



General Membership Meeting – Spring 2017

April 1, 2017

Meeting Minutes

Attendees

Emma Whitworth	Arrakis	Wilson McElvain	Helios
Dessa Gilbert	Arrakis	Scott Delhommer	Helios
William Hoinoski	Arrakis	Aditya Mukerji	Helios
Daniela Reyes	Arrakis	Daniel Divin	HoC
Giovanni Alcantara	Arrakis	Lily Nylund	HoC
Maria Cuyan	Avalon	Eric Murillo	HoC
Kevin Martinez	Avalon	Blanche Jamail	HoC
Josh Carroll	Avalon	Elliott Heidenreich	HoC
Andrew Browne	Avalon	Lee Salvemini	HoC
Cody Bjornson	Avalon	Megan McPherson	HoC
Noah Vaughan	Avalon	Shannon Mullery	HoC
Alana Brandt	Avalon	Jessilee Shipman	New Guild
Brittany Speetles	Avalon	Boone Ryan	New Guild
Michael Brown	Avalon	Alejandra Fajardo	New Guild
Natalie Nobile	Avalon	George Roberson	New Guild
Blythe Kamin	Avalon	Nora Greene	Royal
Natalie San Luis	Avalon	Kevin Mejia	Royal
Marina Chazco	Avalon	Hayley McGaugh	Royal
Laura Marshall	Avalon	Mila Santana	Royal
Marie Sells	Eden	Michelle Pascal	Royal
Josh McCauley	Eden	Rachel Ellis	Seneca
Nico Cortes	Eden	Erika Lawn	Seneca
Takashiro Shimada	Eden	Philip Crandell	Seneca
Josh Malett	Eden	Dani Muñoz	Seneca
Roxanne Zech	French	Jake Bruner	Seneca
Lana Porter	French	Ali Yavuz	Seneca
Haley Galloway	French	Kathryn Drake	Seneca
Erin Dowd	French	Celia Shaheen	Seneca
Aimee Sixta	French	Michael Zhang	Seneca
Huyler Marsh	French	Ellie Audet	Seneca
Ransom Hefley	French	Miguel Salinas	Seneca
Sam Limerick	French	Sloane Palmer	Seneca
David Wu	French	JT Harechmak	Community Trustee

PART 1 – ICEBREAKER AND REPORTS

Noah welcomes everyone and starts the meeting

Icebreaker activity involving rock, paper, scissors game

Message from President – Cara:

Explains why GMM is important; update on Ruth Schulze expansion and April Board decision on the project; update on social justice progress since the last GMM; expresses excitement about the conversations at this GMM

Financial Update from Treasurer – Huyler:

Gives updates on overall ICC Austin financial strength, the Ruth Schulze expansion, and rationale for summer 2017 rate increases.

Report from Staff – Billy:

Gives update on staff work over the past semester, including supporting board conversations. Expresses importance of the GMM conversations in directing staff work

PART 2 – BOARD PERPETUATION

Roxanne explains importance of board perpetuation, what board officers do, and election process

Candidate Introductions

Scott Delhommer, Mila Santana, and Hayley McGaugh present themselves as board officer candidates

All candidates respond to question about readiness and ability handle board financial oversight.

Natalie Briscoe community trustee video presentation screened

PART 3 – SOCIAL JUSTICE CONVERSATIONS

Topic introduction by Committee for Combatting Oppression

Notes from Small Group Discussions

Group A

Josh - ICC Austin introduces and exposes the cooperative model; educates in this regard

Andrew – Social Justice is fair/equitable to all; reparations – make up for past wrongdoing. ICC Austin – not externalizing costs, not moving housing contribution to private sector; keeping wealth within the community.

Lana – ICC Austin, can it be a social justice organization; racial/social justice lacking. ICC Austin has always functioned as a white organization. West campus is a place of discrimination, an inherent barrier.

Philip – ICC Austin not doing good job for economic [illegible]; disadvantaged members of society excluded because of location: west campus is simply too expensive.

Andrew – Degrees of separation because of word of mouth connection

Philip – West campus simply more expensive

Lana – Disagrees. Rent, utilities, and food...west campus

Andrew – No property tax [cost for ICC Austin]. [Rent is] going up because of cost of living; 2-3% a year – maintaining increased demand for developers.

