

Minutes of the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held November 17-18, 2008 in the Lady Hamilton Ballroom, Days Hotel and Conference Centre, Toronto Airport East, 1677 Wilson Avenue, Toronto, Ontario.

DAY 1, NOVEMBER 17, 2008

PCMNO MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gary Lipinski, President
France Picotte, Chair
Sharon McBride, Vice Chair
Tim Pile, Secretary Treasurer
Senator Gerry Bedford
Councilor Cameron Burgess, Region 2
Councilor Charlie Fife, Region 8
Senator Reta Gordon
Councilor Marcel Lafrance, Region 3

Senator Joseph Poitras
Councilor Peter Rivers, Region 9
Councilor Maurice Sarrazin, Region 5
Councilor Pauline Saulnier, Region 7
Councilor Theresa Stenlund, Region 1
Councilor Anita Tucker, Post Secondary Representative
Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington
Councilor Joanne Wass, Region 6

PREPARATION OF MINUTES:

Vivian Guthrie, Raincoast Ventures Ltd.

OPENING CEREMONIES – NOVEMBER 17, 2008

PROCESSION AND FLAG RAISING

The flags of Louis Riel, Métis Nation Hunting Colours, Métis Nation, Province of Ontario, and Canada were marched into the assembly room and posted. Fiddler Richard Geroux accompanied by Aline Geroux on guitar led the Grand Entry of dignitaries.

CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING PRAYER

Chair Picotte called the 15th Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) to order at 9:14 a.m. Senator Reta Gordon offered an Opening Prayer.

WELCOMING REMARKS BY CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Chair Picotte welcomed delegates to the 15th AGA of the MNO and recognized the long trip people had made to be part of the growth of the nation. She appreciated the positive attitude that delegates brought with them to the AGA and looked forward to the successful completion of business.

Vice Chair McBride reflected on the emotions stirred by the Grand Entry. She congratulated and welcomed newly elected Senators: Gerry Bedford, Senator Reta Gordon, Senator Joseph Poitras, Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington); and reported the results of the elections to the Women's Secretariat: Bonnie Beaulieu, Northern Representative; Shirley Lynn Pantuso, Eastern Representative; Mrs. Pearl Gabona, Southern Representative; and, Alvina Cimon, Western Representative.

WELCOME FROM DIGNITARIES

Grand Chief Randall Phillips, Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians

Grand Chief Phillips brought greetings from the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians noting the enormous challenge to get the attention and support of the provincial government. Recognition and voice were common issues shared by MNO and the Association, which needed to be addressed with all government levels. Separate issues meant separate tables and separate motions. It was time that governments realized that it was not a 'one basket fits all' situation and that there was a need to focus on the differences in the multi-faced family of the indigenous peoples. There remained, however, an opportunity for a diverse population to work together in common areas. Grand Chief Phillips wished the MNO well with its agenda, not only for the AGA but also for the year.

Ontario Regional Chief Angus Toulouse

Ontario Regional Chief Toulouse greeted the AGA, and noted the heroism exemplified by those present to celebrate the Framework Agreement. He acknowledged that the AGA was meeting on the Mississauga traditional territory and trusted that through consultation and accommodation and with treaties in place, all would benefit from joint opportunities. Congratulations were offered to the MNO and to the province for finding a place of connection wherein all parties could benefit from relationship building. Appreciation was expressed for political efforts to build a better collaboration between First Nations and Métis, with note of the Regional Chief's interest in Nation-to-Nation discussions.

Minister Chuck Strahl, Federal Interlocutor

Secretary-Treasurer Pile read aloud a statement from the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-status Indians, in which the Minister recognized the strong leadership of the MNO. The Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada were working together with President Lipinski and his officials on an economic development strategy, a consultation and accommodation strategy, and on the MNO Registry. The Minister wished the MNO AGA well in its strategic planning endeavours and hoped for a happy and productive AGA.

Métis National Council President Clément Chartier, Q.C.

Métis National Council (MNC) President Chartier referenced the great progress of the MNO and MNC. He spoke in regard to the Métis Nation Protocol signed September 5, 2008 with the Government of Canada to set out a process of engagement on a wide variety of Métis issues. It was through such devices as the MNO Development Framework and the Métis Nation Protocol that the Métis could move forward as a distinct people.

It was shared that the leaders of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) agreed with the MNC President that they must move forward on a government-to-government basis. Minister Strahl had recognized and affirmed the right of Métis to use the name Métis Nation, and noted progress made in moving away from the Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association (OMAA) to a Métis-only body. The MNC President continued to be impressed by the MNO leadership to assist in making a place for the Métis Nation and in achieving government-to-government meetings. Aboriginal governments and each of the five provincial premiers had acknowledged that the Métis were independent and that it was in the best interest of all to commit to separate Métis tables.

MNC President Chartier announced that the Métis Nation Protocol would be complimentary to governing nations, that high on the MNC agenda were the concerns of the Métis Veterans and, that he looked forward to President Lipinski assuming a prominent role within the MNC.

Métis Nation British Columbia President Bruce Dumont

Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC) President Dumont honoured Elders and dignitaries, and brought greetings from the MNBC. He shared that witnessing the celebrations of Lois Riel was heartwarming, and

referenced the importance of keeping the hero to the forefront as exemplified at the inauguration of the Provisional Council of the MNO (PCMNO). MNBC President Dumont acknowledged the valuable contributions made by President Lipinski, not only to the MNO but also to the nation as a whole. He wished the AGA success in its deliberations imparting that “Changes are improvements.”

Derek Lee, MP Representing the Federal Liberal Caucus

Mr. Lee brought greetings from Members of Parliament and discussed personal family stories and his connection to the Métis Nation. He reminded delegates that the Liberal party upheld the principles of the Kelowna Accord, and that all Members of Parliament were dealing with the challenge to bring First Nations, Inuit and Métis into the 21st century.

John Tory, Representing the Federal Conservative Party

Mr. Tory congratulated President Lipinski and others including the Government of Canada to take the step forward in signing a Protocol. The real challenge he noted, was the achievement of real measurable improvements attached to the Protocol and the Framework Agreement, which included areas of parliamentary representation, recognition of language, economic development, education and training, health care, housing, and consultation. The MNO was encouraged to press the government for measurable, actionable and achievable goals.

Gary Lipinski, MNO President

President Lipinski expressed his delight that so many dignitaries were present to witness the events of the day. He commented on the unique relationship between the Chiefs of Ontario and the MNO through their Protocol Agreement, in which then Grand Chief Charles Fox and former MNO President Tony Belcourt recognized each other’s peoples as distinct nations and committed to mutual areas of collaboration as well as separate tables. It was a relationship to be nurtured and a promise for the future of working towards forwarding the better understanding between nations; respecting each other’s issues and working together on areas of mutual interest.

The Louis Riel Ceremony marked a turning point for President Lipinski as Métis people were recognized for their contribution to the growth of Canada. Métis history in Ontario has been one of denial, with Métis people being invisible to most and without rights until the Supreme Court of Canada declared the rights of the Métis as stipulated in the Constitution. Through court cases supported by the MNO, Métis had become recognized where they were once invisible and President Lipinski applauded the Province of Ontario for not appealing the *Lemeiux* case and for incrementally working forward to allow Métis their inherent rights by appointing a stand-alone department to address Métis issues.

President Lipinski recognized the support of government members such as the Honourable Michael O’Bryant, Minister of Economic Development, who had expedited issues and set the stage for future discussions. The Honourable Brad Duguid had taken over the reins as the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and was acknowledged for having connected within days of his election when he avowed his commitment to continue the relationship, thereby giving official recognition of the Métis as a people.

The President shared that after centuries the wall of denial would be broken and would fade as the Métis move forward to a new era and diminish gaps in housing conditions, education, health and economic development to make real improvements in the lives of the Métis. President Lipinski looked forward to the next days to do the work that would create the future for the MNO citizens.

