General Assembly Notes
7th General Assembly October 12th, 2011 @ the Elk statue @7pm
meeting begins around 7:07 pm
facilitator: Shizuko and Jordan
stacker: Chris
secretary: Fiona
vibe checker: Chris
(secretary's note: mixture of paraphrased and quoted speech, also approximately 85% complete/accurate)
a projection, powered by a stationary bike, is provided displaying important points as things go

Meeting begins with a big laugh led by Rachel and shared by all, unfortunately interrupted by this aggro drunk dude who tries to grab the megaphone and is taken to the sidelines by a small group.

F: the situation and the decisions can be tense, remember the spirit of love and cooperation and participation as part of our occupation...

Agenda review:
-facilitator team intro
-decision process review
-committee announcements
-proposal idea announcements
-past decisions
-proposal for this evening
-general announcements
-go home

(boisterous, rude maybe drunk guy from earlier decides to take a seat with everyone and participate)

-a new sort of person is introduced: point of process helpers who can explain the meeting process on the sidelines to those who are new to consensus or don't want to do a point of process for everyone

Decision making process
   • proposal announcement
   • we operate on consensus:
   • Point of Process (Δ hand sign): first priority to speak
       ○ new position of sideline point of process question answerers
   • clarifying questions (C hand sign): next priority
   • direct response (index finger pointed up, swinging back and forth): next priority
   • stack, groups of 3, hold your number up until you speak
   • we operate on "modified consensus"
   • agreement shown with hands up "twinkle fingers", and disagreement shown with floppy hands and down wagging "puppy dog fingers"
   • guidelines for participation: WAIS Why Am I Speaking. Please be considerate, please don't repeat things that have been said by others.
   • Follow the process: if you have an idea, get with others and form a proposal

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C:What if we tried to speak with others earlier and no one wanted to listen? (speaker's personal experience)

F: announce proposal idea at GA, and gather a working group from there

~: "never give up"

Committee announcements

Request for folk in kitchen's votes to be counted, lady has a tally from kitchen to be added

F:We are aren't voting on anything yet.
   Committee announcements less than one minute please.

Δ: one finger in air is a vote?

F: That is correct

~: Yesterday, we agreed that on finger is to ask a question

F: Tonight, hand up is a question, one finger is a vote, * is approval

Stack has requests: hold you number up until called, don't stand behind stacker if you want to get on stack

LEGAL COMMITTEE: message from Wall Street Occupation: "open Main St.", public perception matters, be tactical not emotional

OUTREACH COMMITTEE: committee formed with is revamping street team, also interacting with unions

SANITATION: don't cross contaminate, volunteers needed

HISPANIC: needs people who speak Spanish, meet in library at 4pm tomorrow

F: please use * not clapping, in order to save time

MORALE: Pink Martini would like to give a free concert for the cause during lunch at Pioneer Square, meet at Terry Shrunk Plaza, Friday at noon

SEXUAL ASSAULT RESOUCE COMMITTEE: if you hear about an assault, confidentiality and survivor autonomy is absolute, don't share details at all without explicit permission of survivor.

WELLNESS: reach out to your networks, class space available at library

FACILIATION: training Saturday 10 am – 12, NW corner of Beta

INFORMATION: number to information: (503) 890-0657

Proposal Announcements

(Ideas for future proposals, not to be voted on tonight. Proposal ideas are announced to gather support and feedback and present to the group as a future possibility)

First

Chris Lowe (sp?): contact on Facebook and Occupyportland website

What: Occupy Portland should form a feeder march to join the 10 year anniversary march of the war in Afghanistan; also use the web communications to let folk know

Why: war and militarism are deep causes and symptoms of what we oppose

How: tactical committee organize and activate occupiers

If you are interested: meet tomorrow at 1 at Info Table

Second

proposal idea: grand reopening of Main Street with the mayor and police and a ribbon cutting, "people will learn to love us"

