

Minutes of the 19th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held August 26-28, 2012, at the Comfort Suites and Conference Centre, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

PREPARATION OF MINUTES: Sharon Visitor, Hunter-Courchene Consulting Group

DAY 1 – SUNDAY, AUGUST 26, 2012

OPENING CEREMONIES

PROCESSION AND FLAG RAISING

The flags of the Métis Nation Hunting Colours; Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO); and, Province of Ontario were marched into the 19th Annual General Assembly (AGA).

CALL TO ORDER

MNO Chair France Picotte, called the 19th Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the Métis Nation of Ontario to order at 8:22 a.m.

OPENING PRAYER

Senator Brenda Powley, Historic Sault Ste. Marie Council, welcomed the participants to the AGA and opened the meeting with a prayer.

1. OPENING REMARKS

1.1 Opening Remarks by Chair

Chair Picotte provided her opening remarks in Michif. She welcomed everyone to the MNO's 19th AGA in Sault Ste. Marie. She encouraged everyone to work together to move the MNO's agenda forward and asked that the participants take some time to review the Annual Report that was available in the meeting kits. Chair Picotte also encouraged the members to ask questions. She then acknowledged some of the sponsors, including: Union Gas; Bruce Power; Hydro One; and, Abitibi/Temiscamingue & James Bay Territories Consultation Committee. She then introduced MNO Vice-Chair Sharon McBride to provide some opening comments.

1.2 Opening Remarks by Vice-Chair

Vice-Chair McBride said that she looked forward to the AGA every year and noted that the MNO had accomplished a lot throughout the past year and made positive steps towards the coming years. She welcomed everyone to the meeting and looked forward to talking to everyone.

1.3 Introduction of the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario

Chair Picotte introduced the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO) to the Assembly.

2. WELCOMING REMARKS

2.1 Premier Dalton McGuinty

Chair Picotte read correspondence sent by Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty. The Premier congratulated the MNO on their 19th Annual General Assembly.

2.2 The Honourable Christopher Bentley, MPP, London West, Minister of Energy

The Honourable Christopher Bentley, MPP, London West, Minister of Energy, recognized that Deputy Minister Laurie Leblanc, Aboriginal Affairs was in attendance. He welcomed the participants to the meeting and said that not only was the AGA a celebration, but a reaffirmation of the centrality of the Métis; Métis history; Métis presence; and, the Métis future.

Minister Bentley stated that there had been a great strengthening and evolution of the relationship between the Métis and Ontario. The Premier had consistently met with the MNO each year to develop and build on the constitutionally and historically recognized centrality of the Métis in Canada. He noted that the Framework Agreement that was signed several years ago was currently being updated; there was recognition of the Year of the Métis in 2010 by the government; there was recognition of the celebrations for Louis Riel Day; and, there was special recognition of the contributions of Métis Veterans that were currently in attendance.

He indicated that Métis had always been an enormously entrepreneurial people and that entrepreneurial spirit was recognized when President Lipinski launched the Voyageur Fund to support entrepreneurial resource development for Métis.

Minister Bentley stated that the Province had launched an expansion of the Aboriginal Loan Guarantee Fund, made available to Aboriginal people, including Métis, to participate in renewable energy projects. The Fund had been expanded from \$250M to \$400M.

The Minister also recognized the significant work the MNO had done in education. He acknowledged the Powleys and congratulated President Lipinski and the PCMNO on their re-elections.

He mentioned that the Province and the Métis Nation were stronger together than apart and it was the determination to continue building that relationship that was a great strength. Minister Bentley stated that the Métis had made great contributions to the development of the country and would continue to make great contributions in the future.

President Lipinski presented Minister Bentley with a gift in appreciation of the Minister's continued support of the Métis Nation.

2.3 The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, MPP, Don Valley West, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs (Video Message)

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, MPP, Don Valley West, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs stated that she was proud of the partnership that the MNO and the Province had built together. She recognized the hard work of the Métis Nation, referencing the signing of the historical Framework Agreement in 2008. The Framework enabled the Province and the MNO to work together to improve the well being of Métis families, children and communities.

Minister Wynne said that she was able to join President Lipinski to celebrate the official launch of the Métis Development Fund to enable Métis entrepreneurs to expand their businesses. She also encouraged participants to go to the provincial website to see what was available with respect to funding, such as the expanded Aboriginal Loan Guarantee Fund.

She congratulated the MNO for all of its accomplishments and wished the PCMNO and participants a great Assembly. Minister Wynne concluded by stating that she looked forward to continuing to work together.

President Lipinski presented a gift to Ms. Laurie LeBlanc, Deputy Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, who was in attendance on behalf of Minister Wynne.

2.4 The Honourable Dr. Carolyn Bennett, PC, MP, St. Paul's, Critic for Aboriginal Affairs & Northern Development and the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency

The Honourable Dr. Carolyn Bennett, PC, MP, St. Paul's, said that she looked forward to learning more about the role of Métis people and said that as the Critic for Aboriginal Affairs, she saw one of her roles as increasing the awareness of Canadians about the history of Aboriginal people, including the Métis. She noted that through recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and in partnership with Aboriginal leaders, school curricula was being changed to reflect the true history of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

Dr. Bennett thanked the Assembly for inviting her to attend the AGA and said that she could not help but be inspired by the work of the MNO. She stated that with respect to the health of Canadians, the key piece was to secure personal cultural identity. Canadians needed to know who they were and be proud of their heritage.

She thanked the MNO for the work the organization was doing and looked forward to continuing the partnership.

Chair Picotte presented Dr. Bennett with a gift and thanked her for her kind words.