Honourable Brad Duguid, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Province of Ontario

Minister Duguid acknowledged the attendance of Grand Chiefs Toulouse and Phillips and reflected that it was his privilege to facilitate the signing of the Framework Agreement, which would be a moment in history that would make a difference in the lives of many. It was first time in history of Ontario to sign an

agreement recognizing the Métis who should not have had to wait for so many generations or to fight so hard in order to see fruition.

It was the expectation many generations ago that Métis would be assimilated leaving behind their traditions. However, the AGA and the people represented by the delegates were to be congratulated and assured that they and their predecessors would no longer be denied the benefits due to the Métis and Métis communities across Canada. The Minister had heard recently that Canada had been referred to in the media as being a Métis civilization, and hoped that the framework would set a new course for improved relationships with core funding of \$200,000 annually. As well, the protection of Métis language and rich heritage of traditions would be advanced and the social-economic gap between First Nations, Métis and Inuit and non-aboriginal citizens substantially closed.

Minister Duguid looked forward to working with MNO in an environment of trust and respect, noting that as of this day the Government of Ontario and the Métis Nation of Ontario would walk together. He called on the AGA to make this a day of celebration and stated that it was an honour for him to be the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and to sign the Framework Agreement recognizing the MNO.

At the conclusion of each of their greetings dignitaries were presented with an MNO 15th anniversary gift canoe paddle by PCMNO members.

SIGNING OF THE MNO/ONTARIO FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

Brenda Powley, Senator Elmer Ross, and Thunder Bay Youth Representative Janine Landry witnessed the signing of the Framework Agreement between the MNO and the Province of Ontario by MNO President Lipinski and the Honourable Brad Duguid, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

DELEGATES' MEETING – NOVEMBER 17, 2008

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Picotte convened the 15th Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) at approximately 10:55 a.m. Delegates were instructed to display the Voting Card at all times in order to participate in the voting process.

1.0 Messages of Conveyance

Related materials distributed in the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario Agenda Package, Statements from:

- *Minister Strahl, Office of the Federal Interlocutor for the November 16, 2008 Riel Commemoration in Toronto and on the occasion of the MNO 2008 annual General Assembly*
- *Correspondence from:*
- *Minister of Industry and Member of Parliament for Parry-Sound Muskoka, The Honourable Tony Clement*
- *Deputy Premier and Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, The Honourable George Smitherman*
- *Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, The Honourable Rick Bartolucci*
- *Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, The Honourable Leona Dombrowsky*
- *Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, The Honourable Michael Chan*
- *Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Chief of Staff, Arnold Chan*
- *Minister of Community and Social Services, The Honourable Madeleine Meilleur*

- *Derek Lee, M.P., Scarborough-Rouge River*
- *Yasmin Ratansi, M.P., Don Valley East*
- *Gloria Lindsay Luby, Councillor, Toronto*
- *Ministry of Education, Antonietta Lymberopoulos on behalf of Minister Wynne*
- *Minister of National Revenue Canada, The Honourable Gordon O'Connor, P.C., M.P.*
- *Grand Chief Mushkegowuk Council, Stan Louttit*
- *Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Joanne Lamoureux on behalf of Minister Diane Finley*
- *Grand Council Chief, Anishinabek Nation*
- *Manitoba Metis Federation, President David Chartrand*
- *Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, President Robert G. Doucette.*

2.0 Review and Accept Agenda

Distributed in the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario Agenda Package: MNO AGA Agenda November 17-18, 2008

It was MOVED (Eric Schofield) and SECONDED (Elwood Ross)

That the Agenda for the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario scheduled November 17-18, 2008 be approved as follows:

- State of the Nation Address
- Establish Quorum
- Review and Approval of Minutes from 2007 Annual General Assembly
 - Business Arising from Minutes
- Finance and Administration Reporting
 - Report by MNO Secretary-Treasurer
 - Report by MNO Chief Operating Officer
 - Presentation on 2006/2007 Audit by MNO Director of Finance and MNO Auditor
 - Approval of 2006/2007 Audit
 - Presentation on 2007/2008 Audit by MNO Director of Finance and MNO Auditor
 - Approval of 2007/08 Audit and appointment of Auditor for 2008/09
- Workshop on Duty to Consult and Accommodate
 - Resolutions from Workshop on Métis Rights and Crown's Duty to Consult
- Developing a Strategic Plan for MNO
 - Remarks by President Lipinski
 - Strategic Planning Workshop
 - Building a Stronger Métis Nation and Empowering Communities and Métis Citizens Presentation and Facilitated Open Discussion on Developing a Strategic Plan for the MNO
 - Presentation on Accessing Economic Opportunities and Creating Wealth and Self-Sustainability with Métis Communities and Métis Nation
 - Questions and Discussion from Strategic Planning Workshop
 - Open Discussion
- Future AGAs
- Closing Comments by President Lipinski
- Closing Prayer
- Adjourn

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA08-01)

3.0 State of the Nation Address

President Lipinski remarked on the inclusivity of partaking in the Louis Riel Day ceremonies, and in the signing of the Framework Agreement. To address MNO challenges and opportunities, President Lipinski referenced the past that had brought the Métis people to the present noting that the Framework Agreement represented years of struggle.

President Lipinski shared the significance of the witnesses to the signing of the Framework Agreement, advising that they represented veterans; the family who dedicated their lives to the struggle; and Métis youth without who all struggles would be worthless.

The pride of people reflects the strength of the nation, and throughout history the Métis have brought cultures together and have served as emissaries to relations between First Nations. Far fewer lives were lost in the forming of this Nation because of the Métis and this information alone would warrant research papers.

The pride is in this room, it is in the youth of the nation, in the speech we heard from the grade 10 students to the large audience at the celebration of Louis Riel Day; the Métis hold new careers as lawyers, in health care, education and chief justices.

MNO would never forget the significance of Métis history of Ontario and there was a need to share and publish information about the Métis. President Lipinski recalled the announcement of The Honourable John Malloy, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, to announce the University of Ottawa as host to the Research Chair in Métis Studies and the creation of a \$4 million endowment – a major step and enabler to move forward.

In some cases, the President noted that the Métis presence had made a huge impact on the history of Canada, whether it was participation in the War of 1812 or the Powley case, both of which ensured negotiation between parties. There was need to record the story of how the Métis moved across Ontario, and to record not desecrate cemeteries.

There was also need to recognize that the Métis are tied to the list of Métis Rights not only by the road from Superior to Winnipeg (Red River and Thompson) but also by the unique water and overland transportation linking steam transportation from Manitoba to the Great Lakes. Métis are inextricably tied to Manitoba. Today by signing recognition of our contribution, MNO would ensure its history goes forward to contribute to making improvements in the lives of Métis families.

The wall of denial fell on November 17, 2008 with the Framework Agreement between the MNO and the Province of Ontario. Not everything would be solved or cured, but now there was a path of commitment to work and talk about improvements. President Lipinski was assured that good things would happen, and was optimistic that a Protocol recently signed at the national level would open more opportunities through the MNC. He attributed MNC President Clément Chartier and MNC Vice President David Chartrand with championing issues close to the hearts of MNO citizens: Veterans, education, housing, health care and economic development.

The AGA would hear more and more about economic opportunities for real advancement to create wealth for community and nation. The new Minister for Economic Development in Ontario was an old friend – the Honourable Michael Bryant – and already had an ear for Métis-specific affairs.

Collectively, the MNO have to look at getting into business opportunities. The attention of the PCMNO will be focused on reporting on our businesses and how they are contributing to the MNO as a whole. They will provide the ability to spend our Métis money on enhancements that are important to the Métis.

President Lipinski invited the AGA to participate in the strategic planning session, where delegates could identify achievements for the future by ascertaining objectives for the MNO. When the Métis have worked together (as they did when the MNO got behind the Powley family and fully supported the case through every level of court from start to finish), it will stand with the full support of the province and nation to move forward into a new era of opportunities with the Framework Agreement in place and the province and industry ready to work with MNO. The courts have ruled that the Métis are due the 'duty to consult' and if development is going to happen on historical territorial lands then there is an obligation to consult with Métis of Ontario in a meaningful manner.

