

Mefi Global BIPOC Advisory Board

Meeting 17 Minutes

Jun 27, 2023

7AM PST - 9:00 AM (PST) 120 mins.

Roll call: Brainwane, Majick, Loup, Aielen, Hurdy Gurdy Girl, Travelingthyme

1. Previous minutes
 - a. All previous minutes have been approved and are now posted on MetaTalk. The board has no outstanding minutes to approve currently.
2. Action items from past meetings
 - a. Reaching out to all previous BIPOC meeting participants that are still owed honoraria but not currently on the board, to obtain their payment information. (*followup to Meeting #16*): Thyme and Loup
 - i. Done. Thyme now has everyone's contact information on a spreadsheet. Thyme will be connecting with Loup about finalizing any remaining outstanding payments.
 - ii. Loup has sent payments for all but 2 people. Loup will finalize remaining outstanding payments in the next couple days this week.
 1. Action: Loup will send all remaining outstanding payments owed, and confirm with each payee that all payments owed have been received.
 - b. Removing the old calendar item for recurring meetings on Saturdays (*followup to Meeting #16*): Thyme
 - i. Done. Loup did this.
 - c. Editing calendar item for the recurring meeting to include the Zoom link (*followup to Meeting #16*): Thyme
 - i. Done. Thyme did this immediately during the meeting.
 - d. Sharing moderation onboarding documents with the BIPOC Board (*followup from Meeting #11 & Meeting #16*):
 - i. Loup reports that some new language has been added to the FAQ re usernames. Loup and Brandon Blatcher will be doing a final review of the moderator onboarding document they have developed on Thursday of this week (29 June). Loup will be able to share this document with the board on Thursday of this week.
 1. Action: Loup will share this moderator onboarding document with the board on Thursday, June 29th, through email.
 - e. Loup to schedule time with Jessamyn on the week of May 22 for Loup to discuss with Jessamyn the prioritization of hiring for the tech and admin roles, to see when and how they would like to proceed. Loup to have an update on this no later than Friday this same week, and email the board this update (*followup to Meeting #16*): Loup
 - i. Loup did not send the board any email regarding this item. Brainwane asks why this was not done. Loup gives some reasons:
 1. Tech role: Loup was waiting to hear back from frimble re tech role. Loup has just recently received a shortlist of freelancers from Frimble as of Friday last week, and Loup will be reaching out to this shortlist of

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freelancers. Frimble has not been very available, so Loup did not want to give the board incomplete information.

- a. Brainwane notes that when you tell people that you're going to give them something at a particular date and then you don't, and you're silent, then people basically think that you're just not doing it at all. Whereas, if you let people know "Hey, I know I said I was going to get you this today; here's what's up..." then people know that you're working on it. Loup affirms that this makes sense.
2. Admin role: Loup says the job description changed. Loup is waiting for the last changes because what they mostly want to focus on now is things like managing payments. Loup says this is their second biggest priority after changes to content policy, microaggressions, site guidelines. After these top priority tasks are resolved, Loup will finish revisions to and post the admin job description onsite.
 - a. Brainwane asks whether Loup could share what they currently have re the admin job description. Brainwane clarifies that brainwane is not trying to be a gatekeeper, and it's not that brainwane wants the board to have a revision pass on the document because the board needs to approve it - it's not like that. It's just that Loup/the admin need help making this thing they want it to be and have empirically demonstrated that they have a lot of trouble getting this thing done. Brainwane is itching to just help them finish it.
 - b. Loup responds that they understand. Loup says the reason why this admin role has not been prioritized is because there have been other things that Loup has been requested to prioritize over this admin role hiring.
 - c. Brainwane asks whether the board should just be talking directly to Jessamyn instead of Loup about this?
 - d. Majick feels that the board would be walking the line between being an advisory board and helping the organization, and taking over becoming Steering Committee 2.0 if the board does this. Brainwane and aielen agree.
 - e. aielen says this is kind of what happened to the Steering Committee. It was sort of like "why is this not getting done?" and then "urgh, we'll have to do this..." and then getting into the thick of things, and ending up starting to do more and more.
 - f. The board agrees it is important for the board to keep a boundary between an advisory role and doing labor.
 - g. aielen suggests just asking for a date this action item can be done by, so that we at least have a date/timeline for the job posting

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have felt this policy has been unevenly applied (e.g. US-centric/non-POC content tending to be given more leeway in being allowed to stay up / allowing for time to revise/add a non-paywalled link etc). Especially in this case, the user's linked article was not paywalled for the user's and aielen's region of the world, and so the user could not know that it was paywalled in the US when they posted the link.