Josh – Double rates try to remain stagnant.

Philip – ICC Austin demand is high – lots of benefits outside the monetary ones, e.g. social aspects

[ICC Austin is] Not really ADA accessible; Labor positions/monthly excursions to participate in social justice organizations; making this part of the education process

House of Commons is a hub for student organizing; members involved with events for membership for membership participation.

Improve education process; hold accountable; set the tone early

Property tax exemption; [need based financial aid] prioritization

College Houses simply more well-known; anonymity

A scholarship is potentially the most powerful tool

Group B

Social Justice Meaning

- Everyone is included; equal opportunity
- Equality doesn't always mean a level playing field

What is IC Austin doing well?

- Scholarships
- CCO; guff swap
- Conversation; Board doing things
- Primary focus should be housing
- ICC Austin can't be choosy; assist once people are in the group

How far can ICC Austin go; limitations?

- House by house, it's important to get involved in community; have awareness
- Representation in crap; recruit better
- Word-of-mouth; Huston-Tillotson not mentioned
- Go to Huston-Tillotson and spread word
- International students know about ICC Austin
- Reach out to larger UT community
- Could lose non-profit status if we don't include certain groups, e.g. can't kick out white males
- Within community, do we have knowledge about what to do?
- AORTA audits can be expensive; once every 10 years?

What are you willing to change about yourself as an ICC Austin member/house culture?

- Some people just looking for a room; social justice persons in the house
- Officer to educate members?
- Some don't wish to learn about these things
- Diversity, advertise
- Economic standpoint correlated with other social justice aspects
- Survey optional? Demographic? Skype should always be an option
- Turnover rate is crazy; loss of institutional knowledge important to communicate to board
- Designated labor for outreach; event to go to
- Lots of people don't know we exist
- Ruth Schulze will change things; put us on the map
- Continue to come back to this topic at GMMs

- Social justice is time-consuming
- Reach out to Riverside

- Barrier of accessibility comes from house culture

Group C

Putting economic justice first might limit us

What is social justice?

- Creating more equity for marginalized people; disenfranchised people
- A voice that isn't heard; ensuring all voices are heard; education
- Food justice

Good Job:

- Affordable housing and support network – healthy beneficial community
- Food! Not separating food from living expenses
- CCO – helpful resource! – open doors! It exists!
- Board members pushing social justice!

Limitations

- We are limited by our representation. If we don't fix racial justice, we are passing economic benefits to white students at the exclusion of others.
- No material limits! – Boundaries are how we willing orgs and leadership; What problems are problems?
- Holding staff accountable; include all four universities
- Membership activity

Group D

What is social justice?

- Reclamation of power
- Compensation for systematic historic issues

Good Job:

- Community
- We like prioritization!
- Not externalizing the costs of living
- Having the conversation
- Ruth Schulze ADA
- Transparency of information
- We're all eating

Limitations:

- Capitalism
- Social limitations/members show up
- Combatting here say; disseminating information
- Define Social Justice... Does not look like prioritization; working with identities is hard to do.
- Who has access to current resources? Shaping future membership; extending pass
- Having access-proximity-privilege
- Time-consuming – active in social justice; time limitations
- We are limited by our representation; Reach out to Huston-Tillotson
- Build around commonalities
- Limitation – perception of co-ops
- House cultures not conducive to what we're trying to do; inherently separates each other; deeper than "who you know"

What can we do?

- Informal discussions/events geared to [social justice?]
- Communicative spaces
- Open house in informal setting; small organizing
- Prep time!
- Showing up!
- What we as individuals can do: talk to your housemates
- Not dependent on membership. We are part of an institution. It needs to happen from bottom up. People of homogenous group have no incentive to show up.

Group E

Limits – we are not diverse

- We a rent that affordable; few parking; time consuming
- Step up our accessibility, perhaps create standards

How far can we go?

Change the world!

We affect UT

Obvious steps: Black student union; take social justice seriously; work more with student organizations; recognize all resources

Theme houses made at house level; tying into social justice; Berkeley co-ops:

- Upper division
- Voting at a meeting
- Queer and LGBTQ friendly
- Substance free
- Historically diverse house

What can we do?