The MNO will be bringing on key staff and has created a branch to deal with pressures on community relative to natural resources, environment, and community relations, with Bob Walden serving as Branch Director.

Chartered Community Councils have the same responsibilities to meet and elect their leaders and for the first time ever there is a branch [Natural Resources, Environment and Community Relations] to work to ensure that communities get the assistance they need.

In regard to the Crown's duty to consult, it was the President's understanding that corporations or governments would have to consult regarding any project affecting the Métis traditional homeland. In recent consultations, MNO communities identified that they would not be opposed to development but only with minimal environmental disruption. This also opened the opportunity to negotiate and discuss with developers the nature of benefits for Métis businesses and communities including economic development partnerships such as equity partnerships, etc.

MNO Immediate Past President Tony Belcourt was acknowledged for the work he had done on behalf of the Métis Nation. MNO continued to pay its due respects to Mr. Belcourt who, as one of the Métis leaders, was the Captain of a ship to steered us through rough waters.

Over the past 15-years the MNO has grown and maintains a staff of over 150 full time employees across Ontario. The MNO Training Initiative (MNOTI) program faces a challenge in that the federal government is ending its current program and is considering a successor strategy. However, this was one of the areas where the government finally got an Aboriginal program right. The MNOTI has been effective for Métis wanting access to upgrading and valuable training and it will be up to the MNO to ensure that the successor strategy picks up on and enhances what currently exists in order to deliver an effective program to all MNO citizens.

The Aboriginal Wellness Strategy (AWS) is also up for renewal. It reaches into many communities and is pan-Aboriginal as well. There are stalls; however, MNO staff is working hard to ensure Métis rights are upheld. Métis people are 30% of the aboriginal people in Ontario and currently receive 3% of the funding. It will be up to the MNO to ensure renewal of an AWS that will fulfill the needs of the Métis.

President Lipinski referenced abounding opportunities in education. The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education, is committed to education and the MNO has given her a MOU to ensure capacity for a funded education branch and to analyze policy. In the Framework

Agreement there is a section with six ministries signing on as support ministries so that the Métis can get the proper support with core capacity and with real ability to address challenges. In the education arena, there are some concerns regarding voluntary self-identification, representation on school boards, and whether Métis children are meeting provincial norms. President Lipinski was hopeful that the Minister of Education would add her signature to the Framework Agreement.

Hand-in-hand with opportunities go challenges. When the PCMNO met with officials, administration was instructed to provide facts and to look at the MNO's bottom line. The President related he had woken up many times in the middle of the night worried about finding the funds to cover council rents, expenses, payroll, etc. The MNO was carrying a large debt that restricted its path forward until it was dealt with head on. It was imperative to know the bottom line and what could be done to move on to the next level.

The work of former Chief Operating Officer (COO) Pierre Lefebvre was acknowledged, and to fill the void he left was the newly appointed COO Doug Wilson. Since May 2008, the finance department had worked hard to meet the requests of the PCMNO and every effort had been made to introduce efficiencies and to produce information necessary to move forward.

In determining the bottom line, this will be the first time ever at the MNO AGA that we will be looking at current year's financial statements. The MNO is carrying a deficit of \$1.5 million, which has the potential to increase to \$4 million. PCMNO recognizes the challenge ahead and has the resolve and commitment to work together to address the matter. A third party independent monitor has been hired and the governments of Ontario and Canada are aware of the MNO's fiscal position.

In a meeting with Minister Bryant, the MNO President asked if the Minister would work as a partner in the debt reduction process and was relieved when the Minister answered, "I get you, we're there, and we want to move forward with you on this. Don't worry we'll get you through this." With the commitment of the Minister and the Government of Ontario, the MNO has requested the support of the Office of the Federal Interlocutor (OFI) and the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. Meanwhile, the MNO has tightened its financial belt and will meet the debt reduction challenge head on with a well thought out business plan to take MNO to the next level.

Deficiencies in monitoring and tracking have been identified and are being rectified. The MNO registry has been under-funded for years. There is in place a province-wide agreement regarding harvesting cards with benefit to the province and federal governments that has not been monetarily supported. MNO has undertaken legal costs in the case of the MNO/Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) Agreement and needs to be reimbursed. The government is starting to recognize that the Métis have accepted more than their share of responsibility, and is now committing to share the burden.

MNO has a solid commitment from the government to move forward on reducing the MNO's debt. It has the resolve to move forward on Powley, and the President guaranteed that the MNO would have the best, most transparent and accountable financial reporting across the Nation.

President Lipinski concluded with note that the PCMNO was here for the Métis, the communities, the families, and their children. With a financially sound MNO providing the services and programs necessary to its citizens, President Lipinski would be happy to "pass the torch" and go fishing.

Métis Nation British Columbia President Bruce Dumont

Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC) President Dumont acknowledged the courageous speech made by the MNO President, and commended the MNO citizenship for working as a team to help each other flourish. He offered shared staff resources as support and presented hand crafted sheepskin footwear and ear warmers to the President along with commemorative pins.

Recess

The meeting recessed at 12:15 p.m. and resumed at 1:26 p.m.

4.0 Establish Quorum

Vice Chair Picotte reported that there were 120 registered delegates in attendance at the 15th AGA, and advised that 61 of the registered delegates were required to be present to form a quorum. Motions to amend the bylaws or which affected citizens' rights required 2/3, or 80 of the delegates to vote in favour in order to be approved.

5.0 Approval of Minutes from 2007 Annual General Assembly

Distributed in the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario Agenda Package MNO AGA (hard copy and on compact disc):

- *Draft Minutes of the MNO 14th Annual General Assembly held July 9 -13, 2008*
- *List of Resolutions from the MNO 14th Annual General Assembly held July 9 -13, 2008*

It was MOVED (Jack Leroux) and SECONDED (Elmer Ross)

That the Minutes of the 14th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held July 9-13, 2008 be approved with the spelling of the names of Dora McInnis and Lois McCallum corrected.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA08-02)

5.1 Business Arising from Minutes

It was queried whether all the directives contained within the list of resolutions had been carried out. Tim Pile, Secretary-Treasurer responded that most were complete and that some had become actions and were still being addressed.

Request for Action

It was requested that a report of the resolutions having been completed and those still to be completed be circulated to delegates.

6.0 Finance and Administration Reporting

6.1 Report by MNO Secretary-Treasurer

Distributed in the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario Agenda Package: MNO AGA, Financial Report dated September 2008 (compact disc).

Secretary-Treasurer Pile reflected on the words of President Lipinski and recognized the PCMNO, MNO communities, and MNO citizens for their support. Steve Berry, Director of Finance, and Finance staff were also acknowledged for completing a four-year mandate in just six-months resulting in the ability to present financial statements for the current year for the first time at an AGA. The efforts of the communities to supply year-end fiscal information was appreciated, with note that it was imperative for Finance to receive annual reports before July 31.

6.2 Report of the MNO Chief Operating Officer

Distributed in the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario Agenda Package: MNO AGA, Métis Nation of Ontario 2007/2008 Annual Report.

Doug Wilson, Chief Operating Officer, provided a semi-annual report on his first six-months and related his Métis family background.

Staff was commended on the remarkable jobs they had done under tremendous pressures of time and responsibilities and with pour resourcing. Marc St. Germain was acknowledged for the graphics and publication of the MNO 2007/2008 Annual Report; and Jason Madden, JTM LAW, was credited for clarifying matters for provincial government lawyers in order that the Framework Agreement would be satisfactory to both parties.

Mr. Wilson recognized that everyone had made sacrifices to ensure the continuation of the MNO and that it was incumbent upon the MNO citizens to show understanding and to enable staff to conduct the business of the nation. Mr. Wilson noted his renewed commitment to the MNO after having listened to the words of President Lipinski in the State of the Nation address.