But also another key thing was that Taz spoke to the user more recently after the initial conversation (that originally stated the paywall policy as the reason for deletion), saying: it **is** because it wasn't a US-centric post that it was deleted. Over email, Taz said to the user: "I can understand why this feels unsatisfying! Because, in reality, it **IS** because it wasn't a US-centric post that it was deleted -- but only because I was afraid it was going to be hijacked to be about US stuff, and it already had been! I'm sorry that this is the case. Aside from more mod time, which we really cannot afford atm, I don't know how to have solved that problem, but I am truly sorry." Aielen says the implication in this more recent communication is sort of like saying to the user "because your post is about non-US stuff, that's why it was kind of singled out or given more priority to be deleted". This confused the user, and aielen was also confused when this later communication from Taz was forwarded to them, because this is not what aielen and the board originally understood to be the official policy. This is why aielen circled back to the board and moderators and asked for clarification on this point.

- iv. Loup says that Loup has had a one on one discussion with Taz about the thread after seeing Taz's reason for deletion of the post. If there is a problem like that we can only address that within the thread, and if that implies moderation that's not a problem and they are here for that. Loup can understand how from the communication with the user, the user did not get the information, however that was addressed prior even to "this email", addressed directly with Taz and the mods (about the reasoning there). What Loup thinks has been happening specifically with Taz just to give some context is: how the mods proceed with moderation has changed a lot over time, and Taz is pretty much the only one who has been modding this long, and is the most senior moderator the mod team has at this point. But several of the decisions have been very contextual, and now the moderation team is moving towards a "yes/no" type of approach (i.e. "is that a policy we have written, yes or no") and that has generated some friction over the past. This is part of a larger discussion Loup has had with Taz over a meeting they have had one-on-one.
- v. Thyme says that that portion of what was said on Taz's end is also very confusing to Thyme. Thyme says this is not a policy or a thing that the moderators do when it comes to posts that are non-US centric, so this seemed odd to Thyme - perhaps a case of an impulsive decision where Taz panicked a little bit and saw the nature of the post and was like "oh my god, this is what's going to happen" and kind of reacted in that way. But Thyme also very much wants to say that's not how we do things.

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- vi. HGG says based on her understanding, she doesn't attribute malice but rather ignorance as the cause. Training in BIPOC issues would have helped the moderator see that their gut reaction to try to prevent something that isn't ideal (i.e. having a thread hijacked to be about a totally different topic, particularly a non-US BIPOC poster's thread) actually resulted in an outcome which was also not good (i.e. the non-US BIPOC poster having their thread deleted altogether), which also contributed to the frustrations felt by BIPOC folks.
- vii. Discussion of different moderation styles, e.g., "head off bad behavior before it happens" versus a moderation style that responds to issues when they happen:
 - 1. Loup thinks there is a difference in moderation style that comes from moderators that have been around for different lengths of time. There is a lot of anxiety in how moderation happens (e.g. "Oh, this can happen, so I want to prevent it"). While a moderator's heart can be in the right place, now that the moderation team has moved to more clearly-outlined/restricted policies, the moderation team needs to stick to that. And if something happens, what the moderation team tries to do now is act in direct response rather than proactively. (The latter approach might potentially open up other problems while not actually being part of the official policy.)
 - 2. Majick says their takeaway from Taz's statement that was provided was an old-school Metafilter approach of trying to head off bad behavior, which is not super relevant to what we are trying to accomplish here. A "shoot first" approach, even with non-malicious intent (as was the case here), is not helpful. Obviously the site has been a lot harder to moderate in the past; there has been a lot more toxicity and majick empathizes with Taz: Taz has seen a lot of shit over the years, and majick understands Taz wants to avoid a trainwreck of people derailing all over the place. But also - we don't help make the site different from that without helping make the site different from that. Majick thinks that kind of moderation style difference doesn't necessarily help us evolve, and it's good to call it out - just making it clear that we do need to move past it.
 - 3. Loup says they reviewed the specifics of what is written in the FAQs with Taz. They have realized there are some things that are not included, that should be clear; understanding that if they are not clear to site members, then how can they expect site members to do/follow them. This review has been a process that is going very well. Now the moderation team has more of a process where if the moderator doesn't have a set policy they are acting upon, then what the moderator does is have an open conversation about how to proceed. This has made it so that moderation over the past 4 months has been a lot more homogeneous in terms of how the moderation team leaves notes, how they proceed when they delete things, and what actions they take. This was a first step,

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and this issue has opened up a lot of discussion about how the moderation team refines moderation processes.