- Table; promote online; outreach to other organizations; education officers could possible do outreach
- Offer home as safe space for communities to met
- Outreach to new members touring a home
- Propelling inter-house awareness

Group F

Perpetuating inequality

Houses themselves are alienating; “eclectic” aesthetics; parents; limiting

Substance use

Don’t dome woke, get woke

Part of an institution:

- Individuals not solely responsible
- Staff steering
- Staff meeting with other organizations
- Staff meeting with social justice
- Staff attending Austin “Undoing Racism”

Building a new history

Noah – participating in BSU

Public events? Yeah problematic but... Extend ya circles

Turnover is a huge limitation

Group G

The fact that we are having these conversations
Expanding with new house
ADA accessible Ruth Schulze
Prioritized need-based financial aid
Transparent information at House (ya Avalon!)

There are more sober events
It's inevitably going to be more expensive to live in this area
Opening space
We are not the most affordable
How we define social justice? That's very personal
Give resources to members to make sure they're safe
Identity politics can be problematic

Eliminating preconception about stereotypes of who lives at co-ops. You don't have to be a certain type of person.
Not just here for party culture
Lower income kids are 1st generation students
Black and brown kids can't live in a place

Group H

Things ICC Austin does well:

- Placing a priority on social justice
- Traditions and culture in different environments
- House process
- Standing house cultures exclude:
 - Substance-free houses
 - House politics becoming inequitable
- Process unification
- Little change versus house autonomy
- Availability to attend meetings
- New people getting to know culture

Social Justice

Should we?
Interwoven nature
Realism in asking members time and effort
Limitation:
Outside view of ICC Austin; become better images; College Houses and differentiation; Loss of focus on party;

Large Group Discussion

JT: Introduces himself as facilitator, mentions that he'll be taking stack, and notes some ground rules:

- Introduce yourself and house you're from when speaking
- Speak up and speak slowly so everyone can hear you
- Be mindful of the space you are taking up (let others have space too)

Does anyone else have anything to add?

Natalie: Something to consider (not to make a formalized rule) something I've noticed so social justice movement conversations, there is often an unofficial weighted list for people with multiple marginalized identities get move to the top, so that voices that aren't always represented in conversation – that there's a space for those voices.

Roxanne: Two things: Throw glitter not shade. Voice opinions, but do it constructively. Use co-op fingers to help avoid reiteration. Second, the other I heard at a conference recently was called "find the rub". If there's friction, linger on it, ask yourself why there might be friction there. And don't feel uncomfortable to explore it. That's where a lot of important conversations happen.

Lana: Announce your name, house, and pronoun.

JT: Restate the ground rules. Also mentions to avoid "angry piano fingers" gesturing if possible.

JT: Group four, can you tell us what you talked about for question 1, "what does social justice mean to you"?

Natalie: We talked about social justice being an interlocking system of fighting oppression; elevating the perspectives of people who have historically been subjugated and oppressed by colonialism, patriarchy, racism – all of the 'isms' that have taken power away from certain marginalized groups – social justice is an attempt to reclaim that power in multiple ways, because inter-oppression builds on itself and no one really has an identity that belongs to one particular oppression

JT: Anyone else from group 4? How about group six?

[No response from anyone in group 6] - laughter

JT: How about group 7?

Mila: The need for social justice comes from lot of different issues that have been incorporated into the general system. The issues happen at a personal level too, but go way beyond it. People are born into systems without equal access to opportunity. Social justice is a way to compensate for all those systemic problems. A lot of people seemed excited about the upcoming scholarship

program. We also talked about how ICC Austin has historically done marketing primarily through word-of-mouth, but that gets into the second question.

Noah: You can use Amazon smile to make free donations to the ICC Austin scholarship fund. Information on how to do this is in the ICC Austin Weekly News. Use Amazon Smile. Look into it.

JT: The second part of question 1 is about what ICC Austin is doing well. Did anyone in their group talk about what ICC Austin is doing well (that are not scholarships)?

Erin: Group five talked about the great community aspect of living in co-ops, being in a place where we can have conversations like this [GMM group discussion] – really encouraged to have conversations with people from a lot of different backgrounds. We also like the new prioritization of people receiving need-based financial aid.