It was shared that there were 68 MNO programs to be monitored and evaluated. Programs were not in all communities due to duplication by First Nation programs in the proximity. Staff has been working to improve communications with communities and to achieve total transparency,

Mr. Wilson discussed the 3.5 years which the MNO spent under audits; the challenges of having to prove accountability for years gone by; the processes by which the government has held or suspended funding; new structures in place to ensure transparency; and the hiring of expert consultants to forward the business of the nation. He concluded with request that the work by staff be recognized and that staff was truly listening to the citizens.

6.3 2006/07 Audited Financial Statements

Steve Berry, Director of Finance, provided an overhead presentation during which he reviewed the 2006/07 MNO Audited Financial Statements.

Randy Tivy, Collins Barrow Chartered Accountants, discussed the differences between an unqualified and qualified audit and reviewed the MNO qualified audit statement for 2006/07.

It was MOVED (Eric Schofield) and SECONDED (Gerry Bedford)

That the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario approve the audited financial statements dated March 31, 2007.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA08-03)

6.4 2007/08 Audited Financial Statements

Steve Berry, Director of Finance, utilized an overhead presentation to discuss the financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2008, noting discrepancies in the total debt and processes the department had completed to determine a final number.

Randy Tivy, Collins Barrow Chartered Accountants, presented the unqualified Audit Report to March 31, 2008.

In discussion, delegates commented that the fonts for the overhead presentation should be larger in the future and that it would be advantageous to have the Audit Report, Financial Statements and Operating Statements included in the MNO AGA agenda package the following year. It was further suggested to provide visual aids in the form of pie charts to compare and identify revenue sources and to formulate a cash flow chart to inform delegates of provisional funds.

It was MOVED (Eric Schofield) and SECONDED (JoAnne Young)

That the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario approve the Audited Financial Statements dated March 31, 2008.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA08-04)

6.5 Appointment of Auditor

It was MOVED (JoAnne Young) and SECONDED (Pauline Saulnier)

That the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario appoint the accounting firm of Collins Barrow Chartered Accountants as the MNO Auditors for the fiscal year 2008/09.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA08-05)

Recess

The meeting recessed at 2:30 p.m. and resumed at 2:50 p.m.

7.0 Workshop on the Duty to Consult and Accommodate

Distributed in the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario Agenda Package:

- a) *Métis Nation of Ontario Interim Statement of Principles on Métis Consultation and Accommodation and General Métis Framework for Consultation and Accommodation dated November 17, 2008;*
- b) *Resolution on Crown's Duty to Consult and Accommodate Métis Rights, Interests and Way of Life;*
- c) *PowerPoint slide summary entitled "Duty and Opportunity" dated November 17, 2008; and On table document titled "Towards a Métis Consultation Framework" by JTM LAW.*

Jean Teillet, Pape Salter Teillet, Legal Counsel, provided an update on Métis Rights Developments. She reported that this was the first year since 1995 that there had been no harvesting charges and that MNO citizens carrying harvesting cards could exercise their harvesting rights without fear of prosecution. In Manitoba, a 2004 case trial concluded on November 16, 2007 with no judgment from the court to date. There were 19 other charges put in the parking lot awaiting that decision. There was one charge not resolved and one charge pending negotiation in Saskatchewan, while in Alberta there were 28 cases because of a reversal of a prior agreement by the new Alberta government.

Ms. Teillet advised that one case was representative of others and would be a test to determine "what is a Métis Community" (not "what is a Métis hunting ground"). Using an overhead presentation, she discussed the concept of a Métis community and how MNO citizens should be relating to each other. She asserted that the problem with the Crown's position was that they did not know who the Métis were, and looked for historical entities such as reserve land.

It was noted that the Métis were fur traders and some moved onto the plains and adapted to be buffalo hunters. MNO citizens are children of fur traders and voyageurs when the centre of the Canadian (Northwest Territories) world was Toronto/Montreal. Important settlements used as base of operations throughout the northwest were identified, with note that the Métis society remains invisible, that nobody wants Métis, and no one ever wanted mixed race populations.

Ms. Teillet outlined some of the major boat and overland routes, commenting that Métis lived in a world of no boundaries and they traveled on rivers and in wagons leaving no evidence of settlement. Nor was anyone aware of the Michif language because the trade language was Cree on the prairies, while Michif was internal to the Métis.

Métis remained invisible because of their physical characteristics and not being identifiable by only one look. Also, in the past the Métis were given too many different names to be readily identifiable in a territory. The ability to blend in so as not to be ostracized has also kept the Métis invisible. Family movements were noted from summer to winter living quarters and notably north/south connections of Ontario, Montana and North Dakota. It was established that men and women did migrate from place to place within their homeland together.

Ms. Teillet concluded that the Métis were still moving more than everyone else in Canada, and that no one should be looking for small communities, nor basing Métis rights arguments, theory or negotiations on their existence. In the hunt for justice, Métis should not settle for small communities, as the rights reside in the whole territory. Ms. Teillet added proviso that the overhead presentation provided was a work in progress and would evolve as more information became available.

Jason Madden, JTM LAW, Legal Counsel, commented that in each case, community and family stories confirmed the presence of Métis across the country. For the purpose of Section 35, there were Métis peoples before there was a Canada so the question was not whether there was a community or settlement – the customs, practices of the people are protected under the Canadian constitution.

Mr. Madden discussed the Crown's "duty to accommodate", noting that the Supreme Court of Canada had pushed Canada not to litigate but to negotiate with the MNO. It was a positive implication of putting the obligations on the Crown to discuss and negotiate incidences that might be detrimental to Aboriginal rights. It was therefore important for the Métis to remain consistent with the boundaries determined in earlier court cases by focusing on the rights-bearing community.

It was noted that across the homeland everyone was grappling with the issue of "what is community"? Locals, regions and provincial bodies had never addressed how governments would consult with the rights-bearing community and the consultation policy would need to reflect that the MNO was not "dots on a map". Mr. Madden cited a Labrador case, and discussed the question of whether a corporate body could represent a rights-bearing community. He noted that families were being divided by the authority's interpretation of the law, and provided an example of harvesting rights extended to a husband and not to a wife.

Bob Walden, Minister of Natural Resources, Environment & Community Relations (NRE&CR), introduced an overhead presentation and discussed the opportunities presented to the MNO by the Crown's duty to consult as referenced on slides titled:

- Government versus Proponents Consultation
- 'What We Heard' Recommendations
- Development of the MNO Support Branch, Natural Resources, Environment & Community Relations
- Two Parties Consultation (layers and governance decentralized and province wide)
- Assets (including community-owned knowledge)
- Challenges
- Working Collaboratively to Discuss the Protection of the Métis Way-of-Life and Rights
- Characteristics of Duty and Opportunity (effective and predictable, build good relationships, proactive in nature)
- Rights and Relationship Trains
- 5 Stages of Consultation

- Ideas for Discussion from ‘What We Heard’ Consultation (principles, vision and values, best practices, strategic planning, support, follow up).

Mr. Walton concluded that the consultation branch was working to obtain expertise to facilitate working together.