- viii. Aielen asks the mods some questions for clarification, based on the user's most recent communication/confusion:
1. Is there actually a bias (implicit, or explicit) against non-US centric posts when making deletion/moderation decisions? Because this is what Taz told the user explicitly. If what Taz said was actually untrue and more of a panicking, spur-of-the-moment kind of response to the user that was maybe not very well thought-out and perhaps did not actually reflect the official policy, then shouldn't this be clarified to the user?
 - a. Brainwane asks: bias can mean something like a prejudice in someone's head (personal/individual), or an institutional tendency (which is not necessarily emergent from any individual person being prejudiced); both these types of bias can be explicit and implicit; which type of bias does aielen mean?
 - b. Aielen clarifies that firstly they are interested in explicit, institutional bias, because this is what Taz suggested to the user (*"Because, in reality, it IS because it wasn't a US-centric post that it was deleted" ... "Aside from more mod time, which we really cannot afford atm, I don't know how to have solved that problem.."*). Aielen's impression is that Taz kind of makes it sound like Taz is representing the mod team and the admin when Taz is saying that. It sounds like Taz is making a statement saying sorry, right now we (the mods) have to deprioritize non-US-centric posts when we deal with them because we don't have enough mod time. (Or at least this is the impression Aielen is getting.) Aielen feels Taz is coming across as presenting this as an institutional stance. Aielen wants to know if this is actually an explicit institutional stance, and if it isn't, then what is the actual institutional stance?
 - c. Loup says this is part of a larger conversation. Loup says that proceeding from the anxiety of what could happen is one of the things they have been working to avoid. It's common historically that MeFites hijack a non-US post to be about the US (e.g. commenters mentioning Trump in a thread about a terrible politician that is not actually Trump). Proceeding from that anxiety, moderators in the past (that has also happened in this specific case) have tried to halt that before it happens, taking the approach of "Before this blows up, let's stop right here." Loup cites a recent example demonstrating the reverse approach: the threads about the Titan submersible. For those threads, mods stepped in after the fact of both threads going south, instead of proactively predicting bad behavior. We can't be "Minority

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Report” - saying “this will go wrong”. Loup believes the way Taz framed things in the emails wasn’t necessarily what Taz was trying to say. Loup thinks that it was more like Taz knew from experience what was going to go wrong, and this affected her decisionmaking - which Loup thinks is not what we should do anymore.

- d. Thyme agrees. Thyme thinks that Taz was probably not articulating where her headspace actually was. Thyme also could have easily seen that thread going off the rails with the paywall and then Taz logging off for duty that night. Thyme thinks this is where Taz’s anxiety came from: like “okay now a bunch of people are going to say a bunch of things and I’m going to be off duty and none of this is going to be managed”.
- e. Brainwane says she thinks what happened here is that a mod made a prediction based on the mod’s experience, that ended up being wrong.
- f. Aielen notes that this was what the mod said later on but not initially, which was also confusing. Reading the whole communication going back and forth between the mod and the user, it felt like the mod kept on offering up different reasons.
- g. Brainwane says the mod changed their own understanding, which happens to Brainwane too. Brainwane thinks that when it comes to this kind of thing (i.e. someone making a decision that has a bunch of factors behind it), it is normal, and not evidence of someone changing their story in a negative way for someone to explain with more factors when they have more time to explain things.
- h. Aielen says the deletion reason given at first was unequivocally just that it was about the paywall. Then when the user questioned more, the reason given instead was that it was a non-US-centric post and the moderation staff was afraid it would be derailed by US-centric commenters. Aielen says the thread was deleted very fast, less than half an hour after it was posted, and just as a non-paywalled link was to be posted.
- i. Brainwane says it is normal that threads can be deleted this quickly.
- j. Aielen believes more sensitivity could have been applied, given the content and given the poster.
- k. Brainwane asks whether aielen wants to go back in time and change this, or whether aielen wants to talk about what is going to happen in the future.
- l. Aielen clarifies they are interested in how the mod team is processing and analyzing what happened, because how you look

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at the past determines how you move forward in the future as well. That is why aielen is trying to figure out: what is the actual mod stance, and has this been clarified with the user?

m. Brainwane says it sounds like we know what the mod stance is.

n. Aielen says they are not sure, and seeks clarification, asking: Is there an explicit institutional bias? Is non-US content being de-prioritized still, or is this no longer the case?

i. Loup clarifies that non-US content was never deprioritized as a matter of institutional policy.

