what they are telling us.</p> <p>We cannot forget or discount the successes we have shared as a league since 2006. Our multiple teams provided a space for skaters of all levels to experience a feeling of sisterhood and camaraderie in a competitive context that many of us had never felt before. We took the Dead from a scrappy travel team to a competitive division 2 WFTDA team. We had full rosters for two travel teams - our skaters and coaches worked very hard to establish the Dead and the Living Dead as formidable, serious contenders.</p> <p>Most of the top WFTDA leagues – including Rose, Gotham, Calgary – have all maintained their WFTDA aligned status,</p>	
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	<p>and they are more focused and competitive than ever. If the trend locally is towards open-gender play at a high-level, then this can be an opportunity for E-Ville to do things differently and attract both rookie skaters and elite athletes back to our league. OCRD has welcomed men for years and has always maintained a distinct culture from ours. I believe E-Ville moving back to a WFTDA aligned league could also make space for them to offer something different and continue to grow the wider local derby community.</p> <p>We can rebuild this league any way we choose. We can grow and change on our own timeline on our own terms. And the best thing is we don't have to do it from scratch. We can lean on the past 18 years of E-Ville history and knowledge, take the best of it forward and go as far as we can imagine.</p> <p>Finding roller derby was so formative for me. I was 29, had never played a team sport or considered myself an athlete. My contemporaries and I often lamented how amazing it would have been to have played roller derby as teens, or even in our 20s. But even coming to derby relatively late still had such an enormously positive impact on me and I feel a responsibility to make sure that this league continues to inspire and support women and girls of all ages, from all backgrounds to do incredible things and go amazing places.</p> <p>Yours truly,</p> <p>Erika Olbey aka Grace Bones</p> <p>Chair, E-Ville Roller Derby</p> <p>March 28, 2024</p> <p>References/Resources:</p> <p>https://womenandsport.ca/rally-report-2022/</p> <p>https://www.sportanddev.org/latest/news/designing-sport-women</p>	
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	Voting instructions - Mary	Voting instructions a. This ballot will use a ranked choice voting. This will allow voters preferential voting to list their choices for the result they would most prefer to see to the least, 1 through 3. Please select your choices based on most to least preferred outcome of the gender policy review. Most (1) to least (3). b. The ballot will be open from Thursday, March 28th 7pm MT until Friday, March 29th 9pm MT. Each eligible voter may only cast one ballot in the allotted time. The results will be shared with membership following the vote through a URL link detailing the vote breakdown. The board will look at nuances/opportunities of how to move forward and next steps to take after that.	
	Adjournment	Mary opened the vote. Grace adjourned the meeting at 7:35pm.	