2.5 Mr. Mel Ydreos, Vice-President, Aboriginal Affairs, Union Gas

Mr. Mel Ydreos, Vice-President, Aboriginal Affairs, Union Gas, thanked the Assembly for the invitation to attend the meeting. He acknowledged the PCMNO and Métis leaders and stated that Union Gas was proud to support the MNO, particularly the AGA Métis cultural event that commemorated the Bicentennial and the contributions of the Métis to the War of 1812 that shaped the Nation.

He continued that since that war two (2) centuries ago, the Métis people had made significant and heroic contributions to Canada. He acknowledged the Métis Veterans that were in attendance.

Mr. Ydreos said that it had been two (2) years since the Métis Nation and Union Gas had signed their first General Relationship Agreement and since that time the partnership had been strengthened and a solid foundation had been built for future prosperity. He indicated that Union Gas was pleased to renew the Agreement with the MNO and was very proud of the work undertaken throughout the partnership.

Union Gas had worked closely with the MNO to support the Aboriginal Business Directory; had provided computers for computer labs within MNO offices to support the Genealogy Program; and, had supported the Métis Summer Youth Camp.

Mr. Ydreos thanked the MNO for the partnership opportunity and to continue to strengthen the relationship. He wished the members the very best for the Assembly.

2.5.1 Agreement Signing

President Lipinski agreed that the partnership had been beneficial to both the MNO and Union Gas and looked forward to continuing the relationship. The General Relationship Agreement was then signed.

Ms. Theresa Stenlund, Councillor, Region 1, PCMNO, presented Mr. Ydreos with a plaque commemorating the renewal of the Agreement.

2.6 Mr. Irwin Elman, Chief Advocate, Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth

Mr. Irwin Elman, Chief Advocate, Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth thanked the MNO for the invitation to attend the Assembly. He noted that the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth was a new office and he welcomed the opportunity to develop a relationship with the MNO. The Office was independent from the provincial government and existed to elevate the voice of children and youth to decision-makers. He acknowledged Minister Bentley as a champion for children and youth.

He noted that the lived experience of children and youth was an incredible source of wisdom for people and when that voice was put at the centre of thinking, it brought people together to find ways to do something different to make change. Mr. Elman said that his Office wanted to work with the MNO to make sure the voices of Métis children and youth were heard. He stated that it was a historic step for his Office and he anticipated that it would be a long and beneficial partnership that would benefit Métis children and youth across the Province.

2.6.1 Agreement Signing

President Lipinski stated that the MNO was looking forward to working more collaboratively with the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was then signed. Ms. Pauline Saulnier, Councillor, Region 7, PCMNO presented Mr. Elman with a plaque commemorating the signing of the MOU. Mr. Elman then presented President Lipinski with a gift.

2.7 Mr. Allen Prowse, Vice-President, Quality, Partnerships & Community Programs, Providence Care

Mr. Allen Prowse, Vice-President, Quality, Partnerships & Community Programs, Providence Care indicated that the partnership with the MNO had provided Providence Care with unparalleled learning with respect to delivering health care to remote Aboriginal people. As the MNO and Providence Care moved forward, emerging opportunities would be identified together to address larger needs. The renewed partnership would include renewed goals and directions to continuously improve the quality and focus of health care, particularly in rural and remote communities.

Mr. Cameron Burgess, Region 2, PCMNO, thanked Mr. Prowse for his important words and presented him with a plaque on behalf of the MNO.

2.8 Dr. Pierre Zundel, President, University of Sudbury

Dr. Pierre Zundel, President, University of Sudbury, stated that the university had a great partnership with the MNO. Through the partnership, Métis oral history was being captured and courses in Métis culture were being developed. He said that there had never been more interest in Indigenous cultures in Canada as there was currently. Dr. Zundel said that the winds of change were coming and it was wonderful to observe how the winds had been filling the Métis sails. Métis spoke in a unified voice and worked together to achieve their goals. The University of Sudbury was happy to sail along with the MNO on the journey.

Mr. Marcel Lafrance, Councillor, Region 3, PCMNO presented Dr. Zundel with a plaque on behalf of the MNO.

2.9 Ms. Kim Powley, President, Historic Sault Ste. Marie Community Council

Ms. Kim Powley, President, Historic Sault Ste. Marie Community Council welcomed the Assembly to Sault Ste. Marie. She congratulated the PCMNO on their recent elections. Ms. Powley acknowledged the dignitaries, Métis citizens and Veterans and indicated that she looked forward to continuing with the Assembly.

Mr. Ernest Gatien, Councillor, Region 4, PCMNO presented Ms. Powley with a gift and thanked the Community Council for hosting the AGA.

2.10 Mr. Clem Chartier, President, Métis National Council

Mr. Clem Chartier, President, Métis National Council (MNC) acknowledged the Elders, Senators and Guests of the Assembly. He noted that he was fortunate to be present for the *Powley* trial in 1998 and had the opportunity to listen to experts and learn more about the history of the Métis, particularly in the area of Sault Ste. Marie. He said that it was a victory for the entire Métis Nation and caused government to take action. President Chartier recognized that sometimes government needed to be nudged to take action, however, he was pleased that the Government of Ontario wanted to move forward in partnership with the MNO.

He mentioned that the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) would be making a decision on another significant court case: *Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) vs. Canada*. The Manitoba case dealt with land rights, specifically the land that was promised to the Métis people in the Manitoba Act in 1870, known as Rupert's Land. The case would determine whether that land was still owed to the Métis. It would also determine the future of Métis outside of Manitoba, particularly those Métis covered by the Dominion Lands Act.