1. Loup shares a deleted derail comment that came up 3rd in the thread - part of the data Taz used to make the “delete this whole thread” determination.

ii. Thyme adds that it is not necessarily deprioritization. Yes, institutionally and historically in the way these threads have been moderated, the gut reaction and the reflex is to do a not-good thing, something that’s actually proving to be harmful and not helpful in addressing issues of BIPOC-related posts. In terms of forward, Thyme thinks it would be helpful to have more of a conversation with mods about this (i.e. mod behavior that has disproportionate effects on BIPOC users/topics). Thyme would be very open to this and thinks it would be very helpful in this situation - to re-discuss, re-calibrate and remind.

iii. HGG says from this situation you can see now as moderators looking back, that the historical way of dealing with things (cutting things off before they become a problem) has been problematic. Institutionally, the moderators (and therefore the site) have realized that this is not a good approach, because it often results in people’s voices getting cut off. It’s not intentional, but we can see that it’s happened time and again, and so HGG thinks there should be an acknowledgement of that to the user (HGG’s understanding is that the user hasn’t received such an acknowledgement). HGG finds that sometimes it’s simplest and most effective if an organization can say: “We messed up, here’s how we messed up, and as a result, we’ve decided that we’re not going to do this anymore. So we’re sorry that we did this to you. It wasn’t intentional, but it wasn’t a good result. We’ll own that, and from this point here’s how we’re going to

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handle things. The previous approach was to head things off by just cutting off discussions that the mods thought were going to go sideways; that's harmful when it seems to disproportionately affect non-US, BIPOC, other marginalized / minority voices, so we've come to recognize that's not a good approach, and we're not going to be doing that anymore in future."

iv. Aielen agrees with HGG, and says that a clarification and acknowledgement from the moderators to the user would be useful to the user. Aielen notes the reason why this is all being rehashed again:

1. We (the board) all thought this had been resolved last year when it was discussed then within the board meeting.
2. How it got brought up again was - after compiling the minutes of our meeting discussions last year, we ran the minutes (documenting our board discussion) by the user late last year. The user then expressed confusion over positions expressed by mods in the meeting minutes that did not seem reflective of what had been directly communicated to the user by the mod they were in contact with, and asked for clarification.

Aielen says it would be great if someone from the mod team could clarify this once and for all with the user, and maybe put together a statement for the BIPOC board as well, so that we all have that on record (this leads to the original second question, as below)

2. Has Taz followed up with the user, if what they said about non-US centric bias was actually untrue and more of a "spur of the moment" reaction?
 - a. As there has been no such follow up with the user, Loup will follow up with the user and cc the board.
 - i. Action: Loup to lead the writing of a statement to share with BIPOC Board and with the user, and to reach out to the user directly. Loup will send the note to the user and cc the Board.

1. Thyme offers to help

g. **Developing a list of requirements/content the BIPOC Board subsite should have (followup from Meeting #16): board members**

- i. **Done. Board members have developed this asynchronously**

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1. Action: Loup to share this highlighted spec with frimble [includes all of this (#1)]:

a. CORE CONTENT: At a minimum, this site/page needs to include:

- i. description of why the board exists
- ii. who is on it currently
- iii. links to all meeting minutes
- iv. how to join if you are so moved

b. DESIRED CONTENT: As a MeFite, I'd want to be able to go to a single page or website to learn what the board is and what it's doing, so I can judge its progress and help out. Therefore I would go there to:

- i. learn & understand the basic facts of what the Board is and why it exists (the text from <https://metatalk.metafilter.com/26210/What-The-MeFi-BIPOC-Board-Does>)
- ii. learn who's on the board currently, and when they joined, and who used to be on it and when they left
- iii. find out when the Board has some current or upcoming initiative (such as a survey, a virtual event, a recruiting drive for new MeFites, a post-a-thon) and indicate that I want to participate
- iv. see links to past initiatives/events and read or watch the results
- v. read (or get links to) documents that the Board has written to share: meeting minutes, major statements, data analysis, and any other notes regarding progress/decisions/policies (such as an individual Board member's MeFi comments that they want to highlight/link to, such as my comment on whether we've moved the needle <https://metatalk.metafilter.com/26293/Policies-on-Trans-Issues-Current-and-Future#1416335>)
- vi. understand what a Board member's responsibilities are and who gets paid, how much, and where that money comes from
- vii. figure out whether I want to join it, and if so, get instructions for doing that
- viii. get instructions for contacting the Board privately (the email address)
- ix. find out how to publicly talk about the Board, e.g., find instructions like "to start a public discussion about the

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Board's work, start a MetaTalk thread with the following tags"