Related Questions and Discussion

During the ensuing discussion, questions, comments and responses included the following:

-
- Discuss the relationship not the substantive issues.
-
- Was there an information package available regarding the presentations about lines [boundaries] and how Métis are not determined by communities or settlements – including a definition or terms of reference for community?
- Mr. Madden replied he could describe concepts of how community should be addressed.
-
- We’re not quite as mobile as we once were. Would MNO take reasonable steps to ensure that Métis citizens in urban centres do not experience a resurgence of prejudice that might preclude the delivery of services?
- Ms. Teillet commented on the terms ‘user right’ and ‘proprietary right’ asserting that the Métis used the land in a particular way, and discussing rights and title as well as different layers of rights.
-
- What would it look like if 10 years from now if the registration is 50% of Canada’s population? The concern is that we not move ahead too quickly or we will have French speaking and Aboriginals claiming Métis heritage. At what point do we go beyond rights and legislation?
- Ms. Teillet discussed heredity noting that Métis have to trace their Métis ancestry from the Métis Nation. It might be different peoples with grandmothers of grandmothers who may have been Métis but it was not a kinship relation unless traced to the Métis Homeland. Remember the definition, to be registered as Métis a citizen has to have Métis ancestors from the Métis Nation; the map may move down south into Ontario or more into BC but it would not ever look like a map of Canada.
-
- My ancestors migrated from Quebec with the fur trade into Alberta. We are all related to each other and relations are all important at every table. We must realize that for the most part Métis are very close and connected to each other.
- Mr. Madden commented that you take the mobility and add the genealogy and then look at an interconnected web of relations.
-
- In regard to mobility, when a family originates from another community how are harvesting rights transferred? We are facing urban sprawl and losing hunting areas. Would the PowerPoint presentations be available to the delegates?
- Ms. Teillet spoke in regard to mobility rights and how they were non-existent, as governments were trying to put boundaries around defined Métis settlements. She discussed the implications of transferable rights of Indians marrying from one group to another, and cautioned harvesters in regard to oral agreements of hunting outside of their homeland territory. She further referenced: the national definition of self-identification; genealogical connections to the Métis Nation; the unknown qualification of being accepted by the Métis community; and the problem of urbanization of southern Ontario, noting that there was not

going to be hunting for much longer and it would soon become a safety issue resulting in the gradual loss of hunting rights. Ms Teillet's PowerPoint was part of a Masters thesis and was available on line through the Toronto University.

-
- In defining a community, given that the Métis community was extremely mobile perhaps the community should encompass everything and go back to the Northwest boundaries. There seemed to be some problem with Alberta rescinding memberships?
- Ms. Teillet responded that Alberta was not taking back memberships, but was aligning them to the requirements of the MNC adopted Métis definition.
-
- Would support for economic development projects be provided from the MNO NRE&CR?
- Mr. Walton responded that citizens looking for support in RFPs or writing proposals, etc. should first contact the NRE&CR and if they could not assist they would find someone who could.
-
- In regard to the definition of Métis, we keep hearing that there are no Métis in Quebec. However, most people agree there are Métis in Quebec and I think we should be including them. Where is the document that Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia are the only places that are Métis?
- Ms. Teillet responded that the idea that there are people in Quebec of mixed heritage is not at question; however, the Métis Nation is made up of people of kinship and is different from other peoples.
-
- It was commented that Mr. Madden had referred to Labrador Métis in the on-table document.
- Mr. Madden responded that the courts use the term "Métis for the purposes of 9124". He clarified that in the east there are different mixed blood people, including Inuit with Métis ancestry who use Inuit culture and traditions.

5:09 p.m.

Chair Picotte departed the meeting and Vice Sharon McBride assumed the chair.

Mr. Madden concluded by referring to the document titled "Interim Statement of Principles on Métis Consultation and Accommodation and General Métis Framework for Consultation and Accommodation". He discussed the principles therein as a means to move ahead on Métis issues to work towards a more detailed policy developed on how Métis work together. For the interim, the principles were to serve as a guide.

It was MOVED (Tim Pile) and SECONDED (Pauline Saulnier)

THAT WHEREAS the Métis people have lived on and relied on the lands that are now known as Ontario for generations prior to the creation of this province;

AND WHEREAS Canada's Constitution recognizes and affirms the rights of the Métis people based on this prior occupation and their special relationship to the land;

AND WHEREAS the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) was formed to represent the Métis people and advance the rights and interests of its citizens and rights-bearing communities;

AND WHEREAS based on this mandate the MNO has successfully moved forward on advancing the Métis Nation's collective rights agenda through, amongst other things, pursuing litigation to secure the recognition of Métis rights, creating a centralized and legitimate registry of

Métis citizens in Ontario, developing democratic Métis governance structures and institutions at the local, regional and provincial levels, and, implementing a harvesters Policy and Harvesters Card system to regulate the Métis harvest in the province;

AND WHEREAS in 2003, based on the MNO's efforts, in 2003, the Supreme Court of Canada in the *Powley* case affirmed that one of the Métis Nation's protected rights included in Canada's Constitution is the right to harvest;

AND WHEREAS in order to implement the *Powley* case in Ontario, the MNO and the Province of Ontario entered into an agreement which recognizes and accommodates the harvesting rights of regional rights-bearing Métis communities throughout their traditional territories;

AND WHEREAS in 2004, the Supreme Court of Canada recognized that the Crown has a duty to consult and accommodate Aboriginal peoples in relation to planning, policies, developments, activities and projects that may affect Aboriginal proven and asserted rights, interests and way of life;

AND WHEREAS based on its mandate to advance Métis rights in the province, the MNO has moved forward on attempting to ensure the Crown's duties to the MNO are recognized and fulfilled;

AND WHEREAS in 2007-2008, the MNO undertook province-wide consultations on developing a MNO Consultation Framework and produced a final 'What We Heard' report outlining the input received from MNO citizens as well as principles and recommendations to move the Métis Nation's rights agenda forward in this area;

AND WHEREAS the MNO Annual General Assembly (AGA) endorses this final 'What We Heard' report, including, its principles and recommendations, as well as, the Regional Métis Consultation Protocols that have been signed between the MNO and its Chartered Community Councils in order to ensure the Crown's duty to MNO citizens and regional rights-bearing Métis communities throughout the province are fulfilled in a fair, transparent, predictable and honourable manner;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 15th AGA of the MNO:

1. adopts the *Interim Statement of Principles for Métis Consultation and Accommodation and General Consultation Framework for Consultation and Accommodation* dated November 17, 2008;
2. instructs the MNO to develop, in consultation with MNO citizens, Community Councils, Captains of the Hunt, and the PCMNO, a provincial Métis Consultation Policy which builds upon the recommendations in the final 'What We Heard' report, the adopted *Interim Statement of Principles for Métis Consultation and Accommodation* and *General Consultation Framework for Consultation and Accommodation with Métis*, and the Regional Métis Consultation Protocols; and that this Policy be brought to the 16th AGA of the MNO for consideration; and
3. directs the MNO to lobby governments in order to secure adequate and sustained funding to support the consultation processes set out in the existing as well as future Regional Métis Consultation Protocols, and to work with industry to increase knowledge about the Regional

Métis Consultation Protocols, and to establish strategic partnerships with the private sector for the benefit of MNO citizens and regional rights-bearing Métis communities.

RESOLVED (AGA08-06)

(One citizen abstaining from the vote.)

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADJOURNED

The 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held November 17-18, 2008 adjourned on Day 1 – November 17, 2008 at 5:20 p.m. and agreed to reconvene on Day 2 – November 18, 2008 at 8:00 a.m. Senator Ruth Wagner-Millington offered a Closing Prayer.

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY – NOVEMBER 18, 2008

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY RECONVENED

Chair Picotte reconvened the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario at 9:00 a.m. Senator Olivine Tiedema offered an Opening Prayer. The City of Thunder Bay Métis Council presented a memento of the unveiling of a mural in their community to President Lipinski.

8.0 Remarks by President Lipinski on Developing a Strategic Plan for the MNO

Distributed in the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario Agenda Package: Call for Submission of Flag Design.

President Lipinski extended appreciation to the organizers of the 15th Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO). Part of the AGA agenda was a consultation with Council Presidents, delegates and others to build momentum by participating in a strategic plan to provide input to the MNO's growth and goals for the future.

Referring to the distributed document, the President noted that one goal would be the creation of a flag for the MNO. He called for submissions as outlined in the agenda package, noting that the winner would be announced at the 2009 AGA. Another goal was to develop a document that would become a checklist or reference guide to ensure that the goals of the citizens were upheld.

The President reflected that many delegates were in leadership capacities and noted the importance of understanding the governance system including the Chartered Community Councils, Provincial Council of the MNO (PCMNO), and National Council. President Lipinski encouraged Community Councilors to invite the Regional Councilors to their community meetings in order that the interests of the communities could be better conveyed to the PCMNO.