President Chartier acknowledged Dr. Bennett's comments with respect to the TRC. He said that Métis were experiencing exclusion and marginalization with respect to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement. President Chartier stated that the Prime Minister's Apology in 2008, excluded the majority of Métis and as a result, the TRC did not have a mandate to deal with those Métis excluded from the Agreement.

He said that Métis did not want to be separate from Canada, but want to be part of Canada as a Nation; however, Métis wanted the right to self-determination as a People with a land base.

He mentioned that the Métis Veterans had also not been accorded their rightful place, particularly WWII Veterans. President Chartier said that it was important to continue pushing for the rights of Métis Veterans and to never forget the contribution made by the Veterans.

President Chartier concluded by congratulating the PCMNO on their elections and re-elections. Mr. Peter Rivers, Councillor, Region 9, PCMNO, thanked President Chartier for his comments and presented him with a plaque.

2.11 Ms. Audrey Poitras, President, Métis Nation of Alberta

Ms. Audrey Poitras, President, Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) acknowledged the dignitaries and brought greetings on behalf of her Council and staff. She congratulated President Lipinski and the PCMNO on their recent elections. She said that the MNA was celebrating its 19th anniversary and she had had the honour of being involved in the MNA for the past 16 years and had seen the MNO grow significantly. She acknowledged the Voyageur Development Fund and Agreements and MOUs signed, including the Framework Agreement. President Poitras thanked the MNO for inviting her to attend the Assembly.

Ms. Joanne Wass, Councillor, Region 6, PCMNO, provided President Poitras with a plaque for her continued support of the MNO.

3. STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS – MNO PRESIDENT GARY LIPINSKI

President Lipinski welcomed the Métis citizens; Ministers and Deputy Ministers and Métis Nation leaders, including President Chartier and President Poitras, as well as the dignitaries from the educational institutions, private business partners and Métis Veterans. He recognized the Métis Senators, youth and women who were also in attendance.

He commented that time marched on and life happened and some special people were lost within the Métis Nation. He recognized the contribution of Ms. Donna Lee, former Regional Council member and PCMNO member, to the MNO. Ms. Lee had passed away earlier that year. He offered sympathies to Community Council President Larry Duvalle and his wife Fran, who was going through her darkest hour. He also offered sympathies to those Métis citizens and their families who were suffering through illnesses.

He stated that he was honoured to be at the Assembly in Sault Ste. Marie and said that 2012 was an important year with many accomplishments. Provincial elections had been held and he thanked every candidate who participated in the elections as well as the volunteers.

President Lipinski said that it was both an honour and a privilege to work with such a remarkable and dedicated team of staff and with such esteemed colleagues on the PCMNO. He was looking forward to working with the current PCMNO as well as the new Senators that would be joining the PCMNO, including Senators Verna Porter and Rene Gravelle. He thanked Senators Ruth Wagner and Gerry Bedford for their past service on the PCMNO. He acknowledged Mr. Mitchell Case, Youth Representative and Ms. Jennifer Henry, Post-Secondary Representative.

He said that a great deal had been accomplished in 2012. He noted that the relationship with the Province of Ontario was the strongest that it had ever been: MOUs had been signed; there had been recognition of Métis in 2010; and, there had been a commitment to create the Voyageur Development Fund. The Fund was officially launched the previous week and was

dedicated to the expansion of Métis businesses. He mentioned that 100% of the funding for the Voyageur Development Fund was provided by the Province of Ontario. President Lipinski indicated that currently, the federal commitment to the Fund was missing.

President Lipinski acknowledged President Chartier's opening remarks and the costs, both in financial and human resources, to take a case forward to the SCC. He said that taking *Powley* forward represented a 10-year commitment. He recognized that MMF's case took 30 years to move through the courts. The court cases were important to the Métis Nation and both the MNO and MNA sent Intervenors to make arguments for the courts to consider in the Manitoba case. The MNO hoped that the Manitoba case would force the federal government to create a process to deal with the historic grievances of the Métis, since no such process existed for Métis.

He stated that the Métis Aboriginal title had not been extinguished and Métis communities were rooted in deep history. Métis participated in the War of 1812 and fought alongside their First Nations brothers and sisters and pushed the Americans back to Mackinaw Island and held that territory. After the war ended, First Nations went back to Canada and were given reserve lands, but the Métis community was displaced.

He mentioned that in the afternoon, a presentation would be given, providing more details on the work that the MNO had undertaken throughout the past year within its respective Branches. President Lipinski commented that a lot could change within a year and going back further, the MNO was in such a different place than four (4) years ago. He noted that the MNO's debt situation was serious and discussions had occurred with various levels of government. A meeting had occurred with the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and the MNO asked if the Ministry was going to work with the MNO because it would be a difficult journey. The Minister responded that if the MNO was committed to working together, the Ministry would work with the MNO to reduce its debt. President Lipinski said that the audited financial statements would be presented later on in the agenda and he was pleased to say that the MNO had significantly reduced its debt, noting that a \$2.1M debt to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) had been fully repaid.

The PCMNO recognized that the way to build a solid foundation for the future as an organization was to be debt-free. President Lipinski stated that being debt-free would then lead to more economic development opportunities, whether that involved creating job opportunities or moving into the employment market. He said that when he traveled across the province, there were immense opportunities available and often it was important to move forward quickly, particularly in the resource sector.

President Lipinski said that with respect to the Ring of Fire, proponents were undertaking discussion and engaging with Métis and hopefully more economic development opportunities would fall into place. The Métis Voyageur Development Fund and the Aboriginal Loans Guarantee Program would also create opportunities to work with proponents.

