

# Spokescouncil Planning

## Meeting 01-15-2025 6pm

### Action items

- Move proposals / make proposals with LP's template
- (All) Comment on outreach proposal [here](#)
- (Ash +LP) Refine Spokes explainer
- (Ash) Make spokes flyer
- (Iris) To craft inline text blurb to announce Spokes in signal chats
- (Frankie) to write a proposal about prioritizing proposals (with dot voting)
- (Frankie) Write a first draft agenda for the 1st Spokes meeting
- (Ash) Write proposal: Cleaning proposal process
- (Andrew) to identify "dream team" of people who know things about the physical infrastructure of woodbine (and its problems)
- (Andrew) At next meeting, Andrew wrangles action items
- (Briar) Write out what we need to do to make the next meeting the last before the actual Spokes meeting
- (Briar) Write an agenda for the next meeting
- (LP) Make date poll for the next meeting

### Notes Summary

- Soft consensus around a desire to have next mtg be the last before the Spokescouncil meets!
- Some discussion about Peter Gelderloos' book [Consensus](#), which offers food for thought on collective decisionmaking
- We'll talk more next time about what consensus model we like. Consensus? Consensus minus 1? We have diverging opinions in the group.

- We recapped how the fishbowl Spokes council format works, and folks present agreed to try that format for initial Spokes meeting
- We've aligned on calling on Working Groups for proposals, but likely only discussing cleaning proposal(s) at the first Spokes meeting
- There are lots of action items to complete async before the next meeting!! See above.

# Agenda

- eat & hang (60min)
- super speedy emotional check ins + No gossip announcement, 1 min per person or less (8 min)
- claim roles (2min)
  - facilitator: Ashley, Ella
  - note-taker: Farnk
  - stack: LP
  - time-keeper: Briar
- action item check-ins (10min)
  - (Paul) Write agenda for next time
  - (LP) Set poll for next meeting time
    - [ella started this ] (LP) Combine Ella and LP's existing explainers, on LP's wiki page and BEEF IT UP
  - (Frankie) evaluate which groups would be included/excluded from spoke representation using the criteria we settled on
    - Added column to [WB chats spreadsheet](#).
    - (all) please help me turn Not Sures into Yes / Nos!
  - (All) Reformat existing proposals into LP's proposal template, for discussion next time
  - (Ash) use the new proposal template for the new proposals above in the [New proposal ideas before 1st meeting](#) section
- discuss takeaways from Peter Gelderloos for our proposal process (20 min)
  - Screenshots of source text [here](#)
  - "WAIT - Why am I Talking?" or "How we can all make meetings less of a slog"
    - jazz hands to show agreement v commenting verbally
  - Rules of Thumb for informal/formal consensus
  - Vibes checker role
  - Future process for feedback
  - Proposal Process for Spokes Planning Meetings adapted from "Consensus"(keep close to 33 min total):
    - Conceptualizing propoals (5 min, Ella)
    - Intro proposal (5 min)

- Questions/Concerns (5 min)
- Friendly amendments (10 min)
- Withdrawals (1 min)
- Voting/Blocks/Stand Asides (1 min)
- If Block occurs > discussion > amendments offered (10 min)
- Peter's critique of consensus minus one (5 min, Ella)
- Vote again (1 min)
- Questions/clarity on blocks v stand asides v friendly amendments

## Section notes

- how much of this do we need to decide / discuss beforehand?
- we will benefit as spokescouncil council from getting better at proposals, can bring to broader Spokes
- we're less "defining the rules" and more becoming resources for process
- i had a conceptual shift about proposals:
  - initial idea: all the working groups would submit cleaning proposals, they would be competing
  - after reading: WGs bring ideas, they are synthesized into a *proposal*, then agreed upon in the meeting
- according to Peter G, meetings are for synthesizing proposals
- "alternative voting" --> instead of deliberating too much, you have rounds of voting / ranked-choice voting
- for cleaning proposals: each WG could propose cleaning that they can commit to as a distinct working group
- anti-goal: we don't want WGs competing with each other over proposals
- anecdote from basement: there was consensus that we wanted to make meetings decision moments more than deliberative moments
- it can be good to seek input *before* the meeting, synthesize proposals
- we'll be bad at proposals at first. good to make it easy to "fail safely". if we have guardrails on proposal discussion, bad proposals can be opportunities for learning instead of tanking the meeting
- was a role of admin group at 4th street to help people who brought shitty proposals
- a group that struggles to make decisions together might have non aligned values or interests. gym collective runs great because there's no inherent contention.
- this (Peter G's book) doesn't have to be the only tool in the toolbox
- WAIT (why am i talking?) how much space am i taking up? is this relevant?
- jazz hands to show agreement
- rules of thumb for formal / informal consensus:
  - if decision can be made in less time than it would take for a formal process, just decide
  - else, make a vote
- vibescheck role: person who's just there to read the room. if someone's being a jerk or taking up time, make a note or give them feedback.