Alana: By not externalizing the costs of living, ICC Austin inherently helps empower the community by keeping the wealth in the community.

Cara: We talked about how the fact that we were having social justice conversations is a really important and something that ICC Austin has been doing well recently. Our group was excited the Ruth Schulze how will be entirely accessible, and prioritization of people with need-based financial aid. On a house level, some people felt social justice was being advanced through transparency of information/dissemination of information to members about everything happening in the organization.

Cara: Reads second question: “How far can ICC Austin go towards being a social justice organization? Are there any limitations? Should ICC Austin even be moving in this direction?”

Sloan: [too quiet] ... my point is that racism and patriarchy are part of capitalism, so it's kind of hard to fight that.

Erin: There are social limitations to normalizing as a group. People try to do a lot of social justice events, but people just don't show up.

Nico: There's no empirical evidence to back this, but from personal experience an hearing from others, the way you hear about co-ops is from here say, or maybe being invited to a party. Maybe spreading the word about co-ops this way creates an accessibility problem.

Boone: Now that we are all together, maybe we should have a conversation on how do we define social justice, exactly. Everyone has their own interpretation.

JT: How would you define it?

Boone: Our country is filled with different kinds of people from around the world. Bare minimum: If you're here, we should treat you like you're here. There are all kinds of people, so prioritizing this person over another because of historical problems is difficult to do because we individually have to learn all those problems – and then address all the sentiments about those

problems. Alternatively, we could say, “We’re an entirely new generation of people. I’m going to treat you all the same. If you’re a good person I’m going to treat you like a good person. If you’re not a good person, I’m going to probably treat you like you’re not a good person.”

When you’re working with peoples identities, and your feelings about those identities, it’s difficult. We’re each individuals, entire worlds unto ourselves. We can’t all accommodate each others worlds. In terms of what’s ICC Austin doing well, we’re all eating. We have pretty good times. We’re people.

Natalie: I think ICC Austin does a lot of things well for the members of the organization, especially in terms affordable housing – and yes we’re all eating, and eating with our chosen family, we’re hopefully living in a community that is healthy and helpful. If something goes wrong in the house, we hopefully fix it quickly. Having conversations like these, establishing a CCO [committee for combatting oppression], are also great services to members. All of that is great for serving current members.

Where ICC Austin performance drops off is when we think about who has access to all of those great things. If we’re serving the greater Austin community of students in general, we need to think about all our potential future members, shaping that membership, and expanding our inclusivity past primarily white, upper class membership.

Blanche: Having housing so close to campus is very beneficial. We’re the only affordable option in the area, and if you don’t get it you have to live far from campus. You might have to take a bus, be late for class looking for parking, pay for gas which makes it more expensive. Maybe we should reach out and flyer Riverside and other places students might live. They may have gone to those affordable options because they haven’t heard about ICC Austin.

Noah: We might be affordable for west campus, but we’re not necessarily accessible. \$740 [rent] is still a lot of money. That’s difficult to overcome considering we are in west campus. Reaching out to other areas could help. Another limitation is how time-consuming working on social justice can be: A lot of ICC Austin members have jobs or are busy students. It can be challenging for them to participate. Maybe more meetings so that there more options could help.

JT: Please speak up. Would a microphone help. [consensus is yes]

Roxanne: Reads question two: “How far can ICC Austin go towards being a social justice organization? Are there any limitations? Should ICC Austin even be moving in this direction?”

Natalie: The AORTA report doesn’t say that ICC Austin should take the first step of economic justice, and then move forward to achieve other forms of inclusivity like fiscal accessibility, racial inclusivity. I don’t think the economic focus is a great way to make ICC Austin more just. As long as we are making strides towards economic inclusivity, and reaching out to more low-income students, although that’s certainly a step forward from where we were, as long as we are not addressing the overwhelming whiteness of ICC Austin as an organization, the ICC Austin benefits will primarily go to white students. I don’t think it is overwhelming or ridiculous to try to solve both problems at the same time – because I don’t think they are two problems. They are

one problem: We have inherited problems of classism and racism. One practical step would be to reach out to the fourth college in Austin – Huston Tilotson – the only historically black college in Austin. HT is not listed as a served college on the ICC Austin website. I hope that it was a massive oversight instead of some malicious or racist intent. I just found this out in preparing for this conversation.