He indicated that he was now moving to the last and most important piece that he wanted to address in the President's Update. President Lipinski said that following the elections, the Branch Directors and Managers undertook a planning session to how to better focus the MNO's activities, programs and services on children and youth going forward. The focus on children and youth would span from pregnant women to young adults. He mentioned that he had also had a discussion with the Métis Nation of Ontario Youth Council (MNOYC) and asked for their assistance in the matter.

President Lipinski stated that healthy living for pregnant women needed to be promoted and every child needed to be supported to be the best that they could be, from infancy on. Children and youth needed to be supported as soon as they started school to aspire to graduate and pursue post-secondary education. There were too many Métis youth dropping out of school and those students required encouragement at all levels; by politicians and community leaders and by individuals significant in the lives of those Métis youth. That included parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, neighbours and friends.

Someone needed to play a significant role in children's lives. The low graduation rates of Métis students could not be blamed on schools, but rather, it was an issue that everyone needed to take responsibility for. Every child needed to be given an opportunity and support to be the best that they could be. He said that the MNO would be meeting with the banking sector to discuss potential funding for educational opportunities for Métis youth. He said that the MNO also wanted to run ads in the Voyageur to encourage Métis youth to set up an education fund. The MNO would continue to press government for post-secondary education funding.

President Lipinski said that there was value in work ethic as well and that young people should not expect everything to be given to them. Young people should also work towards creating a better future for themselves. He said that it was also important that children be brought back to the Métis way of life where those fundamental values as Métis people were instilled in their children.

He concluded his comments by saying that when he was a teacher, he had a student who struggled to get relatively good marks. One time, the student did really well on a test and when President Lipinski phoned the student's home, the father answered and just based on the father's tone, he was expecting that his son had gotten into trouble at school. Once President Lipinski explained that his son had done a great job on the test, the father became excited and the two of them had a wonderful discussion. He said that following that discussion; the son became a completely different student who put more effort into his studies. He said that was one example of positive reinforcement and he asked that everyone apply positive reinforcement in their lives.

4. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Chair Picotte referred participants to the AGA Agenda under Tab 2. Ms. Sharon McBride, Vice-Chair, PCMNO, reviewed the Agenda and Chair Picotte asked for a motion for approval.

It was MOVED (Thomas Thompson) and SECONDED (Joanne Young)

That the Agenda for the 19th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario meeting scheduled August 26 – 28, 2012 be approved as read by the Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA12-01)

5. OVERVIEW OF THE RESOLUTIONS PROCESS

Chair Picotte provided an overview of the Resolutions process and suggested that the composition of the Resolutions Committee include the following: Ms. Pauline Saulnier; Senator Ray Bergie; and, Mitchell Case.

5.1 Appointment of Resolutions Committee

It was MOVED (Joanne Young) and SECONDED (Cecile Wagar)

That the Resolutions Committee for the 19th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario scheduled August 26 – 28, 2012 be comprised of Senator Ray Bergie; Pauline Saulnier; and, Mitch Case.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA12-02)

RECESS The Meeting recessed for break at 10:22 a.m. and resumed at 10:45 a.m.

The Resolutions Committee convened during the break and determined that the deadline for submission of resolutions to the Resolution Committee was Monday, August 27, 2012 at 1:00 p.m.

6. “WE ASPIRE TO ATTAIN OUR HIGHEST POTENTIAL” – VIDEO PRESENTATION

President Lipinski said that a video presentation was developed to provide a more in-depth report on the activities of the MNO for 2011/2012. It was noted that the video would soon be available on the MNO website.

RECESS The Meeting recessed for lunch at 11:33 a.m. and resumed at 1:02 p.m.

7. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY QUORUM

Vice-Chair McBride reported that there were 204 registered delegates in attendance at the 19th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario. She advised that 103 registered delegates were required to form quorum. She also noted that motions to amend the bylaws or motions that affected Citizen’s Rights required the approval of 2/3 of the registered delegates, which was 135.

8. REVIEWS AND ADOPTION OF THE 2011 ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY MINUTES

Vice-Chair McBride reviewed the motions and resolutions from the 2011 Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

It was MOVED (Joanne Young) and SECONDED (Thomas Thompson)

That the Minutes of the 18th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario be accepted as amended as follows:

- On page 10, correction of spelling of Chair Picotte’s name; and,
- On pages 17 and 21, correction to spelling of names.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA12-03)

8.1 Business Arising From the Minutes

There was no business arising from the Minutes of the 18th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

9. FINANCIAL UPDATE

Chair Picotte welcomed President Lipinski; Ms. Judie McKenney, Director of Finance, MNO; and, Mr. Randy Tivy, Collins Barrow Brown to present the Financial Update.

President Lipinski indicated that Mr. Tim Pile, Secretary-Treasurer, had been diagnosed with cancer in the past year, but had undergone treatment and the cancer was now in remission.

However, Secretary-Treasurer Pile's wife was just called to Edmonton, AB to undergo transplant surgery and he had accompanied her. He said that Secretary-Treasurer Pile wanted to offer some comments to the Assembly via teleconference.

Secretary-Treasurer Pile welcomed the participants to the AGA and apologized for not being able to join them. He indicated that his wife's surgery had been successful and he thanked the Assembly for their prayers and support through his and his wife's health difficulties.