- c. **A HUB TO POINT TO:** As a BIPOC Board member, I want to be able to point to one URL (a particular page or subsite) and know that the reader -- MeFite or not -- will be able to get at all that info easily.
 - d. **WE CAN EDIT IT:** As a BIPOC Board member, I want to be able to edit or add something to that public webpage or subsite without having to wait for frimble or a mod to do the edit for me.
 - i. It was established that the board feels pretty strongly that the ability to edit the content is important. The resulting access control issues are not specified.
 - e. **DOESN'T NEED TO EMBED ZOOM/SURVEYS:** (As a BIPOC Board member, I do NOT particularly desire that this page/site have its own functionality to host virtual events, make/host surveys, etc. I am fine with using other tools to do those things. I do want a reliable hub where people can go to find LINKS to those things.)
 - f. **NOTIFICATIONS/SUBSCRIPTIONS: OPTIONAL??** As a MeFite, I might also like to be able to subscribe to the subsite in some way and get notifications when the Board posts a new event or a new document -- maybe a MeMail or an email, or maybe through RSS/Atom, or maybe through My MeFi on the MetaFilter front page, or some other mechanism.
 - g. **WE COULD MAKE A MOCKUP:** We could consider doing a Notion mockup (or even just using Notion for the short term). It's possible to divide the Notion workspace into a private area and public-facing area. I use simple.ink to generate public-facing URLs for public Notion areas. [Link to Notion mockup redacted.]
3. Slack's Reminder Bot
 - a. To reduce unnecessary board-wide (and guest) pings, Thyme is requested to set up the meeting minutes automated reminder in just the meeting-specific channels in the future, and close down the one that is in #general.
 - i. Action: Thyme to change Reminder Bot setup and shut down Reminder Bot in #general.
 4. Reopening discussion of soliciting/onboarding new members (noting brainwane would like to be replaced by September)
 - a. A spreadsheet of BIPOC/international Mefites was developed earlier this year, when the BIPOC board was hoping to reach out and encourage BIPOC / international self-nominations for the SC elections. Out of the 25 people we list in the spreadsheet, three specific users said a few months ago that they might be interested in joining the

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Steering Council, although not all eventually self-nominated. Brainwane suggests reaching out to these people again to ask if they would like to join the BIPOC board.

- i. Action: aielen and HGG to reach out certain users to ask them whether they are interested in joining the BIPOC Board: to do please by July 11th.
 1. Aielen: reach out to a user
 2. HGG: reach out to two users
 - b. brainwane has pinged [redacted user] (turned it down); please feel free to reuse her email which she forwarded to the BIPOC Board.
 - c. Brainwane asks if there are any other people who weren't in that spreadsheet that we want to specifically reach out to and ask to join the board?
 - i. Majick notes there is a larger problem of discoverability where some BIPOC MeFites don't know that we exist. The board itself is not necessarily well-known among new membership, not necessarily known to be highly/visibly active, or not known to people who only hang out on specific subsites. Folks in the population who might be willing to self-select might not be aware of the board's existence or path to join. We need publicity for the engagement funnel to work and to help people to join the board. (The upcoming subsite should help.)
 1. Action: Board identifies this issue as deserving of a more future discussion, will revisit at a later meeting.
5. Thyme meeting minutes workflow and workload in the context of the new minutes-posting format
- a. The board's recent resolution to post meeting minutes on Metatalk means a lot of additional work/time spent formatting the Metatalk post. Aielen helped Thyme with the formatting for Minutes #15 and #16, but this took hours for both Aielen and Thyme, and this arrangement isn't sustainable on a monthly basis. Thyme mentioned not having the capacity to take on MeTa-minutes formatting by themselves regularly as well. It would be good if we could figure out labor distribution and/or possible tools that could help Thyme, as well as a plan to get the MeTa-minutes done.
 - i. Majick and brainwane say: there are tools that can take that down to seconds. HTML Cleaners for instance.
 1. Action: majick or brainwane to work with Thyme for next MeTa posting, show Thyme the free online tools to make this easier and quicker.
6. Progress on flagging UX improvements
- a. Loup shares that this is also mentioned in the June 21st MetaTalk update <https://metatalk.metafilter.com/26321/MeFi-Site-Update-June-21st>
 - b. Loup says the code was inconsistent across various subsites, which implied a lot of one-off changes; frimble has now refactored and made them consistent, so now it is possible to make site-wide changes and progress from here. In terms of when we can start seeing visible changes, Loup hopes to have this before the next meeting, within the next few weeks. Possible changes: better accessibility (making flag visually bigger), could be an emoji or button.
 - i. Board asks for a date to expect changes by. Loup says July 15. Both Jessamyn and Loup are working to prioritize this with Frimble.