9. Strategic Planning Workshop on Building a Stronger Métis Nation and Empowering Métis

Doug Wilson, Chief Operating Officer, introduced the 'Workshop on Building a Stronger Métis nation and Empowering Métis'. He noted the PCMNO and administration's commitment to communication with Councils, and referenced meetings already conducted with MNO Veterans, Women's Secretariat and Council Presidents. He observed that attempts at transparency resulted in working together, and discussed the tripartite process at federal, provincial and MNO level.

Mr. Wilson provided information on consultants participating in the strategic planning workshop and looked forward to affording even more capacity in administration with the addition of an Executive Director of Development to the MNO administration team. He acknowledged government departments including INAC and OFI, and the Manitoba Metis Federation, for

sharing information and resources as well as the Métis National Council (MNC) for facilitating a Métis-specific allocation for MNO. It was the willingness of people to work with the MNO coupled with the key of engaging all ministries in order to address the issues of Métis citizens.

9.1 Presentation and Facilitated Open Discussion on Developing a Strategic Plan for the MNO

John Graham, Institute on Governance (IOG), provided an overhead presentation titled “Métis Nation of Ontario: Strategic Planning Initiative” and discussed the process and emerging thoughts for a strategic plan. Themes and ideas from meetings to date were provided, with note that further input would be sought from the AGA. Slides presented were titled as follows:

- Session Objectives
- Why Plan?
- What is a Strategic Plan?
- What is a Business Plan?
- Proposed Process – Phase One (meetings and interviews)
- Proposed Process – Phase Two (refine draft and fold in economic development concept)
- Proposed Process – Phase Three (consultation and draft business plan)
- Proposed Process – Phase Four (presentation to 2009 AGA)
- IOG’s Role (to assist MNO in creating and modifying strategic and business plans)
- Draft Content for Plan
- Environmental Scan – External
- Environmental Scan – Internal
- Priority Areas for Strategic Plan
- MNO Governing & Management Systems
- Métis Rights
- Social Programming
- Economic Development
- Cross-cutting Themes
- Priority Areas of Community Councils
- Questions (1. How can the proposed process be improved within the constraints of the existing budget? 2. What are the critical issues that the plans need to address? Those listed in this presentation? Are there others? 3. What are the priority issues?)
- Contact number: jgraham@iog.ca.

Mr. Graham discussed the intent of vision and mission statements. He shared developing external environment themes including: a strong interest in education; developments through duty to consult; the idea of partnerships; relationships with First Nations and other aboriginal groups; rights issues; the new priorities brought about by the recent federal election; the general economic downturn. Internal environment conditions were identified as: rapid expansion of MNO; capacity shortages; dedicated and overworked staff; increasing professionalism of human resources and technology; volunteers a strength but burnout is a problem; a general feeling of optimism and the need to build on this potential strength; financial situation challenges; large size of Ontario and dispersed Métis population to serve; internal staff challenges; information technology IT; and lack of communication between community councils.

Mr. Graham elaborated on the following:

- Emerging areas: reforming governance and management, rights, social programs, enhancement of economic opportunities.
- Governance and Management System: address structure to improve communications, enhance internal accountability, meeting the accountability requested by funders,

strengthening MNO governance, addressing relationships of elected officials and staff, registry, an existing consensus of the importance to governance and other external levels of government, staff capacity, policy and communications capacity, a need for a Métis Action Act, etc.

- Métis Rights: trying to implement harvesting regimes, duty to consult roles, etc., consolidate and implement gains from litigation.
- Social Programming: Métis Nation Human Resource Development Agreements (MHRDA), health up for renewal and critical; lifelong education, child welfare.
- Cross Cutting Themes: culture and heritage, MNO Cultural Commission, language retention, archiving for future generations.
- Self Sufficiency: priorities of setting agendas rather than being directed by others.
- Effective relationships: government, private sector and families.
- Review of themes from meetings: strengthen council governments, educate, communicate, councils share and promote best practices, etc.

Questions and Comments

Mr. Graham restated questions posed during his presentation. Delegates' responses' included:

-
- Is there a long-term component to the strategic plan? Long-term goals should be included.
- Mr. Graham replied that the 5-year plan was typically considered to be the long-term plan and that beyond 5 –years was difficult to anticipate. The vision statement should address long-term strategies; the process of consultation on a vision statement had begun.
-
- Concern was expressed that the Métis Nation Act was very akin to colonizers that caused much grief to Métis and other aboriginals in Canada; it would be preferable if we only had recognition of MNO as governance without any strings attached. If part of the notion is to protect Métis traditions and property from others we are already 90% there as stated in the MNO mission statement: *honoring our ancestors, protecting our descendants*.
-
- We need established goals for short-term immediate situations plus the long-term goals; we need both paths.
- Mr. Graham responded that the strategic plan would reflect longer-term goals and offer more detail in the shorter business plan.
-
- A critical issue is lack of access to justice and criminal justice system, family and civil law, and there is no reference to land.
- Mr. Graham advised that those issues would be added to potential priorities and that they had been initially included under social planning.
-
- The Aboriginal Justice Strategy Committee has been producing papers in the areas of child, family and restorative justice and publish them on their website within a week. We would be well advised to put all the research papers forward.
- Mr. Graham recalled mission statement ideas of advancing self-government, promoting native language and improving well being of individual and collective.

Doug Wilson, Chief Operating Officer, called on Lisa Pigeau, Primary Care Manager, to speak in regard to her involvement in the first Métis Justice Circle.

Ms. Pigeau described the very emotional process for the client and the person affected by the client's actions and others involved. The judge in the case had requested permission to sit in on the process. It took 17 months to prepare for the Circle which included senators, family, lawyers etc. and led to recommendations for the client and person affected by the client's actions that are still participating in programs and doing well as a result.

Chair Picotte recognized this as a first for the nation, impacting lives in a positive way and sharing traditional aboriginal knowledge with others.

Recess

The Assembly recessed at 10:30 a.m. and resumed at 10:45 a.m. at which time Chair Picotte announced that MNC President Clément Chartier had rejoined together with MNC Vice-President David Chartrand had arrived at the meeting.

WELCOME FROM DIGNITARIES CONT'D.

Métis National Council Vice President and Manitoba Metis Federation President David Chartrand
Métis National Council (MNC) Vice President and Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) President Chartrand acknowledged the Elders present and declared that the strength of the Métis Nation was to be found in working together. He acknowledged MNC President Chartier for having the foresight to negotiate the national protocol and spoke of issues on the national front regarding the governance file, and pushing to finalize studies to end discrimination against the Métis veterans.

In regards to sharing ideas, MNO has stirred up the Métis environment to educate the public in regard to there being one Métis Nation political body in Ontario, and to obtain that recognition from Minister Strahl.

MNC Vice-President Chartrand recalled the MMF's plan to slowly build their asset base, noting that the MMF now had assemblies of 2,500 delegates. An important part was establishing that money received from Canada is not charity, as the Métis pay taxes and a greater portion of those monies should be used for Métis communities. MMF has been working since the 1980s on its development, and recommended that the MNO seize on every opportunity and resources that are inherently the theirs.

MNC Vice-President Chartrand cited successful programs to maintain the tradition of Métis fiddle music passed on by ear; the firewood project for elders where heating their homes would otherwise cost more than their pensions; and fund raising efforts for funeral funds. Unfortunately cancer and diabetes were prevalent in the MMF and there was desire to share successful health programming. He concluded with note that the MMF was a proud government no different from the MNO.

President Lipinski presented Vice-President Chartrand with an MNO 15th anniversary gift canoe paddle.

9. Continuation of Strategic Planning Workshop

9.2 Presentation on Accessing Economic Opportunities and Creating Wealth and Self-Sustainability with Métis Communities and Métis Nation

Jay Kaufman, KTA Inc., commented on the importance of developing a business plan, noting the steep learning curve ahead for all involved. He felt honoured to bear witness to the historic event of the signing of the Framework Agreement that would open important opportunities, and recalled working with former MNO President Belcourt for 18 months on communication technology development.