He mentioned that the Finance Committee and PCMNO were pleased to report that the goal of reducing the MNO debt had been achieved over the past year. Secretary-Treasurer Pile recognized the hard work of Mr. Doug Wilson, Chief Operating Officer (COO), MNO; Ms. McKenney and the finance department; the Finance Committee; and, the Special Assembly for supporting the direction of the Finance Committee. He wished everyone a good meeting and hoped to see everyone at next year's Assembly.

9.1 Treasurer's Update/Finance Report

Ms. McKenney provided an overview of the Financial Report ending March 31, 2012. The overview focused on the following: Overview of the MNO Financial Situation; MNO Financial Management and Accountability; Debt Repayment & Net Assets Deficiency; Current Financial Position; Activities; and, Funding Sources.

9.2 Approval of the 2011/2012 Audit

Mr. Tivy reviewed the Audited Financial Statements For the Year Ended March 31, 2012.

It was MOVED (Joanne Young) and SECONDED (Daniel Gilbeau)

That the 19th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario approved the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended March 31, 2012.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA12-04)

9.3 Appointment of the Auditor

It was MOVED (Joanne Young) and SECONDED (Thomas Thompson)

That the 18th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario appoint the accounting firm of Collins Barrow Chartered Accountants as the MNO Auditors for the year ended March 31, 2013.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA12-05)

RECESS The Meeting recessed for break at 2:38 p.m. and resumed at 2:56 p.m.

10. MÉTIS CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES UPDATE

Mr. Wilson invited Ms. Wenda Watteyne, Director, Healing and Wellness, to provide an update on Métis Child and Family Services. Ms. Watteyne provided an overview of a PowerPoint presentation that focused on the following: Summary of Key Activities in 2011-2012; Summary of Recommendations Provided to Minister and Commission to Promote Sustainable Child Welfare; and, Update on Current Priorities.

11. UPDATES

11.1 Women's Secretariat of the Métis Nation of Ontario

Vice-Chair McBride, who was also the Women's Secretariat of the MNO (WSMNO) Spokesperson, indicated that the Report of the WSMNO was located under Tab 7 of the meeting kits. She reported that the WSMNO had convened the previous day and held Elections. She welcomed new members Ms. Barbaranne Wright and Ms. Candace Lloyd and returning members Ms. Pearl Gabona and Ms. Shirley Lynn Pantuso. She noted that the WSMNO operated differently than the MNO where members worked in their communities as well as on the WSMNO.

She reported that the Terms of Reference (TOR) were currently being revised, including the Mission Statement. She then read the revised Mission Statement into the record as follows:

The Women's Secretariat (WSMNO) is a collective body within the Métis Nation of Ontario. We are dedicated to empower and support Métis Women and their families by promoting physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.

The WSMNO is entrusted to enhance the rights of Métis Women to fulfill their potential in all aspects of their lives. The WSMNO will promote Métis culture, language, history, values, traditions and healthy families and communities by sustaining a healthy lifestyle.

We will aspire each woman to achieve personal goals and aspirations that positively influence themselves and others. The WSMNO will promote and advance equal rights and a strong unified voice for each Métis woman and her family.

The WSMNO will continue to update its TOR. She also added that the WSMNO member term had been changed from four (4) years to three (3) years.

11.2 Senator's Report

Senator Reta Gordon reported that the Senators had met the previous day and also held Elections. She indicated that the PCMNO Senators included: Senator Rene Gravelle; Senator Joseph Poitras; Senator Verna Porter; and, herself, as Executive Senator to the PCMNO.

She said that the Senators had formed a more cohesive group and worked together for the advancement of the Nation. She noted that in all large families there were differences, but those differences were overcome for the betterment of the Métis Nation. Senator Reta Gordon stated that the Métis Nation did not walk one behind the other, but side by side. She recognized all of the Senators in attendance and asked all Senators to stand. She thanked Senators Ruth Wagner and Gerry Bedford for their years of service for serving on the Council and on the PCMNO.

Senator Reta Gordon left the Assembly with the following words by Robert Frost:

*"The woods are lovely, dark and deep
But I have promises to keep
And miles to go before I sleep
And miles to go before I sleep"*

She thanked the Senators and the Assembly for their continued support.

11.3 Veteran's Council Report

Mr. Joseph Paquette, President, MNO Veteran's Council (MNOVC) thanked the MNO for its continued support of the Council. He said that the Council had a great responsibility to represent and advocate on behalf of Métis Veterans. The Council offered its sincere and honest commitment as the MNO marched forward into a new era and fully supported the Statement of Prime Purpose.

He stated that the MNOVC had established a database that had been well accepted. President Paquette reported that approximately 60% of Métis Veterans were being verified in accordance with Community Charters, which was a great achievement.

In 2011, Veterans had attended many events across Ontario as well as participated in many local events; not only as Veterans, but as Métis Veterans. In 2011, the MNOVC website was also established, which promoted Veterans across the province. President Paquette also thanked the MNO for promoting the Veterans and noted that within the past year, nine (9) articles, featuring Veterans, had been published in the *Voyageur*.

President Paquette attended the Remembrance Day ceremonies in Ottawa, ON, November 11, 2011. He said that MNO Veterans also participated in the ceremonies. He noted that in December 2011, Métis Veterans were honoured for their role in the Korean War and a plaque was erected in Ottawa, ON for Korean War Veterans. He continued that a Métis Veteran received the Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship (OMC) in May 2011 and Métis Veterans were enshrined in the Canadian Archives as participants in the War of 1812. The MNOVC was presented with an 1812 Banner and Medal at Commemorative Ceremonies held at Rideau Hall, Ottawa, ON in October 2012. President Paquette stated that both Prince Charles and Prime Minister Harper were present for that ceremony. Finally, the MNOVC participated in a Legion Meeting in Oshawa, ON in July 2011 where some Métis Veterans were awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

He said that the future of the MNOVC was in the hands of Métis Veterans. The MNOVC was looking towards upcoming events and the participation of MNO Veterans in those events. President Paquette noted that 2013 marked the anniversary of Juneau Beach for WWII Veterans; 2014 was the 100-year anniversary of WWI; 2015 would see Toronto host the Pan Am Games; and, 2017 would be Canada's 115 Birthday.