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- c. Majick says: we have for a long time wanted to be engaged with new feature development, giving feedback, proposing features etc. We haven't been in the loop for it yet, because new feature development has not been a thing. Now that this is unblocked with the refactor and we're making a new tech hire - now that work is starting to move, Majick would like to see us have an organizational structure to collaborate on the process. How do we advise/participate in these code changes? How do we participate in the evolution of the site as a codebase?
 - i. Loup says there are two parts to this.
 - 1. One is the governance part (Jessamyn is working through this)
 - 2. The other part is the new tech hire that the site will have. What was budgeted was 15 hours a week for the new hire. Loup says Frimble is now working about 25 hours a week, so together with the new hire this will total about 40 hours a week of tech time. Loup says frimble has already earmarked projects for the new hire to work on specifically when the new hire starts. These are 2-3 projects that have (to date) been taking forever. Starting with these 2-3 projects will allow the new hire to learn how things are done, how the site structure works, and then take it from there. Progress on the new tech hire front will be slow - it will take "MetaFilter" time (which means very slow), but both the governance part and the tech hire part are moving, even if slower than the admin would want.
 - ii. Discussion of goal of moving to a more maintainable platform for MeFi – the site's codebase
 - 1. Loup notes that specifically the flagging UX case has demonstrated how little the admin has had context around how things are set up. Loup initially thought the flagging UX would not take that much time or that many changes, but after frimble walked Loup through it, Loup realized it would take forever if frimble did not get proper assistance. Now the admin has a better understanding of the codebase challenges at hand. It will take time from the point where we start making changes, to where/when the changes show - but it has been moving. We first need to make sure the underlying infrastructure is good/conducive to making changes before changes can be made.
 - 2. Majick says one of the initiatives Majick was hoping to see - and this was also part of the Steering Committee's code working group discussion - was moving towards a more open and maintainable platform so that we could have volunteer participation code-wise, to really help accelerate things. While this seems a longer-term project now, hopefully the experience of a new tech person getting in there will be what it takes to move us towards that path, because it is a good first step.
 - iii. Brainwane suggests interviewing frimble for a "code tour" of new features when they go live, like <https://dw-dev.dreamwidth.org/232709.html> (explanation

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<https://www.harihareswara.net/posts/2011/discovering-an-origin/>). A MetaTalk post of its own, not just within the site update. Maybe with screenshots

1. Action: Loup to bring it up with frimble when the UX changes are ready to go live. Yes it's ok for Loup to put frimble in touch with BIPOC Board members to get education for us!

[HGG unable to stay for the rest of the meeting, leaves the meeting.]

7. Content Review Work (that blocks admin hire) - earlier mentioned in Item #2e)i)2)i)

- a. There's been feedback about two different things:
 - i. The moderation team having policies that the mods know, historically (orally, informally) - but that is not specifically written down
 - ii. The written documents that have been developed, that comes in 3 parts, namely:
 1. Content Policy (https://www.metafilter.com/content_policy.mefi)
 2. Community Guidelines (<https://www.metafilter.com/guidelines.mefi>)
 3. Microaggressions (<https://www.metafilter.com/microaggressions.mefi>)These documents cover more specific things that the mods see happening more on the site. One specific thing to be improved is the coverage of trans issues - it could be more explicit about what kinds of things are not ok and what shouldn't happen on the site. This is something being worked on for the new revised documents (see b., below)
- b. Loup is working on a draft of new revised documents, balancing the competing priorities of detail vs usability: while there's a need to add more stuff, it still can't be a 6-page document that people need to read in order to post on the site.

As soon as Loup has the 1st draft ready, Loup would like to post it on MetaTalk for feedback. One problem of posting directly to MetaTalk is: with so many people voicing their opinions, how do you translate that into useful feedback, useful action for change, and actual policy. To help make this smoother, Loup would like the BIPOC board to be the first set of eyes that highlights and red-lines critical changes that need to go into the first version Loup is drafting.

 - i. Board is happy to take a look, do any redlining, feedback, anything we can do to unblock this.
 - ii. Board suggests Loup show us the draft as it progresses, sending us email updates - and we can help make comments and give feedback.
 1. Loup agrees and says the biggest changes have already been included in the current draft; any remaining changes are not as big and require going back to long thread conversations with site members. (These long thread conversations contained important points of discussion that Loup felt should be included in the new revised policy documents.) Loup anticipates being able to share this draft with both the board and Jessamyn tomorrow (28 June).
 - iii. Action: Loup to share draft of new revised policy documents with the board and Jessamyn tomorrow (28 June)