Mr. Kaufman described the purpose to review objectives and present a proposed approach to obtain delegates' feedback. In terms of the context, there was a renewed focus within MNO on

greater self-sufficiency to generate its own revenues. Windows of opportunity such as the Crown's duty to consult should be expedited. In talking to the MNO leadership, Mr. Kaufman had noted that this would not be a quick fix but a process to develop a sustained financial base. He had heard key success targets of services, business investments, etc., and saw that business leadership and entrepreneurship were core characteristics of Métis. There was a need to capitalize on that, as well to develop a skills bank to ensure that Métis achieve improved self-reliance for citizens and communities to create opportunities for revenue generation.

Referencing an overhead presentation titled "Métis Nation of Ontario: Economic Development, November 18, 2008", Mr. Kaufman indicated that the AGA would be looking at developing a strategy for an economic model and discussing goals. KTA would use a tripartite approach (working with Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, OFI and INAC, provincial government ministries and MNO) to develop a knowledge base of information relating to the 'invisible' Métis, and to ensure that capacity was built with the creation of a reference group that could support the projects. Titles of slides reviewed included the following:

- Purpose of Presentation
- Project Context
- Project Objectives
- Project Outcomes
- Project Approach
- KTA Role
- How We Get There: A Phased Approach
- Phase 1: Project Initiation
- Phase 2: Building and Sharing An Information and Knowledge Base
- Phase 3: Vision and Strategy
- Phase 4: Finalizing the Strategy
- Phase 5: Final Report
- Questions: Are the goals the right ones? and, Do we have the right process?

Mr. Kaufman summarized that one of the critical success factors would be leadership group; and that building and sharing information by developing a profile on the MNO would build the story. There was opportunity to learn from the models of the MNC's other governing members, and there might even be opportunities to work together in partnership on long term economic development projects.

Another key factor would be to complete an inventory of government programs and engage those departments to start networking and obtain support. Visioning and strategizing would include what the MNO model should look like and a envisioning where the citizens want to be in 10 or 20 years as part of an internal inventory. It would be important to determine the opportunities and to define deliverables and potential win/wins in the business arena. In terms of outcome the process should be a consensus approach leading to a developed strategy to form a plan that works for the MNO.

Questions and Comments

- Doug Wilson, Chief Operating Officer, indicated that housing was an area that had been profitable. Working with the province there may be the opportunity of offering up the housing branch to become part of the MNO Development Corporation (MNODC) relative to repair, inspection and maintenance of houses. The MNODC has started discussions but needs the energy and expert assistance [capacity] to deliver on the projects.

- The United Nations (UN) declared the 1970s to be the development decade, and the experience of the speaker was there were no monetary results. It was suggested that the MNO look at the process by first looking at Canada as a whole not being as productive as it should be – that there was a third world aspect to some regions of the country. Working through UN agencies and university faculties might get some leverage. In a broader way Métis nations should work together to remove the barriers at the provincial and federal government levels.
 - Mr. Kaufman responded that the lesson from the 1970s and 80s was that you have to have money. Successful development ends with the government and MNO has established certain criteria for governments. Best practices connections with universities and colleges would be a real source of help and these were mainly existing relationships. However, the MNO needed to act now to take advantage of existing relationships to develop tools and skill sets, etc. He asked what the role of Council would be to develop revenues for wealth management.

- Can we not recommend that the government set-aside for Métis what they do for other aboriginals in small business? There are a lot of small business that could profit from being able to tap into that.
 - Mr. Kaufman observed that one of the issues was that the federal government has a pan-aboriginal policy and also is not aware of Métis businesses in the provinces. One of the keys would be to develop networks and even a business association. It might take millions of dollars of infrastructure to reinforce those networks.

- Can we manage to have partnerships with other provinces and not interfere with their processes?
 - Mr. Kaufman reflected on the importance of creating relationships with other Métis across the provinces, using this as an opportunity to learn from their successes.

- As a spiritual ambassador and Métis citizen there are principles that need to be included in the process and we know that visioning is the most important step to implementation. To build capacity at the Council level by building capacity for visioning processes that would preclude problems in implementation. Métis planners and dreamers do not always work well together. Without vision the people perish. Encourage every one to adopt inclusive principles that strive for the common good, store treasures in heaven and owe nobody.
 - Mr. Kaufman commented that the vision to believe in core principles should guide the process.

- In terms of small business, the government has a series of courses on the website available for free.

- President Lipinski was reminded of quote, “I have a dream” and the need to include all Métis and all other governments. If we need money to move forward on economic developments we need to ask government for it. We have been treated with respect by Métis governments across the provinces and sharing best practices is becoming the norm. Business owners are not getting unique opportunities and this warrants discussion. Communities do need capacity to support revenue generation at their own level. There are potential areas for exploration, i.e. leadership at community councils who own their own office buildings and rent to support services – MNO needs to follow that model. The money paid annually in rent for the MNO offices could be a down payment for our own office building. Opportunities with Ontario are in mining and energy projects, i.e., transmission line across the province could stimulate economic opportunities for local communities as well as the MNO.

- Vision setting sometimes starts with small beginnings at local levels such as fund raising through casinos, potlucks, dog sled races and concession stands. Our vision is to support our dance troupe and send a busload of citizens to Batoche.
- It would be a dream to own MNO headquarters and it was recommended that members contribute to a building fund.
- What is the time frame? What is it we're going to do? When will we do something?
 - Mr. Wilson responded that there was much underway and many of the initiatives were started by the previous administration. The direction of the PCMNO has changed from an international focus to a local one and MNO is in need of developing the strategy to continue momentum with financial negotiations, etc.
- A dream of a business owner who often does not have a pool of professional trade people to draw on is that the MNO have its own training institution and Métis trainers.
- A long-term goal of one community was to own a Métis Museum. They have realized that dream using rent from land used by the railroad.
- It would be desirable to create a vision on retirement, especially retirement homes and accommodation flying the Métis flag and artifacts.
 - Secretary-Treasurer Pile advised of numerous MNO projects for seniors and called for suggestions from councils and communities regarding seniors' projects or housing for people in need.
- Our council has advisors to the school projects, why not hire a MNO citizen to teach how to make canoes and sell them?
- REACH Aboriginal Communities are available to support Métis in poverty; it's no shame to partner with aboriginal brothers and sisters on projects.

Mr. Kaufman extended appreciation for the participation in the questions and discussion from the Strategic Planning Workshop.

Recess

The Assembly recessed at 12:00 p.m. and resumed at 1:05 p.m. Chair Picotte called for two-minutes of silence to pay honour to delegates' partners and families at home.

10. Open Discussion on Future Annual General Assemblies

Chair Picotte introduced the session to look at other ways of doing things at the MNO AGAs within the MNO monetary abilities.

President Lipinski indicated that this was the first part of the consultation to make the AGA responsive and accessible to the needs of the citizens. This year the AGA was postponed to enable involving citizens in the historic signing of the Framework Agreement and to set in place the strategic planning process. Historically the AGA has not been a financial success yet this time with transparency and accountability in mind every penny has been accounted for prior to the meeting. This was the first MNO AGA held indoors and the first to be a three-day event.