He thanked and acknowledged the Assembly.

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADJOURNED

The 19th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held August 26-28, 2012 adjourned on Day 1 – August 26, 2012 at 3:42 p.m. and agreed to reconvene on Day 2 – August 27, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.

DAY 2 – MONDAY, AUGUST 27, 2012
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ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY RECONVENED

The 19th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held August 26-28, 2012 reconvened on Day 2 – August 27, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.

12. OPENING REMARKS

Chair Picotte welcomed the participants back to the meeting and provided an overview of the previous day's events and provided an overview of the agenda for the day.

13. ELECTION REPORT

The Honourable Paul DeVillers, Chief Electoral Officer, provided an overview of the Election Report that was included under Tab 5 of the Meeting kits. He highlighted some challenges experienced during the provincial elections and outlined recommendations for future implementation.

Questions and Discussion

A question was raised regarding the ballot and secrecy envelope. It seemed that process was contrary to any other process seen within other election processes, such as municipal elections, for example. The participant said that he did not see that issue addressed within the recommendations of the Election Report and asked whether or not the issue would be addressed.

Mr. DeVillers indicated that the Committee had received that comment from a number of sources. He said that for the by-election, the order of the ballot and verification was reversed because of the number of different ballots and the different sizes of ballots. It was important to ensure that the anonymity of the vote was maintained. The verification was removed and was done in front of the scrutineers and candidates to ensure that ballots were cast by registered voters without opening the ballot, in order to maintain the confidentiality of the voter. All candidates and scrutineers were satisfied and signed off on the process.

The comment was made that a system be developed that would maintain the secrecy of the ballots. Mr. DeVillers agreed and said that although it had not been included within the formal recommendations, it was one of the tenets of a democratic election and must be maintained.

Mr. DeVillers made the comment that at the polling station in North Bay, harvesting documents were in plain view. He said that he was informed of the situation and contacted North Bay and the situation was rectified immediately. North Bay had stated that 12 people had voted, meaning that 12 people could have seen the information on election day and perhaps 30 people could have seen the information during the advance poll. An independent investigator determined that it was inadvertent and it would not have materially affected anything. The Electoral Officers agreed with the independent investigator.

President Lipinski thanked Mr. DeVillers and the Electoral Officers, on behalf of the MNO, for managing the MNO's 2012 Elections. He noted that there was a need for a correction in the Election Report and indicated that in 1999, all positions were contested, resulting in some of the improvements in the current MNO Electoral Code. He continued that since 1999, the positions

of President and Chair, had been acclaimed, for the most part, however, a democratic process generated greater interest.

He said that there was a commitment from the MNO to improve the Electoral Code. A resolution would be put forward to the Assembly the following day to move forward with the recommendations made by the Chief Electoral Officer.

The question was raised as to whether a motion was required to have the MNO Electoral Code revised. Chair Picotte clarified that a resolution outlining revisions to the Electoral Code would be tabled the following day.

Mr. Robert A. Giroux, Sudbury Métis Council stated that he would not be in attendance at the meeting the following day. He said that he had participated in the Elections as a candidate and noted several discrepancies with the process. He believed that there were existing electoral codes within the Canadian system that should be adapted for the MNO.

Mr. DeVillers responded that the MNO Electoral Code was designed specifically for the type of organization like the MNO. Recommendations had been outlined that would strengthen the code, such as lengthening the time frame for both campaigning and the mail-out ballot process. Mr. DeVillers agreed that there were areas that needed to be improved.

Mr. Giroux disagreed and stated that elections were elections. He asked if tomorrow was the only day that participants would have to provide input into the revisions to the MNO Electoral Code. Chair Picotte stated that the resolution outlined a process for making revisions to the Electoral Code and that tomorrow would not be the only opportunity to provide input.

Mr. DeVillers commented that the role of the Chief Electoral Officer and the Electoral Officers appointed by the CEO was to administer and apply the MNO Electoral Code as it was written. The principles of democratic elections were also followed.

Ms. Joanne Young, Hamilton-Wentworth Métis Council, said that she was the Mover of the resolution regarding the review, amendments, processes and consultation on the MNO Electoral Code. She encouraged those participants who were unable to attend the meeting the following day, to speak to her directly if there were any specific issues they wanted raised during the discussion of the resolution. She added that the resolution spoke to a complete review of the MNO Electoral Code that included a consultation process.

11. UPDATES (CONT'D)

11.4 Youth Council Report

Mr. Mitchell Case, President, MNO Youth Council (MNOYC) welcomed the Assembly to the beautiful traditional territory that was Sault Ste. Marie. He said that his report focused on MNOYC activities and accomplishments as well as a work plan for the next four (4) years. He acknowledged the MNOYC members and Community Council Youth Representatives who were also present at the Assembly. President Case thanked the Assembly for its encouragement of the MNOYC and Métis youth across the Nation.

He said that currently, the MNOYC only had one (1) vacancy, which it was working to fill. He noted that all of the MNOYC representatives were currently enrolled in post-secondary institutes

or would be pursuing post-secondary education. The MNOYC had established a portfolio system in order to increase communications with MNO Councils; Branches; and Directors.

