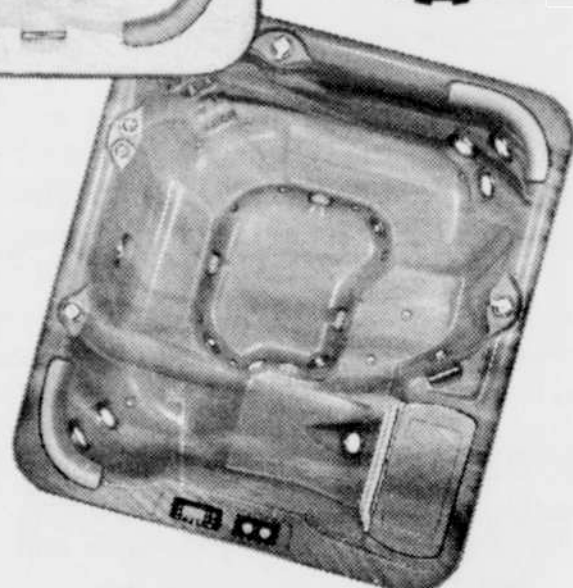
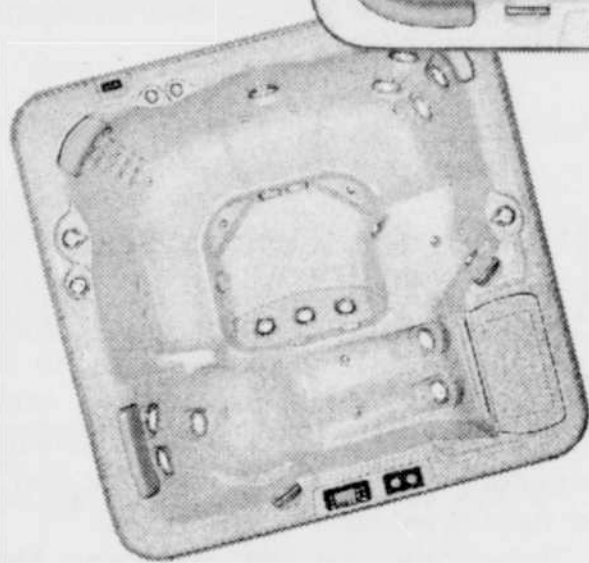


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NORTHWESTnews

THE WAITING GAME

Continued from Page 1

Gary Coleman said he has attended 10 board meetings and has been asked to leave seven times. "I'd like open board meetings," he said.

Vice chair Carmella Ettinger said she tries very hard to adhere to the bylaws but that she doesn't think all meetings should be accessible to the general public. In fact, she admitted she has asked Coleman to leave the meetings several times.

Ettinger said everyone should not know some information—particularly about finances and people. She said most meetings are open and that the public can know about most discussions.

It was Ettinger who called to close the June 29 meeting and asked non-board members and Just Out staff to leave because of pending board elections.

MacAuslan subsequently was voted off the board. She later claimed that she was removed illegally and that she didn't receive due process. Swan similarly was voted off the board earlier in June, before the Pride 2000 event. Both women and many of their supporters who attended the community meeting think the board didn't follow bylaws.

"The board doesn't follow 501(c)3 guidelines," Swan alleged at the meeting. She also insisted "financial guidelines and procedures were not followed this year."

Ettinger said she would be happy to speak privately to anyone who has concerns or problems with the board. She didn't see the community meeting as a place to resolve these issues.

But that statement made Carla McFarland nervous. She said she's worked with nonprofit boards for 30 years and doesn't think this is the way to handle dissent.

"I'm concerned with board members willing to speak to individual community members, privately," McFarland said. She thinks communication needs to be out in the open at this point.

An open letter was sent to Pride Northwest's board after MacAuslan's ousting, outlining a litany of complaints and demands. The 42 authors of the letter offered the board an Aug. 15 deadline to enact necessary changes "to place themselves back in compliance" with Pride Northwest's bylaws and values statement, 501(c)3 nonprofit code and Internal Revenue Service code. The group promises it will forward its grievances to the secretary of state for an investigation if the board fails to act.

But Sardo is against turning to the government to resolve the issue and thinks doing so "is futile and destructive to the gay rights movement." Community organizing is the solution, she says.

The letter's circulation was accompanied by an aggressive e-mail campaign to draw community members to the meeting. Apparently, the campaign worked. Almost 70 people showed up to participate.

Some expressed a desire to hear from board members and to hear "some vested resolution," as one speaker said.

Guajardo, who made her best attempt to keep the meeting under control, blocked such attempts by audience members to take over and vent their grievances.

"All organizations have problems," she said. What is important, Guajardo added, is the strategy and the spirit in which the problems are taken on.

But many who attended grew weary of the constant constraints put on the meeting's format. In response, Pride Northwest's secretary, Michael Kennedy, said there might have been a misunderstanding—Just Out didn't report what the board intended the meeting to cover, he said. Other board members also were surprised about the audience's expectation of an open forum.

But at Pride Northwest's June meeting, board members announced that concerns about the board and this year's event could be raised at an



Participants at the community meeting gathered in small work groups to discuss changes to future pride events

In the end, some participants were met with applause when they demanded the board agree to reconvene with the public to hear concerns and to answer questions. Some wanted to meet with the Pride Northwest board within two weeks.

upcoming community meeting before closing that meeting to the public. Later, Just Out received confirmation from Pride Northwest about a July 13 community meeting.

In the end, some participants were met with applause when they demanded the board agree to reconvene with the public to hear concerns and to answer questions. Some wanted to meet with the Pride Northwest board within two weeks.

However, board members said they couldn't respond to the community's demand for an additional meeting without convening at a later date to consider the request.

But Jack Nelson, Pride Northwest's chair, agreed the board would consider the request and send a letter to Just Out by Aug. 4.

MacAuslan was disappointed she isn't back on the board. However, she vowed to return in three weeks to continue her fight.

Phil Marsh had concerns, too. But at the night's end, he participated in a request to mention something positive about Pride 2000. He said he thought the parade was fabulous.

Earlier, Guajardo asked what people had heard others saying about Pride 2000.

"One big family," someone exclaimed.

■ JONATHAN KIPP is a Just Out staff reporter who can be reached at jkipp@teleport.com.

PHOTO BY MARTY DAVIS