This statement comes from seeing their awful and anti-Black conduct, and our own experience with them.

We had been intending on putting a statement out earlier but our garden and community work has kept us busy.

After seeing their attack on a community member we returned to this statement with urgency.

Halifax Mutual Aid Meals has engaged with us in ways that have been scary to see with someone associated with 'community service'.

We had engaged (individually) with this person(s) after reading their dehumanizing and paternal way they were engaging with the houseless community. After some labor from us, they finally changed their wording and name after we gently called them in to reconsider the ways they were framing their 'offerings'.

Things seemed to go well until they released a statement that is counter to ALL the ways we have learned and been taught to show up for one another. Asking for bank statements, policing what people can and cannot buy and refusing to think beyond 'other people do this so I should too'.

This is a dangerous rhetoric that sometimes finds itself in community spaces especially when people refuse to look beyond the charity and nonprofit way of working with different communities.

We'll take this time to engage with a topic that @IslandObsidian highlights in our mutual aid zine around the idea of the 'charity' model and debunk some myths about basic community work ideas that we can work through as they come up. These definitions are pulled from Dean Spade's Mutual Aid book directly but are engaged with in our zine as well

Charities: "Set conditions for getting help— recipients have to fill out onerous paperwork; be sober; have a certain family status; have a certain immigration status; not have outstanding warrants, certain convictions etc…; offers "help" to the "underprivileged"; absent of an awareness or strategy for transforming the conditions that produced injustice; embraces paternalism, rescue fantasies, and saviorism…; imposes eligibility criteria for services that divide people into "deserving" and "undeserving" recipients"

Despite our understanding that this was an outdated and dehumanizing way to frame being in community with one another, these are some of the ways Halifax Mutual Aid Meals has engaged with the communities we are in/in solidarity with.

If you also agree to move away from this framework, we would strongly suggest you reconsider your solidarity with Halifax Mutual Aid Meals.

Despite the time taken to educate and softly call in Halifax Mutual Aid Meals, they have been engaging with this harmful and dangerous approach to 'community' work.

We are not in any way affiliated and refuse to engage anymore with this way of thinking.

Trust can, and has, been built without creating a power dynamic and engaging with outdated and dangerous rhetoric.

Here are a few things that stood out from our conversations (though there's sooo much to unpack):

1. **"Why should I send/forward funds to this person? They're just going to spend it on drugs or alcohol!"**

Everyone underestimates how hostile sleeping outside or inadequate housing takes a toll on sleep and safety. If people choose to consume anything to ease the stress/pain and/or navigate this capitalistic hellscape, then all we can and should do is make things as safe as possible for each other.

We do not villainize people who use drugs at CGK!

It's important to note that this city has NO adequate or effective way to help folks who do drugs or drink alcohol when they no longer want to consume them.

Forcing people to disclose personal information (from a random person on the internet mind you) is so entitled and paternal.

Many of us know that going 'cold turkey' can lead to death especially in the case of alcohol.

Who are you to create such hostile ways of giving aid?!

2. **"This person has asked for help and has been helped before! They shouldn't get any more from me/we!"**

Whether someone discloses they have received help or not is none of our business. To assume it is out of deception is more of a reflection of you than them and even if they chose not to tell you, that is likely motivated by them needing the extra help.

3. **“We’ve done this before/other people do this!”**

Many groups and nonprofits who engage with this charity method are choosing to intentionally ignore the heaps of data and conversations that have been pushing for a better vision of being in community with one another. To choose comfort over human dignity is a choice. A bad choice yes, but still a choice.

The dehumanizing way Halifax Mutual Aid Meals has acted with this idea is so anti-community it was appalling to read!

When confronted about this they asked for their $5 donated to a mutual aid @nailahmoonkjipuktuk was hosting back. And we gave it back. We won’t take money that's so conditional it's anti-human.

TLDR: Halifax Mutual Aid Meals is trash, engages in anti-Blackness, and has been engaged with multiple times to call them in. They are clearly unwilling to implement any of that feedback in a good way.