Boone: How do we define diversity? Is this just a color thing? We are all about the same age, but we have particular differences, we come from different backgrounds. I think that's enough differences to start before we begin adding in national issues like race and gender because the jury is out on a lot of this: People don't see eye-to-eye on this, so for us to make this our prerogative gets us into that national funk. We have enough in common that we can already work on to better the household; to better ICC Austin. We don't need to go that direction – asking how are we inviting historically black colleges into this [ICC Austin]. I've never experienced racism once since I've been in ICC Austin at all. I think I can say this confidently: Nobody has ever treated me differently because of my race. So, for us to make [race] into a problem and say we need to do something about it – well, I can't speak for everyone but I don't think it's an issue. What I see an issue is that we're all chasing these differences: “We have these differences.” “We need to solve these differences.” There are always going to be differences between people. Let's find something simple: “What's the same?”, “What do we love?” [For example] We love music – let's build around our music, let's build around our culture, let's build around our food culture, let's build around our gardens – things that we all have.

JT: A lot of these board conversations were spurred when somebody came to the board during member open time saying, “listen, this is my experience, and ICC Austin hasn't been kind to me. They've been not kind to me in a way that's explicitly correlated to my racial identity.” It was a tough conversation, and that's what started a lot of these talks. So it's not just that the board just feels like there *might* be problem. We've had concrete examples of members coming to us telling us that they are problems. We agreed they were problems, and did things like the anti-oppression training – with a rousing 2-3 people show up. The board concern now is that these things are happening and people don't seem that concerned about it. So this conversation at GMM are to get a better sense of what the general membership thinks about these issues. Understanding how member feel also takes place on an ongoing basis; between board meetings with house board rep feedback. There are lots of times to talk about this; We have heard about problems in the past; We're all ears on solutions for it.

Huyler: Going back to the question of how far ICC Austin can go towards being a social justice organization, are there any limitations, and should ICC Austin being moving that way. In our group one of the resounding limitations was the perception of ICC Austin and co-ops as a whole in Austin. We're not seen as a social justice organization. People know co-ops as a place where weird things happen and a lot of parties. This can be a limitation if we want to try to break into the social justice sphere – if we want to do that. It's a very difficult thing to become a social justice organization with no background and nobody knows who you are. When you're trying to be a social justice organization and people only know you as a place where people party and do illegal things, it can be quite difficult. Going forward we are doing things like tabling, open houses, and more events where ICC Austin can be seen as more than just – I've said it a couple

times now – a place where people party. This is a limitation, and something we can address pretty easily moving forward by having more events like this [non-party].

Philip: Seneca members saw the GMM questions posted at the house, and talked about them in advance to some degree. One thing that came up a few times during those conversations, as well as during the past few GMMs, is that it is about “who you know”. That’s how members are getting into ICC Austin – people who know each other. But the problem may be deeper than just that, namely our culture. Our house cultures may not be conducive to what we’re trying to do. We’ve got a liberal, upper-middle class college student vibe. It inherently separates people from one another and is thus a barrier to accessibility. The problem is not just friends-of-friends-of-friends. It’s much more fundamental than that.

Andrew: Members at ICC Austin get a defacto scholarship equal to the difference between what you pay to live at ICC Austin compared to living at a private apartment. We get a property tax exemption because we offer affordable housing to all students. In practice, it doesn’t go to all students. It goes disproportionately to some students. In my view, these conversations serve to push back on that [inequity]. We are getting a free ride in a way because we are living in ICC Austin houses. And we are [currently] an economically advantaged group by and large. We are already ahead, and ICC Austin is putting us more ahead. Obviously this doesn’t apply to 100% of people, but it does apply to a statistically significant degree to the extent that we are whiter, or richer, or whatever than the overall UT population or Austin population. And to that degree ICC Austin is actually perpetuating that inequality. That’s where I see these conversations as important and the social justice role of ICC Austin come into play.

Roxanne: [reads third question] What are you willing to change about yourself as a member or your house culture to help ICC Austin make better progress towards social justice? What are you willing to see changed about ICC Austin as an organization?

