

Tech Valley Game Space Meeting Notes for 1/13/2021

The regular meeting of the Tech Valley Game Space Board of Directors was held on Wednesday 1/13/2021 at 6:02 pm.

The following members of the board were in attendance via teleconference:

Taro Omiya

Frederika Edgington-Giordano (Secretary)

Jamey Stevenson (Interim Executive Director)

Neil Yoshi Alers

Dan Tanguay

We have quorum!

Taro acted as Chair.

The notes from the previous meeting were reviewed. Taro was listed as Chair, which was corrected. The meeting notes were approved.

The first item on the agenda was setting a timeline for the SWOT. Dan had set up a document and plenty of in-depth responses were provided. The strengths and weaknesses of TVGS were discussed. Opportunities and threats to TVGS were discussed. Scaling down TVGS operations, which allows more easy pivoting, was discussed. One threat that was discussed was developers working from home and the exodus of talent from Capital Region due to the prevalence of working remotely. NYS is deep in debt. Challenges with growing the organization to be discussed with Taro, as the previous Executive Director. Funding issues were discussed. They are preventing TVGS from hiring staff. This will be addressed in a separate meeting. The topic will include where TVGS wants to be in 5 years. Focusing on development and championing diversity in game development were discussed. The value of having a physical location is in question. Narrowing focus, including moving out of spaces with competition was discussed. Expanding outside of Capital Region was discussed. There was some misalignment is between the 5-year goals and these would need to resolved for creating a 1-year plan.

Including volunteer coordinators with planning was discussed. At this point, getting alignment within the board would be done first. An additional meeting would be better with some asynchronous communication to work out of details.

Jamey was hoping to use the 1-year plan for the budget for the year. Planning with an April-to-April budget estimate was discussed. Working through the education needs for the budget was discussed. Checking in with potential partners and asking about charging for educational materials was discussed.

Nominating board members was discussed. Frederika will not be renewing. Jamey will be. Dan needs to discuss with wife. The remaining board members who were coming to the end of their terms were Stacie, Stephanie, and Laquana. Someone will need to reach out to them to determine if they will be continuing. Letter of intent will be needed from existing board members.

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Appointing a Vice Chair was discussed. Secretary doesn't need to be appointed at this time. Appointing Taro as Chair was touched on. Taro is still not clear where he will be and when he will be moving, so this discussed at another time.

Board appointments will be discussed at another time.

Moving the board meeting before April was discussed. Not necessary at this time based on feedback from present members.

Membership tiers discussion was next, should this topic be moved over to the financial meeting? We need feedback from financial committee, then the board would review and approve it.

Executive director job description was discussed next. This positions still needs funding. Having the description prepared for applying for funding would be good. Jamey agrees this should be a priority and it would help him with his duties as Interim Executive Director. As soon as we can hire, Jamey would like to step aside to allow for some with more experience. Jamey to be point person for writing it up and the board will provide feedback.

Potentially updating the process of voting for items outside of board meetings was raised. This is important because of issue that were encountered with a time sensitive situation. Frederika has an action item to review alternatives to requiring in-person or virtual meetings. This will be in parallel with the Executive Director job description to better understand what that role is empowered to do and better define the situations in which the Executive Director will be able to act without direct oversight.

Educational partnerships were discussed next. There are, currently, 3 or 4 in contact with TVGS. TVGS will need a draft budget for partnering with them. Partner organizations include Questar, RPI, Hopeworks, and Russel Sage. There are two that are more immediate – Questar and Hopeworks. Hopeworks asked to license lesson plans. Questar wants to conduct training for high school teachers. This would be in a similar format to work with camps that TVGS has worked with before. This will be discussed at the financial meeting. Frederika to provide info on previous programs and to try to attend meeting. Reviewing procedures overall with board, allowing the Executive Director or acting Executive Director to move forward with some autonomy.

Drafting the policy for negotiating with other organizations both public facing and internal were discussed next. This would help with providing expectations for turnaround on business agreements/negotiations. This is an action item for the financial committee members.

Using a task manager was discussed next. moving action items to a Trello board or similar. Managing/upkeep – who would be responsible for maintaining it? Should be a 'light' touch, strictly after and before meeting. Discussion and feedback might be curtailed. Drawbacks were discussed. Sending the agenda from the prior meeting between meetings was discussed.

Finding a new Treasurer was touched on. Jason still seems to be on top of Treasurer duties, so finding a replacement is not currently a pressing issue.

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Migrating documents to Google shared drive was touched on. The board meeting notes will be provided in a zip file to be uploaded. Frederika to provide this in the next few months. This will be in the public folder.

Taro to copy over the TVGS bylaws so that the copy being maintained would be owned by TVGS.

The update on the RPI grant was discussed next. Ben Chang thinks funding from NYS may be unfrozen. No-cost extension was applied for, but the timeframe is not clear. A budget will be needed to be submitted. Currently, we are waiting on NYS.

Also, RPI submitted for a skill development grant and they are waiting to hear back. Per Ben Chang, they would want to include TVGS. This grant would go towards job training and skill services.

Taro linked to document for appointing new board members. Trying to find more diverse candidates for the board was discussed. Frederika to check if policy document was approved. Jamey to check on the document with the list of desired board member skills.

The meeting was adjourned.



Frederika Edgington-Giordano, Secretary of the Board