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If you are interested: meet right now behind the Elk Statue

Third
Speaker was told by food crew to move his tent
proposal idea: a dozen campers to move to Terry Shrunk Plaza, room is running out for tents so we need more ground, he will be moving at 9pm tonight
~:we can't move there because it's federal property
F: not time to discuss, but check in with David
~: speaker says he slept in Terry Shrunk last night, was woken up at six am by city police and not charged with a crime

Fourth
Proposal idea: Ron thinks we should form a committee, approved by GA to report to government organizations the results of GA's, committee speaks for us at city councils, etc
If interested: meet after GA, also info info desk (Ron)

Fifth
Thomas will be at communications tent, he has been fighting his whole life

Sixth
Brandon is a certified flagger and wishes to propose that we train flaggers to help children cross the street, etc

Seventh
Michael Callahan, a member of the "Right to Dream" movement located on W4th and Burnside (an outdoor safe site dedicated to undisturbed sleep for all). Last week Seattle passed ordinance allowing 100 people encampments when facilities are provided and maintained, wants the occupation to work towards getting that passed in Portland. Also, Right to Dream needs a pickup truck helper to haul materials)

Eight
Cameron says that yesterday less than 100 people were present for voting. He proposes that if there is a misrepresentation of voting, to give voice to camp workers who cannot be present at GA's. Contact him at info.
Jesse agrees one-hundred percent, but lots of people can't occupy and he wishes there was a forum to vote from home

F: It's not raining and we all look lovely. **

Ninth
Cindy says an immediate plan is needed to form education system at the occupation, connecting to form free school, conventional education oppresses, let's make our own.

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Past Decisions
Decisions of previous GA's

- no permit sought for march
- route released morning of march
- value statement in solidarity with the Portland marathon
- skeleton crew to remain on site and split off group to meet at PSU for day of marathon
- occupy Main St.
- 90% modified consensus
- 6 point proposal process

Δ: there had been a friendly amendment to proposal to occupy Main St: city officials and police speak directly to us versus through a liaison, avoiding hierarchy. This passed as amended.

Proposals

F: There are four proposals tonight, two are related

First Proposal
Regardless of the decision tonight regarding Main St, we provide a statement:
(Paraphrased) City officials and police concerned that the occupation is endangering lives by keeping Main St. We are concerned too; we believe that our system controlled by 1% is a bigger threat. It is claimed that blocking the street slows down Emergency Vehicles, which we acknowledge, but a bigger threat is 40 million American without healthcare; we occupy with them.
Public transport has been sited as a reason to open the street: we acknowledge, but the real threat is millions in budget cuts destroying public transportation, we occupy with them.
Working people late to work: real threat is the exploitive economic system, low paying jobs, high debt, and no control of their own lives. We occupy with them.
We are 99% and we occupy together.
This proposal is only to publish the statement, it is not a proposal regarding whether to open the street or not.
C: Is this a time sensitive proposal?
A:Yes
C: Why are police unions not involved?
A: Emergency vehicles and Trimet expressed concern. We responded to that.
C: Will there be a chance to add amendments?
A: There will be an "evolution" process later.
C: Can we integrate the word "precedent" into these statements?
F: Suggest this during the evolution process.

Objections/Concerns
st:man told a woman that he wants us all to know there are millions in favor of opening the street
F: This does not pertain to this proposal
st: "Fuck the police."
st: concerned with language, belief that 1% system is a greater and ever present danger to the people of Portland and across the world, but doesn't belittle the direct important of safety

Δ: Should this wait til we decide on opening/keeping street?
~:Proposal states that it is regardless of street decision
F: clarifies objection process
Δ: 50 million uninsured, not 40 million, wants to include unemployment in statement, straighten out process: is this discussion or objections?
F: let's use this time for objections.
Δ:F said objections then temp check and then vote, he has a problem with process so he was waiting to make less than an objections
F: temp check is not a passing vote, evolution comes after temp check
st: before we vote on the road, we have police speak to the GA
F: does not pertain
Δ: opportunity to vote or straw poll on presented amendments so far?
F: yes, during evolution process
TEMP CHECK on this proposal: *** (lots of support)