Daniela: We talked about how the houses themselves are kind of alienating: Some of them are very, um... *eclectic* in their aesthetics – to put it lightly. [laughter] Parents are important for a lot of members, and their opinions can be a big deal. For people like me, a first-generation American, from a conservative catholic household, that kind of first impression [of house aesthetics] can be limiting. In our house we have “What are you doing after the orgy?” painted on the staircase very prominently. I’m lucky that my dad didn’t understand it or didn’t read it. The question is, how do we compromise between how our parents see the houses with our liberal expressions so that we aren’t excluding people [that would be good ICC Austin members]. Parents might see the expressions and say, we don’t want our kids living there.

Erin: I want to rephrase what Daniela was saying: How do you express you house identity without unnecessarily turning people off? For example, there might be corner case things [potentially offensive, disgusting, ugly curios] that three people love, but that might be polarizing to other groups that might be considering moving in. I moved into ICC Austin not knowing about UT, west campus, or ICC Austin. I moved in sight unseen. I wasn’t entirely sure I was even moving into a house. If I had watched all the youtube videos introducing me to the house that are now available, some of the content would have made me more excited about moving in – but some of it would have really turned me off – for similar reasons to what Daniela mentioned.

There are a lot of things that people will pick to publicize about their house, like wall art or other things. Prospective member with any knowledge of the house could misinterpret the information [eg the baggage attached to wall artwork] and not want to live at ICC Austin because of uncertainty and concern over how that prospective members' identity will fit in to house with a lot of things [aesthetic choices] that might seem alienating.

Roxanne: As a board member, I try to do more listening than talking in these spaces. Something that I've seen in our community very recently, and something that I struggled with when I moved in: I had to let my house know not to have any paraphenilia out [in commons areas] because of who my parents are and my background as a person. I know that this is a barrier to entry. Sometimes the cultures we have in our houses regarding substances are less welcoming, and are non-inclusive. Recently I've heard about houses having events that are not centered around a keg. That is very powerful for us as an organization and a way for us to be more inclusive to people, who for whatever reason, are uncomfortable with substances.

Hayley: It's important that the message be that ICC Austin houses are not a place to come if 'you are woke', it's a place to come 'to get woke'. I came into ICC Austin not knowing anything about co-ops, or even any experience living in a liberal place. It felt quite intimidating, and there was a large learning curve. Diversity is fostered when our house spaces are places you can come and learn and be loved – not come and be loved because you are educated.

Natalie: I wanted to come back to this question that I've been thinking about since someone posted it in the bathroom I use... This is an important conversation about how we as individual housemates facilitate a house culture that is welcoming and open. I'm particularly proud of Avalon for doing this. I have been at and known Avalonians for years. Over the years our culture has definitely shifted to become more welcoming, more safe, and less tolerant of behaviors that are harmful or alienating. These conversations are important at the individual member and house levels.

But I want to also impress upon the board and staff that while individual change is important for social justice, the fact of the matter is we [individual members and houses] are part of an institution. People come in and out of ICC Austin. Board members cycle in and out in a year, or two years, or maybe three. So, that kind of individual change can only go so far.

I agree that in terms of having a more diverse membership, giving more power to members who have historically been neglected by the organization [ICC Austin] is going to foment change from the bottom up. So, the more people we have the marginalized identities in the membership means more of those people who will be serving on the board and house officer positions. That's very important.

But the fact of the matter is, we have people steering the ship. It is important to make sure that those ship-steerers are steering us in the right direction. (I haven't attending a board meeting, but I plan on doing that very soon.) The job of the board is to hold the staff accountable. What I'd like to see, in addition to all the things we've talked about, is more involvement by staff in steering this conversation. If it's a value of ICC Austin to move towards social justice, I'd like to see the staff working with other organizations, the staff meeting with economic and affordable

justice, and affordable housing organizations to see how we can collaborate. “Undoing Racism” is an Austin workshop that I’ve been a part of, and many different organizations that I’m part of have also participated in. It is for white-led organizations that are trying to make their services to members more inclusive. That’s something staff could benefit from. I want to add this to the conversation because what we’re talking about here is important, but I want to make sure we’re not neglecting the other side of it: That we’re an institution We’re led by a staff and a board of directors. I think the board of directors has done a kick-ass job of making sure this conversation is on the table and stays on the table, but I want to make sure this [staff role in social justice work] is also part of the conversation and not something we’re missing out on.