The MNOYC held monthly conference calls and weekly conference calls leading up to the Assembly. The conference calls enabled the Council to move their work forward.

President Case said that at last year's AGA, the youth tabled four (4) resolutions, including three (3) special business resolutions. He noted that the youth would be tabling another three (3) special business resolutions at the current AGA.

The MNOYC representatives had been involved with the MNO's Infinite Reach Program; participated in the Métis Residential Schools Conference; participated in Knowledge Sharing Workshops with Elders and Senators; and, participated in the MNO's Paddle Making Workshop. Several MNOYC representatives also participated in the Circle of Light Conference and the Michif Language Gathering. President Case also testified before the Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples.

The MNOYC was involved in local communities, at the provincial and national levels. The MNOYC had drafted a Policy and Procedures Manual through a Governance Working Group. The draft document had been finalized in February 2012.

The Council looked forward to continue to work with Elders, Senators and Veterans and continue to strengthen communication with community council youth representatives. The MNOYC would be developing a Communications Strategy, which would include expanding the MNOYC website. The MNOYC was also looking to develop a Youth Engagement Strategy in order to fill 250 elected youth representative positions across Ontario. President Case said that the MNOYC would be working directly with the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth

He mentioned that over the next year, the Council would be working to implement the new Policy and Procedures Manual. President Case said that he was excited for the next four (4) years and the work that the MNOYC would be undertaking. He thanked the MNOYC staff resource for her continued support and wished everyone a great evening at the Community Council Pig Roast.

Questions and Discussion

Senator George Kelly invited youth to approach any Veteran in Ontario for support or to join the Veterans for any occasion.

RECESS The Meeting recessed for break at 9:54 a.m. and resumed at 10:10 a.m.

14. MÉTIS RIGHTS UPDATE

Ms. Jean Teillet provided an update on Métis Law activity for 2011-2012. She provided an overview of the following cases:

- *Cunningham* – Are Métis “Indians”?;
- *Hirsehorn* – Hunting & Mobility;
- *Tsillhqot'in Nation* – Aboriginal Title;
- *Caissie* – Are there Métis in New Brunswick;
- *Legrande* – No Aboriginal Right to hunt in a wildlife sanctuary;

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- *Langan* – No Historic Métis community in San Clara Manitoba prior to effective control;
 - *Beer* – Métis Right to harvest Wood without a Permit;
 - *Smith's Landing First Nation v. Parks Canada Agency and the Fort Smith Métis Council* – Consultation with First Nation over Métis cabin in Park;
 - *O'Sullivan Lake Outfitters* – Incidental cabins;
 - *L'Hirondelle* – Judicial Review not the appropriate way to challenge denial of fishing license or proof of Métis identity;
 - *Ross River Dena* – 1870 Order;
 - *Bellrose* – No tax exemption for Métis elected officials under the *Income Tax Act*;
 - *Moulton Contracting Ltd.* – Individuals require authorization of Aboriginal collection to assert rights in court; and,
 - *Paquette* – No Métis Nation Harvesting Card.

Questions and Discussion

Ms. Teillet indicated that *Hirse Korn* focused on two (2) main issues: the Métis Nation was not defined by small local settlements; and, that Métis should have the right to move between Métis settlements and maintain their rights.

The *Tsilhqot'in Nation* was not a Métis case, but was an Aboriginal title case. The BC Court of Appeal ruled that the rights holders were the larger Nation and not local settlements. The ruling also cited *Powley* and affirmed the structure of how the Métis Nation have been working. The case would be appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC).

The application of the decision in *Langan* was contrary to how she and Mr. Jason Madden had been trying to frame cases, which was unfortunate. Ms. Teillet said that proper rights holders could not be the settlement holders, otherwise small judgments occurred. She mentioned that it was not likely that the case would be appealed.

Ms. Teillet commented that in the *Ross River Dena* case, the judge found that the 1870 Order did not give rise to Aboriginal rights and that could have repercussions for the Métis Nation in future cases.

She said that with respect to *Paquette*, although evidence was not provided of a historic Métis community north of Lake Nipissing and east of Sudbury, it did not mean that there was no evidence. Ms. Teillet said that the case also demonstrated that the MNO was following the policy with respect to issuing Métis Nation Harvesting Cards.

14.1 Future Cases and Activities

Ms. Teillet would be moving forward on the *Cunningham* case and *Hirse Korn*. She mentioned that a decision would be coming down soon on the *Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF)* case, which had been in the courts since 1981.

She noted that 2013 would mark the 10th anniversary of *Powley* and suggested that some discussion occur or a conference on what had happened since the decision and where the Métis Nation wanted to be situated in the next decade. Ms. Teillet said that it would also be the 40th anniversary of *Calder* and the 20th anniversary of the MNO.

She also mentioned that there had been some discussion about the Election Act and it may be beneficial for the MNO to undertake some internal analysis with respect to the MNO's foundational principles.

15. WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

Mr. Jason Madden referred participants to the PowerPoint presentation entitled "*Métis Nation of Ontario – Registry Consultations*". The presentation focused on the following: Mandate for Consultations; 2010 MNO AGA Resolution; Multi-Year Consultation Process on Ontario Métis Identification and Registration; Phase I – 2010/2011; Themes From "*What We Heard*" Report; Phase II – 2011/2012; Emphasize MNO Statement of Prime Purpose; Importance of Métis Rights; Focus on Métis Rights; Supreme Court in *Powley* Case; Mattawa Research; Focus on Métis Rights; Update Interim Registry Policy With Ontario Focus; Improved "*Tools*" for MNO Registry; Adoption; and, Harvester Cards.