Evolution/Friendly Amendment/Discussion
st: there should be statements about concern for safety of campers regarding traffic
st: our rights and their convenience, propose that we open the street...
F: Does not pertain to this proposal
st: insert language referring to unemployment
st: clarify position of Trimet Union regarding use of our street, pertinent to statement
~:speaker says she heard Trimet union is in support of us using the street
st: those concerned about statement should form a group to amend statement right now
st: serious concern, GA does not hear back whether each amendment is being accepted or not
~:when someone makes an amendment, we must approve/disapprove and it must be clear whether each is approved or not
F: we have a list of proposed amendments, we can hand signal and F will announce if it is cleared

1st Amendment: safety of campers noted, ****Vote: generally accepted

st: speaker is not used to being surrounded by police, we should throw police off. Remember that there are homeless. We fight for our safety everyday. If you don't fight for your safety now, you will do so in homelessness.

2nd Amendment:
Δ: isn't the language we just voted to include?
F: We don't need to vote on this amendment. ***

3rd Amendment: add "unemployment" in useful context
st: unemployment is a hot topic. Jobs are available but wages are not liveable. We should be disgusted by the quality of jobs.
F: such language is in proposal already
st:we should cote on spirit of proposal, not exact language to speed up process
Δ: If we aren't voting on language now, can we raise objections later?
~: Axel was trying to address that in his amendment

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st: we sound tired, speaker was at work all day. She can't hear, there are 1,000's watching our live feed and they need to be able to hear, more mic check.
(crowd shifts forward)
F: we have big decisions to make, folk who are concerned with language should meet and refine language, and we can readdress the statement. This is a written statement, and we are coming to agreement
temp check: ******
consensus: statement with amendments, consensus achieved
Δ: speaker wants to add amendment, people say no.

Second and Third Proposal:
F: There are two proposals regarding Main St. We shall hear both first, temp check and then discuss one with hottest reaction

Proposal A:
Keller proposes: we are making history. Occupy Portland continues to use Main Street as a common space for meetings and community building, except for Emergency Service Vehicles, bikes, and the anti-war march on Saturday. Direct communications will put in place with transit, EMS's, and the public to develop a long term plan honoring both the occupation's need for an accessible gathering space, and the safety of the entire community.

Proposal B:
Axel proposes: remove barricades, closing the road at certain times for our use, draft a press release and create a forum for community concerns. Transit workers have concerns we respect, pre release publicizes times we plan to close road for our needs, we are concerned network with community regarding use of street. But we don't like the threat of force.

Δ: we voted on that last night.
F: we didn't achieve consensus
(dude gets pissed, a lady goes to talk to him on the sidelines)
F: we hear proposal A again.
C: Which one opens road?
A: Both, A opens road to EMS, bikes, and march, and leaves dialogue open for future use of space.
F: neither proposal totally opens roads. We should hear proposal B again.
Δ: These proposals are the same basic idea, street open under some circumstances...
F: This is not a point of process.
Proposers:: if either one goes forward, we can try to integrate the languages
C: parked cards? Are we getting rid of them?
Keller: be up to everyone, friendly amendment to proposal B
st: I want to know now.
F: process is as important as decision
st: first we open only sometimes, who will be in charge of opening and closing, how facilitated?
Keller: we have an elaborate system, we can train staff to conduct traffic for EMS
st: Axil, what times are you proposing we open street
Axel: GA's decision, but could be decided by transport system

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st: can we agree now that it's during high traffic

F: during discussion

Δ: confusion, proposals are similar. People leave GA when there is confusion. Their voices aren't being heard.