Noah: I want to address the 70-80-year ICC Austin history as all-white, and even started off as all-male. This is kindof hard to undo. We need to build a new history on diversity and inclusion. Our group talked going to participate in black student union meetings and being present in those spaces; maybe not saying “you guys need to help us”, but just participating and pushing for that cause. One idea is for houses to sponsor or team up with an organization in Austin that does active work in the community. That could be very powerful; allowing each house to have its own little piece [of the social justice puzzle?] that would become part of the house culture, something that really important and personal to members of that house.

Roxanne: It’s in the works. It’s in the works. If your house is interested in that, talk to us [committee for combatting oppression]. It’s happening... maybe. [laughter]

Noah: If you have an idea, or an organization you’d like to participate in yourself, bring your house into that.

JT: House of Commons, does Food Not Bombs still use your kitchen [answer: no. kitchen too small. They now use 21st street co-op kitchen]

Boone: Quick question: How’s the recycling for you guys? Is it good? Great? [lot’s of thumbs-up – clarification on bi-weekly pickup schedule]

Nico: We discussed making some events more open to the public. There are some problems, a lot of problems, with that of course. We had a board-game night, and I tried to do a book night – but it wasn’t successful. When I was making the events I was think about who to invite, and I immediately jumped to other cooperators, but then I thought, “why do it stop there?” We could invite people from anywhere; friends, family, or other people at your school. That’s not a well-defined solution, but it might work for getting more people interested.

Cara: I’ve heard that if you’re a student from a low-income background, the last place you want to live in college is a trashed old house. The amount of work that could be done by members to make their house look nice has a lot of impact on who’d want to live there. If you’re a first-generation college student, and you come from a black or brown family, you may feel more pressure than you white friends about what goes on in your house – like what you’re making public on facebook, parties. Realize that what you do in your house can limit what people will be there.

JT: I remember my first house meeting when I moved into House of Commons. I had just dumpstered a ton of sweet furniture. We filled the living room with it, and then member wrote all over it, painted it, poked holes in it. I was so mad I made it a discussion item at the house meeting. And then all these rich kids from the Woodlands just said, “I just love it when nice shit gets ruined.”, and everyone gives co-op fingers. I just thought, “who are these people?”, “what is this place?” Recognize that alienating parts of the coop may be things you haven’t even thought of. Things you think are really rebellious things are really just turning away people who should really be living in ICC Austin.

Mila: Going back to what Noah and Roxanne said about bring events into each house, our group discussed how membership and education could really step up and help in this transition. What Natalie said about the individual versus the organizational level – instead of putting it back on the membership and education officers to have more events, maybe as houses we could make that part of the house culture through house manuals. A lot of what officers do is not written down, making perpetuation of ideas more difficult.

JT: Please continue these conversations at your houses, and make sure to give ideas to the board as you develop them.

MEETING WRAP-UP

Attendance trophy – Seneca “wins”, but with recount Avalon is the final winner

GMM Surveys filled out

Group Photo taken

Food and mingling

Spring 2017 GMM Member Feedback Survey Results

(50 of the 65 attendees filled out member feedback forms)

Overall, how satisfied were you with today's event?

- 13 – extremely satisfied (26%)
- 24 – satisfied (62%)
- 3 – neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (12%)
- 0 – dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied

What did you enjoy most about GMM:

Top Responses

- Group discussions (on social justice; healthy; the fact that we're having the social justice conversation at all; hearing great ideas) – 13 members said this
- Small group discussion - 11
- Large group discussion - 6
- Food (free; donuts) - 5
- Talking to and engaging with people I've never met; hearing other opinions on issues - 5

Other Responses

- Learning how other houses operated differently (structural) - 2
- The openness of conversations and facilitation of the groups
- The [social justice] topic
- That people were comfortable voicing their concerns about what they didn't like with ICC Austin
- Community respect between people
- Seeing everybody caring about ICC Austin's future
- It was cool to see ICC Austin people come together like this