Delegates were asked to consider other opportunities for future AGAs: What should be at AGAs going forward? What events should be held in conjunction with the MNO AGAs? Responses received included:

- The AGA functions should be dry events and include cultural training and entertainment by Métis citizens.
- People with small children cannot afford a hotel and would opt for using the MNO tent and the park at Sudbury might be free. A summer event would be preferable.
- Children are missing at this AGA and they are missing exposure to culture. Also we need to organize 18 months in advance to assist with costs by getting corporate sponsorship. Would like more traditional ceremony and entertainment. We could get rid of golfing.
- Hold it in the first or second week in August to allow children to attend and learn Métis culture and traditions (tomahawk throws, etc.) Keep it outdoors in the summertime and maybe cut down the weeklong agenda.
- Métis are the trade people, but there are no trade tables here, just vendors. We should be saying what have got to trade. We do not need outside caterers, we could potluck. We need to help each other, ancestors knew this, and the bush provides food and has for centuries. We need the recipes for moose, muskrat. We're bush people, let us feel the wind on our faces, hear the morning songs of the birds, and involve the youth. There is no reason not to have teams with adult umpires, play with the youth: a voyageur game – where they go from fort to fort and they speak a different language, with adventures on the way (lose cargo and trade goods, etc.).
- It saddens me to see the way the AGA is going, I remember River Valley in 1994 we spent three hours discussing how we wanted the AGA and I remember the objections to the children in the tent at the business meetings but also discussion regarding the importance of them to remain where decisions are made.
- Here there was no sunrise ceremony, we miss the traditions, and this event is a backward step. I see citizens bring what they needed to AGAs, we brought our food and children with us and it was far more meaningful. Install values of Métis in our children, provide accommodation and care for children and elders, outdoors near water with campgrounds.
- This is my first AGA, and my first Louis Riel day. My spouse left because he had nothing to do. I came here on my own and I want to be a part, but wasn't sure where I fit in. How do people who only read the Voyageur feel connected? There has to be something that is inclusive and as far as the concrete jungle I'm o.k. with this. If we had it in the summer past I do not think we would have had the Framework Agreement or the dignitaries in attendance. This venue has served a positive purpose and was a valid forum for Métis people. The timing for the AGA and Riel event was good overall.
- I was born in-house and do not ever want to sleep in a tent. I prefer a good bed with a roof over my head. I did fish but have never hunted. I am a Métis who was brought up in a city and cannot really sympathize with those who would campout – I am an urbanite.
- We have an opportunity to use all these ideas, and need to have a facilitated discussion. A venue could be found to do facilitate a bed or a tent. Without structure things would fall apart – we have to learn to use everything Canada has to offer and if we don't get our letters in before the end of January requesting corporate assistance, any opportunities for money will be lost.
- We have a partnership in Sudbury with the MNO tent available and other nice facilities and a huge lake, grass, room for children, no charge for camping, and many good motels in the vicinity. We may not get the dignitaries to an outdoor meeting but I am in full support for teamwork.
- Thanks were offered to the MNO for organizing the AGA and the very moving ceremonies on Louis Riel Day.

- The first AGA was in 1993 at a venue on Church Street in Toronto. The assistance to senators and other attendees has been very good at this AGA.
- Great having it here and it was always important to get together. It is nice to alternate camping options.
- Having originated from Alberta and coming here for the first year, I thought how wonderful the Métis families were together in the outdoor AGA with happy children. The outdoor AGA seems to promote pride in being Métis and the experience is invaluable to the growth of the nation through the place of family.
- Suggestion to hold the next AGA in Sudbury. The park is available for any other group. Métis have done a lot of work on the campground, and there are fewer flies in mid August to September.
- As an advocate for youth, the absence of youth is very noticeable. Some youth have full time jobs in summer making it difficult for them to attend. Could we consider a consistent date so that youth could plan their time? That would be useful. We need to empower youth, as they get involved in community councils.
- I have been to every AGA since River Valley and think that maybe a weekend would be better. I remember where Senator Larkman taught us how to smoke hides – these are the skills that need to be brought back to our children before they are forgotten and lost.

President Lipinski concluded by thanking everyone for their thoughts and stimulating ideas. It is a goal of the PCMNO to be inclusive and bring more people into the tent, there was no choice this year and our doors might not be open today if we had opted for a longer AGA so it was not an option. This discussion would not end at the AGA. The PCMNO would meet in January 2009 to share more ideas from local councils. He requested that communities communicate their ideas with regional councilors to enable a better decision on behalf of all. The AGAs have been a way to explore and enjoy all the areas of Ontario.

11.0 Resolutions and By-law Amendments

Vice Chair McBride advised that there had been no By-law Amendments submitted for consideration and read a resolution proposed by the PCMNO.

It was MOVED (Judy Masdorp) and SECONDED (Rene Gravelle) and AMENDED

THAT WHEREAS in response to the Ipperwash Inquiry's recommendations the Ontario Government announced a New Relationship Fund to improve Crown-Aboriginal relations in Ontario and to provide capacity to Aboriginal peoples to ensure the Crown's duty to consult and accommodate aboriginal rights, interests and way of life is being honourably fulfilled in the province;

AND WHEREAS the MNO has undertaken consultations on this Fund, as a part of its province-wide consultation on developing a MNO Consultation Policy, as well as, holding a Special Presidents Meeting to discuss the details of the New Relationship Fund;

AND WHEREAS the 2008 MNO Annual General Assembly (AGA) and Special Presidents Meeting strongly supports the creation of the New Relationship Fund and its stated objectives;

AND WHEREAS the 2008 MNO AGA and Special Presidents Meeting want to ensure the Fund is managed in a fair and equitable manner between Aboriginal peoples and that the mandates of democratically elected Métis governance structures are respected and acknowledged as the bodies which represent regional rights-bearing communities in Ontario in relation to the discharge of the Crown's duty to consult and accommodate;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

That the MNO be directed to pursue negotiations with the Ontario Government based on the following:

1. that the MNO pursue a Métis-specific allocation of the Fund that is focused on providing sustained support to the MNO's existing and future Regional Métis Consultation Protocols as well as all MNO Chartered Community Councils to ensure the Crown's duty to regional rights-bearing Métis Communities in the province are being fulfilled;
2. that the Métis-specific allocation of the Fund be no less than 30% of all resources since Métis represent 30% of the Aboriginal population in Ontario according to the most recent Census;
3. that the fund support the MNO in undertaking a provincial Traditional Land Use Study project which can be relied upon and used by all MNO Community Councils, regional Métis consultation Committees, Captains of the Hunt, and the Provisional Council of the MNO (PCMNO), etc. in order to identify Métis traditional knowledge and land use in the province;
4. that the MNO hold annual conferences where best practices and information on consultation and accommodation issues between MNO Community Councils, Regional Métis Consultation Committees, Captains of the Hunt, and PCMNO, etc. can be shared;
5. that the MNO work to secure the Ontario government's commitment to endow a New Relationship Trust Fund controlled by the MNO post-2010 to support MNO Community Councils, Regional Métis Consultation Committees, Captains of the Hunt, PCMNO, Women's Secretariat of the MNO, MNO Youth Council, Veterans, and etc.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA08-07)

President Lipinski spoke in favour of the motion, determining that it would make sense to have a Métis set-aside of 30%.

Chair Picotte explained that for the adoption of resolutions, the call for consensus was made three times in accordance with the Métis Rules of Order. She extolled delegates to review the MNO statement of prime purpose and to use it when formulation the strategic plan.

CONCLUSION AND CLOSING PRAYER

Closing comments by Gary Lipinski, MNO President focused on the AGA as one of firsts, starting with the Celebration of Louis Riel Day in Toronto, the inauguration of the PCMNO by a Métis judge and the signing of the Framework Agreement with the Government of Ontario. The President was pleased and honoured that delegates were present to witness that signing. It was anticipated that Councilors would be taking the news of the Agreement and strategic planning processes to Community Councils.

The AGA paid tribute in a standing ovation to the Chief Operating Officer and to staff for their support in bringing the administration to a level where the MNO could start to take advantage of opportunities. President Lipinski observed that there was also a debt of gratitude due to the families and those who supported the delegates and leaders to be present at the AGA.

Together with the members of the PCMNO, President Lipinski extended appreciation to all in attendance and looked forward to the next assembly in less than a year.

The 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held November 17-18, 2008 concluded on Day 2 – November 18, 2008 at 2:20 p.m. Senator Gerry Bedford offered a Closing Prayer.

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This is a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the 15th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held November 17-18, 2008 and incorporates any and all corrections made at the time of adoption.



Tim Pile, Secretary-Treasurer



France Picotte, Chair