F: there will be another opportunity for clarifying questions, but we have to choose a proposal to discuss

Keller: we agreed that if we reach consensus on one proposal, then we don't need to discuss other proposal, so we will temp check to see which to discuss first, and if we don't reach consensus then we discuss other proposal.

(BREAK FOR STRETCHING)

F: ranks have thinned, squish in. Our decision is really important, thanks for staying and participating

Δ: there was a proposal before to open street completely. It was ignored and it shouldn't have been.

F: That was not proposed, it can be proposed at a future assembly.

Δ: There is confusion about our process, a man proposed during announcements. They had misunderstood and thought that was the proposing process. They tried to explain to him that he needs to get together and write out an actual proposal for next GA

Δ: third option, we can \/ on both, we can reject both proposals, in order to get to something to totally open street. It is important this voice be heard.

Proposals are reread to try to clarify difference in proposals.

Δ: is there an avenue in our process to open up street tonight? We would thought we would have this opportunity.

F: if we vote on Axel's proposal, we could move forward with this.

Δ: can I make a third proposal right now?

F: not now

TEMP CHECK for which proposal has more support: there is confusion and coin flipping to decide which to temp on first, then there is confusion about which proposal was being temped. In the end, it is decided that we discuss Axel's proposal first.

DISCUSSION OF PROPOSAL B

C: what is intent of why/when street closes?

F: we will take several C's, then discuss as a group

C: Axel's proposal sounds like it doesn't specify how long/when to open. Sounds like asking us to "sign a blank cheque".

F: that is not a clarifying question

C: is your intent to develop a working group to later discuss open hours? Or do we decide together tonight?

Axel: there is ambiguity in the proposal, hopefully the group take responsibility, decide tonight and give to a committee

Δ: it is important to clarify that if we vote to accept this, we will all have the opportunity to add friendly amendments regarding hours

F:the intent is to close street for GA's

C: will we deal with safety of children? There are autistic children and children with special needs.

Axel: don't ask me for answers, we should discuss together

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OBJECTIONS/CONCERNS
Δ: we decided to call it concerns, not objections
F: concern noted
st: what if there's a meeting, and fire needs to get through. How do we clear the street in seconds?
Seems overwhelming and unsafe.
Δ: did you clarify time for concerns?
F: we are shooting for ten minutes
Δ: can there be ~ to concerns?
F: let's hear a bunch of concerns and address as a group
st: complicated nature of continually opening and closing street, even if we can decide internally, it
will cause more distress with external community.
St: speaker wants to keep street closed, if we open it will be very hard to keep road closed
st: safety of small children in camp. Children wander frequently. This street is a large "bargaining chip"
not to be given up easily
st: 3 concerns: it is symbolic that the street is called "Main St", how will we occupy wall street if we
don't occupy Main St? If the city was concerned about speed of EMS on this street, they wouldn't have
put a statue in the middle of it. If we don't have a space to meet at all hours, our movement will be
lost.**
st: we should let Trimet through for the city, it would be appreciated
st: after GA voted to hold this road, this afternoon only 10 people were in the street
st: within our 99%, not representing all of us, there are people that really want to be freedom fighters,
we should care about this. If you open this road you allow for this to happen real fast.
F: next step, evolutionary step. Concerns for 2 more minutes
st: as an assembly, we are a small minority of Portland, we are 1% of the 99% who want to use the road
~: the whole 99% haven't expressed opinion adequately enough to determine that
st: speaker from media team, there are hundreds on the stream asking that you stay quiet if it's not your
turn. Many expressed concern with language of proposal not opening up the street enough for people
who are down here already
st: police and city government are misrepresenting the safety hazard of street closure to try to crack
down on this movement. If we are afraid of power, what are we doing here?
St: regardless of how we decide outcome, will the decision be respected by all at the occupation?
DISCUSSION
Δ: too many ~ ignored, why?
~: a ~ is not an opinion, stack is for opinion, ~ is for new/correcting information pertinent to previous
statement
~: only thing that jumps stack is Δ, ~ can be ignored or put to back of stack
Δ: how can we assume that every ~ is expressing opinion, rather than new information, this is
undemocratic?
F: we will try harder
st: speaker has an amendment: we strike all words of proposal and GA will reopen Main St as soon as
safely feasible.
F: This is not an amendment, but a new proposal. an amendment cannot be used to erase and rewrite a
proposal.
Dude gets to shouting, talked down by some folk. He gets aggro and storms off.
St: Brad works in social media. Peaceful protest? Supporters in community want street open, the 99%