- how to give people feedback, how to fail safely
- blocks are taken seriously, if someone's surprised that you're blocking, that's a bad smell / bad sign for the process
- if a ton of people are standing aside, that's also a bad smell
- Peter's critique of consensus minus 1
  - argument for: to prevent some jerk or infiltrator from blocking everything
  - argument against: promotes conflict avoidance, instead of engaging the jerk, you skirt the problem. if the person is continually a jerk, you can expel them from the group
- instead of expelling people, we could:
  - adjust the groups decisionmaking solution space (is the minus 1 someone who has critical information or resources? what if we can't operate without them?)
- conclusion: we can talk more about consensus minus 1

## BREAK TIME! (8 min)

### Cleaning proposals

- i'd love to see folks submit proposals!
- we shouldn't solicit proposals from WGs, we can synthesize ideas in the spokescouncil meeting and produce a proposal
  - this would be easy for WGs to participate in
- Andrew tried a cleaning party, no one showed up :(
- The space is overwhelming in how dirty and disorganized it is. The space could collapse, the space could be unusable. Huge liability. If someone gets hurt, we're screwed.
- alternative path of collaboration: having clearly labeled spots for cleaning. make it obvious how to clean. physical infrastructure for cleaning.
- ask working groups: what parts of woodbine do you touch on a regular basis? what can you do to help clean?
  - it would be useful to gather this information beforehand and share it with folks at the Spokescouncil meeting
- what if people had an open-ended discussion with the topic "cleaning at woodbine"?
- maybe combine these - we want to practice proposal process as well. we can have open ended chat, followed by proposal discussion
- i like the idea of each group getting to share their own idea and also hearing what other groups say
- the space has limitations. you can hang a broom on any given wall, probably. but there are serious physical infrastructure problems at woodbine that many people aren't aware of. if we want to do a big physical reorg of the space, we'd need some education from folks who are the most familiar with the space

- we can lead by example by submitting and deciding proposals, in the open, in front of Spokes
- synthesis: at the meeting, a prompt (offered ahead of time), that WGs can think about beforehand about cleaning. WGs respond to prompt, then general discussion, then proposals, then time for Spokes to caucus and talk about amendments to their own proposals, then a synth proposal can be put together in real time in the meeting, or offline before the next meeting
- beforehand, we can ask for ideas from WGs. then during the spokescouncil meeting
- what if we have an open ended discussion about cleanliness?
- i love open ended convos, but i think we need structure! let's do spokes from the start
- there are physical structural issues that will impede cleaning
- how does caucusing with a WG work in a fishbowl meeting? what about the people who aren't present at the meeting?
  - maybe we shouldn't make decisions at the meeting, since all relevant WG people might not be there
- i think that a closed spokescouncil meeting would be good. the whole idea is that the spokesperson is representative of the group. everyone else at the WGs will be able to see what's in the notes.
- initial reason for fishbowl was that there's not a ton of trust built up
- recap of fishbowl format
- fishbowl makes it easier for folks to learn how the process works, step forward into the Spoke and notetaker role in the future, hold Spokes accountable for whether notes diverge from what happened
- cleaning project (20 min)
  - flesh out the plan for soliciting [cleaning project proposals](#)

## agenda for first spokescouncil meeting (20 min)

- refine & vote on [proposed first agenda](#)
- should we have an open proposal submission process?
- is there any one person who understands the full extent of problems in the space? probably not.
  - people would need a lot of information to make a reasonable proposal about fixing structural issues
- if WGs are free to bring proposals, they will learn about power structures at Woodbine. for instance "i want a pony", someone will then learn that Finance has a say in that and has blocking concerns.
- online and in-person fora where proposals can be posted async at any time
- maybe we start with cleaning proposals, then grow into other proposals

- discussions we've had with other people about the effort to build a spokescounsel
- we could let anyone submit proposals, then let WGs decide which proposals are their most favorite proposals, then proceed thru discussing prioritized proposals in priority order
  - dot vote on proposals in the meeting
- agree, we should keep it simple.
- could we encourage people to submit proposals, show them off at the first Spokes, then say that at the next spokes that we're going to prioritize proposals in that order
- step back: what is the point of the first meeting? consciousness raising, getting excited. practicing proposals in a technical sense. vibing with each other, social time. make people want to come to the next one!
- Assigning action items and Next meeting agenda (20 min)
  - Frankie to write a proposal about prioritizing proposals

## follow up on outreach

- Andrew has been doing outreach! Working with Food Fight + Bikes for Migrants. However we want to go about this, as long as we're not dicks, people will receive us warmly.
- we need to prioritize nailing down a page that explains what Spokes is
- Proposal on how to do outreach exists [here](#)

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Revision #3

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