- Natalie San Luis [ICC Austin member attending GMM]
- Very good Board Officer and Community Trustee candidates
- Hearing from the Board
- Financial and Ruth Schulze updates
- Rock, paper, scissors [icebreaker activity]
- Free t-shirt

List one thing you are taking away / learned from today's GMM:

- Having conversation/hearing perspectives about social justice - 4
- ICC Austin is currently primarily focused on economic justice - 3
- Different people have different ideas of how best to effect inclusivity
- ICC Austin is on the right track but we can do more
- Intersectionality is key. (How does representation and turnover limit us?)
- A fresh perspective on institutionalized racism in ICC Austin
- ICC Austin members really care!!! :)
- How the appearance of certain houses/activities can alienate people
- ICC Austin is not representative of Austin
- That the house culture/dirtiness is limiting to people
- Our houses should become accessible
- A t-shirt
- Eclectic might turn away more conservative backgrounds
- I need to go to more Board meetings
- Responsibility to participate in social justice action
- I learned about our tangible efforts towards justice, like scholarships
- Maintaining houses to not look run down
- I should come back in the fall
- Everything Natalie San Luis said
- Options for portraying ICC Austin as something other than parties
- Peoples' perception of ICC Austin
- Our education events can be more inclusive
- Not to post things online about your house that could dissuade people from joining
- [Opinion] differ on social justice
- Amazed by all the different insights people had with social justice
- How our house can take a more active role in social justice
- ICC Austin does things to help lower-income students
- A lot of positive administrative changes have been made
- Drug use [in houses] is a barrier [to joining ICC Austin]
- ICC Austin direction seems relatively vague
- Some people have Nazi parents
- Goals
- How varied house processes can be bad
- House attitudes
- We need social justice
- Social injustice
- Increased interest in needs of more conservative people

List one thing we can do to improve future GMM's:

Logistics

- Coffee (with the donuts) - 5
- Make event shorter to boost attendance - 3
- More microphones - 2
- Better seating coordination
- Having everyone sit on the floor rather than rows of chairs in a circle
- Soft chairs
- Earlier in the day? I don't know
- On outreach materials give the meeting place address
- Different location
- Back to pizza
- Provide more liquids
- More advertising for event so more people come
- Discussion questions posted before meeting [ed note – questions were posted at houses and emailed out over an entire month]

Discussions

- Small group discussions not well directed, are ill-organized - 2
- More members taking [ed note – this may mean less Board Director talking]
- Silence from Board members for the first 15 minutes
- Encourage people who haven't spoken to speak up - 2
- A mechanism for soliciting more input; more calling on people/soliciting

Content/Program

- This [social justice] should be a topic at every GMM forever - 3
- About 60-70% of today was about social justice. Bring it to 30%
- More time for small group discussion - 2
- More time for open discussion - 2
- Make the agenda less busy; shortened introduction - 2
- Maybe the Board Reps can go over the questions at a house meeting beforehand in preparation
- Make sure small group discussion notes go to the Board [ed note – these notes do go to the Board and are approved as GMM minutes (see the April 2017 Board packet)]
- Different questions – they are always the same [ed note – the GMM questions have been quite different in terms of actual words and topics, but perhaps they feel the same.]

Other Comments

- Cheaper rent
- More structure
- More short breaks, maybe?
- More involvement

Overall, did you find today engaging and worth your time:

- Yes - 39
- Yea buddy
- Definitely, it's really awesome to see what sparks your imagination to other members
- Absolutely
- Yes, sort of
- 7 out of 10
- Half and half
- Worth 1.5 hours, not 3
- No - 6

Anything else you would like to share:

- Sliding scale or donation rent option for wealthier students
- ICC Austin rulez
- Board Rocks
- Okay basically the fact that [name removed] was here and was repeatedly given a platform despite being known as a misogynistic transphobe made me doubt the validity of anything said today. I would have left but I'd already invested two hours in a burrito.
- [drawing of a 'thumbs-up']
- Thank you for hosting this
- [drawing of 'smiley face']
- [drawing of 'heart'] - 3
- Think about: Why do we need diversity?
- People voiced the concerns about what they talked about privately at GMM

Did you know about the small group discussion questions before the GMM?

- Yes - 21
- No - 6