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is negatively affected by keeping street closed. We are dedicated to peaceful protest, not a fight with police, whom we also represent. National dialogue about injustice, learn from each other and educate public about who their enemy really is. Fight Wall St not Main St. Give street back to 99% who are very supportive so far. Getting arrested for holding a street will not win support.

Δ: Friendly amendments cannot run completely contradictory to the spirit of the proposal. Must go through with proposal process.

Δ: amends have been attempted to be made, F said this was discussion

F: evolutionary portion included amendments and discussion

Δ: wants to understand why when people are choosing to speak their minds, because they didn't come at 6:0? this might as well be congress..

~: this is a friendly amendment, it just gets to just puts the open hours to zero

F: use hand signs to show support to speed up process

TEMP CHECK on Amendment \/\/

C: were these your words or are they from the internet?

~: Twitter shows many supporters feel they can't support us if we don't open street

~: there are a lot of people not on the Twitter

F: try to keep opinions out of ~

Δ: how can she speak for all of Portland's poor...

F: not a Δ, let's remain respectful with each other ***

~: to previous comment, 77.3% of US public has access to internet. all day and yesterday extremely strong public sentiment that we open road

st: street as "bargaining chip": we have one chip: popular support for our cause civil disobedience is a tool towards a goal, let's not loose the chip.

St: consensus is about building consensus, we can all reach it. Friendly amendment: road closed at minimum for GA's

st: speaker was told by police we could use Terry Shrunk Plaza for GA's.

Δ: process is interfering with spirit of process, as speaker watches people leave who came here to vote

F: time check, just past ten pm. This process is amazing but difficult. As F it is hard to tell what to do at this pint. This issue is polarized, 86% of people participating in GA last night voted in favor of keeping road closed, which is not 90% so it doesn't pass. Any ideas in group to speed up process?

An irritated guy eating peanuts tries to grab mic to say "get over yourselves".

St: not happy with either proposal, but he will give a little and everyone should give too so we can come to agreement

st: if we support this process, we should use it to come to agreement. Move thru with time limit thru evolution, temp checks move to agreement, if not then come back tomorrow

st: learning the process is as important as making decision

F: 10 min enough? **

St: friendly amendment seems only useful if their coming from people who don't want to open street, it is something in exchange to make them agree

st: lots of chatter in background, hard to hear

st: friendly amendment: road opens on condition that city paint crosswalk and safety committee designates crossing guards. All vehicles must yield for pedestrians. We train folk professional for this position.

C: how many crosswalks?

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~: one in center of street, cars only need to yield if no trafic light presenthas
time check: 5 min
TEMP CHECK on amendment: not 90%
st: these sidewalks are not disability friendly. How are we going to account for that?
F: friendly amendment does not pass.
St: many supporters are not here, they do not want us to get arrested. The city ahs cooperated with us, we should too. This proposal prevents arrests. Amend: only open the road sufficient enough to avoid arrests.
TIME
no amendments accepted
TEMP CHECK: proposal re-read
cyclists on stationary bikes switch to power projection generator
Δ: will there be any future opportunity to add amendments? Can we include a move to open up road immediately after GA?
Things get aggro for a second. A woman is sharply accusing the facilitator of misleading her about the consensus process. Facilitators switch.
Δ: when will we determine time to open/close road?
~:this proposal doesn't make provisions for those times. So the proposal is incomplete
Δ: folk are not respecting process or each other.
F: those who agree to pass with temp check...
(Secretary note: unfortunately at this time a dude came up behind me and started talking loudly about corporate billboard advertising, and I had to move and I missed some of the voting process, sorry.)
F: there is not 90% in favor of passing proposal tonight. By our process we move to discuss the second proposal. We need to talk about second proposal