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- iv. Loup outlines some areas they would especially like the board to help with:
 1. Feedback on any issues they notice that the admin may be missing / not seeing. Particularly: Have you seen things that you think there's an unsaid policy about? Do we do certain things all the time (i.e. patterns of behavior)?
 2. Wording. For example, there is a part of the Guidelines document that Loup is working on, covering behavior where people are not being technically inappropriate per se but still trying to center the conversation around themselves in ways that are not productive. They may present as being technically above board (letter of law vs spirit of the law) but mods can recognize this behavior ("I know what you're doing, and what I need you to do right now is to allow other people to speak and voice their perspective without you jumping in and being like 'no no no this is happening'.") Loup is working to add language that can address this in the policy, and would like feedback on a better way to word this.
 - a. Majick notes there have been all kinds of behaviors that aren't necessarily specific to MetaFilter but have been magnified over the years. It's useful for us to make sure we don't necessarily highlight them but include them in a way that addresses them and works as policy.
 - b. Loup notes the guidelines around this are clear in saying "this is not a set policy that works in a specific way, but rather it's the spirit in which we want you to engage with the site." So far this has worked, but it just has to include some other stuff now.
- v. Brainwane asks: What are the parameters for these documents? (e.g. Length, reading level, whether they can include pictures/screenshots/examples, any vision around how and where these documents are meant to be read/presented, any other key constraints.)
 1. Loup says the 3 documents have an order of hierarchy:
 - a. Content Policy (1st)
(https://www.metafilter.com/content_policy.mefi): Tells you the things you are not supposed to do, describes things that will lead to mod team action.
 - b. Community Guidelines (2nd)
(<https://www.metafilter.com/guidelines.mefi>): Covers more of the spirit of things
 - c. Microaggressions (3rd)
(<https://www.metafilter.com/microaggressions.mefi>): Lays out things that can happen, that the mod team doesn't want to see perpetuated. "These are the things we want you to be aware of, that can happen - and we don't want you to do any of this."
 2. Loup says these documents each have a different purpose. When it comes to the language - there were previously a lot of idioms used; Loup moved

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to simplify the language. But overall policy documentation will retain this 3-document structure moving forward.

Loup says what needs to be done now is synthesizing some of the parts so that more parts can be added, and being more explicit about some aspects like AI and trans issues. So Loup sees the changes to be made as falling into 2 broad categories:

- a. Addressing issues not previously covered in the policy documents based on community feedback
 - b. Coverage of things moderators already do (pre-existing/current implicit/informal moderation approaches) that were not previously explicitly formalized in written policy.
 - i. E.g. the way moderators have been dealing with AI-generated / AI-related content thus far. This is currently mentioned in the FAQ but will be covered in more depth in the revised Content Policy.
3. Brainwane says Loup has not actually answered Brainwane's original question, but notes Loup has given useful information which Brainwane appreciates. We will talk more about Brainwane's original question in the conversation on the drafted document itself.
8. Checking about Slack plan
- a. Aielen asks: How many members are currently on the BIPOC board's Slack plan (who are we paying for at the moment)? Who are the guests? Hope we are not paying for all the 20+ people listed as members in the #general channel, most of which are actually supposed to be guests (e.g. SC members, non-BIPOC staff). Can we remove intended guests / non-BIPOC-board members from the #general channel and ensure guests are in the appropriate channels so MetaFilter is not making any unnecessary payments.
- [Loup unable to stay for the rest of the meeting, leaves the meeting.]
- b. Board decides to discuss this asynchronously on Slack due to time constraints.
 - i. Action: Loup and Thyme to discuss this asynchronously with board members over Slack, check Slack plan payments and sort out members vs guests on the board's Slack workspace.
9. User-reported issues around MeMail harassment and moderation of POC content in AskMe
- a. Aielen shares document relaying some details and correspondence from user, noting user has most recently suggested chatting with the board in realtime about these issues.
 - b. Action: Board to read document by July 25th meeting, discussing in Slack if necessary
 - c. Action: aielen to ask user (via MeMail) if they would like to join the July board meeting and have board listen to them
10. Prioritizing future board work (e.g. user survey, MetaTalks review and analyses, content posting initiatives, data gathering, outreach, events)

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- a. Brainwane: With the work that Aielen has done related to DEI and BIPOC matters, it is important for the group to detail what is important for the board to accomplish? (choosing priorities)
- b. Majick:
 - i. There is the governance piece (the organization of MeFi as a whole): being “clipboard people” to keep the organization on track to do what we (the board, our mandate) want it to be doing. Keeping leadership accountable, both for policy as well as individual actions.
 - ii. Community engagement: this isn’t necessarily just at a public events level but also for example holding spaces for individual BIPOC members to speak to us; direct interactions with BIPOC MeFites.
 - iii. Majick’s take on priorities for the board, in summary: governance and advisement, and leaving space for direct community engagement in some way, whether that’s at an individual or group level. These 2 things are the highest priority for the board in Majick’s opinion. Whether individual acts fall into either or both of those categories, everything else should land under those initiatives.
- c. Aielen:
 - i. Aielen’s take on priorities for the board: data gathering, outreach and interfacing with community (on both a public, community-as-a-whole level (e.g. site content/events initiatives) and a more private/individual level (e.g. holding space for individual MeFites, ombuds role)). Policy efforts can be informed by data gathering, research and community feedback from interfacing.
- d. Brainwane: suggestion we deprioritize events as something BIPOC Board tries to think about on a volunteer level, and first priority should be measuring current baseline re our goals assessing where we are
 - i. Events in particular can be pretty inadequate for user retention (see example of how Wikipedia edit-a-thons https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:How_to_run_an_edit-a-thon are easy-ish to run but do not actually lead to contributor retention https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Learning_and_Evaluation/Evaluation_reports/2013/Edit-a-thons)
 - ii. How do we know we are making a difference? Do we know whether the number of BIPOC readers, posters, lurkers has increased? What about the proportion of commenters? Needing a baseline understanding quantitatively! We should prioritize gathering data, figuring out if we need a user survey. Otherwise we might concentrate on things that don’t actually make a difference. That’s why Brainwane thinks this is more important, and why we should prioritize this as a board for things that we do, even over the governance piece, even over the community engagement piece. Otherwise we don’t even know whether these things are going to make a difference at all.
 1. Some resources to check out can include Wikimedia’s example metrics https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Learning_and_Evaluation/Report – see