Keller restates her proposal
CLARIFYING QUESTIONS
C: this proposal doesn't take logistics into account, who would do this?
F: clarifies clarifying questions
C: if we pass this, the road remains closed, if we do not the road remains closed. How does this change the current situation?
~: opens roads to EMS, bikes and march, opens up discussion for future. We should decide with community not cops, not fear, not city, us.
C: we can hold assembly on streets and also allow EMS and bikes to pass thru. How does this happen during GA?
~: every block in this city has alternative routes. In 2008 snow, city was shut down for weeks. We want to communicate with transit and EMS to figure out best way to work it out. During GA's, we would move out of the way.
~: speaker used to work with large groups and protests and she knows from experience that we can develop a system to clear the street quickly.
C: if we vote yes, will we still get back a chance to vote yes on previous proposal in future?
~: you can bring a new proposal at any time.
C: if we don't pass this tonight, will we still hold this from EMS tomorrow?
F: if we don't pass, things stay the same tomorrow
C: would we be able to move directly to friendly amendments?

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F: let's open concerns, F is sensing lots of people wish to move, let's take concerns for 5 min before evolutionary process begins

CONCERNS

st: I just want to know if the proposal passes, will GA be here to handle situations?

St: problems was today there was division amongst us, and it made us look stupid. We must vote tonight and stay united.

F: time to add friendly amendments, 10 min.

st: in spirit of evolution, if we can come to 90% agreement, we have achieved our process of coming to that decision. It will be a step to please folk that want street open.

StL friendly amendment: add that we open streets during rush house 7=10 am and 4-7pm all weekdays and we get it on weekends ∨∨∨

Δ: that amendment makes it first proposal

Δ: language used is confusing, are we doing discussion and amendments?

F: discussion and evolution

st: Mystic Wolf has been a moderator on Wall St for 26 days, moderator on Portland occupation for 2 days. You people and I, and all the rest of 99%. 35- on live stream have unanimously asked to consider the statement of John at Infinity Circle at Occupy Wall Street, this occupation is not about Portland, but about Us and the world.

John from Infinity Circle's note to us:

"hello OccupyPortland, I love you. The street issue is making mountains out of molehills. We speak for 99%. we are the focal project, however we are not all of the 99%. we must take into account all of the 99%. the city has been with us so far. My concern if we do not open the streets completely, we will lose the backing of the city."

Time check: 10:55pm

F: focus, we're almost there. There is not a large form of agreement in this crowd.

Proposal re-read

TEMP CHECK: proposal warmly accepted

C: are cops included in EMS?

~: ambulances and fire is what was meant

F: we want clarification in languages *

C: are we proposing we pass now and continue discussing to decide to open later?

F: yes

C: what is process for finding out if EMS or fire need to come thru?

~: we need a working group (flagger volunteers to train others)

C: when will this kick in?

Keller: It would begin as soon as we develop a protocol

F: let's look at formal agreement

vote: proposal passes ******

"Who's streets, our streets" commences for a second.

Δ: we agreed to also count stand asides

F: call for a count, however if 90% is clear visually we don't do a count

stand asides: 13, against: 7

Proposal passes.

F: This is what democracy looks like! There are people who will disagree with this decision, we must open dialogue with everyone this process is open, not static. If we are going to continue to occupy

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street, people need to participate. Bodies need to be here on a continual basis.

Next meeting tomorrow at Elk at 7pm.
Closing announcement: find Keller to talk about how to use space, next 20 min.
4 hours meeting but we did it!