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https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Learning_and_Evaluation/Introduction
for a basic introduction to this kind of thinking

- iii. Majick agrees that having a metric and knowing what the needle is, is useful. But we don't necessarily want to drive only the needle. But Majick agrees with Brainwane. "What is the site shittiness quotient, and how do we drive it down" - that ultimately is the point. The board came into existence because of a shittiness. And we now recognize that there are a bunch of other things we want to drive change for, to dial the shittiness back and dial other things up. How do we measure that in some way that's useful, that isn't just watching one metric go up and down but that at least gives us a sense of what's changing. How do we measure change at a holistic level? We do want measurement there. Because if nothing else, we need to know what we're doing.
- iv. Aielen: Approach doesn't necessarily need to be "either/or" in the sense that one initiative/project can have and accomplish multiple goals/targets. E.g. content posting initiative, BIPOC MeFite roundtable session - can incorporate data gathering and surveying.
- v. Brainwane emphasizes the need for a baseline understanding of the data we have about the nature of posts in relation to BIPOC matters (what threads are BIPOC-specific).
 - 1. Aielen agrees that baseline data gathering should be prioritized, looking at existing data available.
 - 2. Discussion of what data already exists and is accessible, how to analyze it, what tools need to be developed. (Related item on original agenda for today's meeting: Item #11 "Data gathering for existing data" – will be discussed in more detail at later meeting)
 - a. Aielen notes we already have some metrics in Matomo. The MetaFilter Infodump (<https://stuff.metafilter.com/infodump/>) is also a resource we can use. MeFites have already made some existing tools for MetaFilter data analysis such as <http://infodumpster.org/>. There is a page on the wiki with a more comprehensive list of existing tools (<https://mefiwiki.com/wiki/Infodump>).
 - b. Majick adds that there are big data dumps and there is Matomo, but there doesn't seem to be an existing codebase to cross-reference and gnaw on the data as much as there is a lot of raw data. Raw data alone is not a conclusion, so we still need to do the analysis piece, and that's the heavy lifting.
- e. Majick notes we really do need to circle back on the "what is the needle?" question as a priority for the next meeting's agenda. If we want to reset priorities and align everything towards doing things going forward particularly with potential changes in board make-up here, it's all the more reason to make sure we have a clear idea of what we're measuring and what we want to do with it.

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- i. Action: Thyme to share these discussion notes with HGG (who had to leave this meeting early) and ask for her opinion on: what is “the needle” and what would it mean to move it? How could we measure it?
HGG will share their thoughts that will be included in this meeting’s minutes for completeness.
HGG’s thoughts after listening to the recording:
 1. What is “the needle”? My *feeling* is that the site has improved in reducing microaggressions in discussions and in moderation. However, as mentioned above, it’s difficult to actually measure change unless we have data on BIPOC engagement. We know there are still systemic issues and individual members who have had poor experiences lately. A basic survey of current users willing to self identify as BIPOC and some questions about their site experiences (negative/positive) could be a simple start. (Recognizing that these things are usually not that simple and do take time.) So in that vein, below are 3 priorities but I don’t think any one is more important than the other. I think they need to happen concurrently.
 - a. BIPOC board priority: data gathering and analysis on BIPOC engagement
 - b. Priority: to provide feedback on institutional changes (proposed, underway, completed) with a BIPOC lens (using the info from the data gathering and analysis)
 - c. Priority: to act as ombudsperson for BIPOC folks who have a grievance or issue they’d like to raise with site management and would like support with

End of Meeting. Items below will be revisited at our next meeting.

1. Publicizing the board, solving the larger issue of discoverability that is tied to outreach
2. Prioritizing future board work, answering the question “what is the needle?”
3. Frimble’s progress on a tool for viewing mod notes in threads
4. Data gathering for existing data
5. Developments with MeFi Events