Questions and Discussion

Mr. Madden commented that the MNO policies needed to reflect the law. Although cases were being tried in other provinces, there were spillover effects for Ontario.

He mentioned that a resolution would be brought forward with respect to MNO Harvesters Cards. The resolution spoke to an independent assessment being undertaken of the Harvesters Card system. Mr. Madden stated that there should be no cap on the number of cards that could be issued by the MNO because constitutional rights could not be capped. A Harvesting Card did not provide Métis with rights; however, it was an identifiable source that Métis had those rights. He mentioned that the cap would not be removed until an assessment on the system was done. Mr. Madden noted that the resolution proposed that Harvesters missing information would have one (1) year to provide any missing documentation.

Mr. Peter Rivers, Councillor, Region 9, PCMNO, asked if there was a way to defend those Harvesters who were charged, who did not have a Harvesters Card but had all of the necessary paperwork in order, or those Harvesters who were charged for harvesting outside of their own territory.

Mr. Madden said that the resolution also spoke to that issue. He stated that if an individual met the *Powley* test, a Harvesters Card could still not be issued because there was a cap on Harvesters Cards. The problem was that the court would ask that it be proven that those individuals, who did not fall under the Harvesters Card, met the *Powley* test and that would cost approximately \$250K for each individual. He continued that the path to cheaper resistance was to undertake the independent assessment in order to negotiate a different agreement that had no cap.

Mr. Rivers asked whether it would make a difference if the documentation were made available at the basic level of the court system.

Ms. Teillet said that another option would be that if someone were charged because they did not have a card, but were on the waiting list, the MNO could indicate that the individual was part of the Métis Nation and had a right to harvest. A card could not be issued because of the cap. She said that could possibly have some persuasion with the court.

Mr. Madden said that he was unsure whether that argument would be 100% successful and it would not be a guarantee. The judge could still ask the defendant to provide proof of the *Powley* test. He mentioned that there was a need to remove the cap in its entirety and also help people in the shorter-term.

Ms. Joanne Young, Hamilton-Wentworth Métis Council agreed that the issue should be moved forward and she agreed that one (1) year was an appropriate time frame for people to gather any missing evidence. She asked what kind of assistance would be provided for those people trying to complete their files. She said that the MNO Registry did not have the staff to provide that kind of assistance. Ms. Young also noted that some documents may be lost and how could an individual work around a missing document to prove a link.

Mr. Madden said that one of the best projects was the Root Ancestors Project. The project enabled people to connect to different groups that produced documentation and links to core ancestors. He noted that that particular project could help people collect the necessary documentation.

Mr. Paquette asked if a Métis Law Summary had been developed for 2012. Ms. Teillet responded that she released the Métis Law Summary each year and noted that the 2011 Summary was available on her firm's website. She said that she was still working on the 2012 Summary and it would be available on the website shortly. She said that individuals on her mailing list received a box set binder for free and updates were provided as inserts. Individuals could register for her mailing list at www.pstlaw.ca to receive a printed copy, or the information was also available on-line.

Mr. Paquette believed that some Harvesters Cards were not being utilized. He said that at the end of the year, it could be verified that the cards were being used and once again, people would be denied cards because of the 1250 cap. He said that when organizations issued false Harvesters Cards and individuals were charged as a result, those organizations should also be charged. Mr. Madden agreed that those organizations should also be charged.

Ms. Teillet said that with respect to Harvesters Card not being used for year, it could be for a number of reasons, such as an individual being sick, or having a bad year. She said that it would also be difficult to assess why some cards were being used irregularly. She stated that from her perspective all Métis had a right to harvest and it was not helpful to look at those cards that were being used irregularly, but rather to look at those cards that were given out in error or look at those individuals who had incomplete registry information. Ms. Teillet stated that once the assessment was completed, the MNO could move toward getting the cap removed.

Mr. Eugene Laronde, Northern Lights Métis Council, indicated this his hunting territory was Mattawa, however, he resided in Cochrane. He said that if he could prove that Cochrane was a historical Métis village or town, would he be able to hunt in the Cochrane area. Mr. Madden said that it had already been established that Cochrane was within the James Bay-Abitibi-Temiskaming area. However, the participant would need to demonstrate ancestral connections to that area. He continued that the Métis Nation was currently at the Court of Appeal with respect to Métis moving between settlement areas.

Mr. Laronde asked how an individual could prove that a town was a historical Métis settlement. Mr. Madden said that it was not the town that Métis people should be connected to, but rather

an area. He said that Métis individuals needed to connect to the root ancestors of a region so that an individual would not just be tied to Cochrane, but be tied to the entire region of James Bay-Abitibi-Temiskaming.

Mr. Robert A. Giroux, Sudbury Métis Council said that he was concerned that 500 Harvesters Cards would be affected by the assessment and yet the Mattawa Research had not been released. He noted that 90% of people east of Sudbury were Algonquin/Nipissing Métis and did not meet the *Powley* test; or would the Algonquin/Nipissing Métis meet the *Powley* test because they had not been included as part of *Powley*.

Mr. Madden disagreed and said that a number of cases had been tried. He said that he was not nervous after seeing the available documentation. Even Ontario recognized that there was something there historically with respect to people being identified as Métis. He did not believe it would be problematic for individuals to ancestrally connect to the root families.

Mr. Giroux commented that he was unsure if one (1) year was going to be enough time to find missing documentation. He said that it took him four (4) years to find his missing documentation.

Senator Rene Gravelle expressed concern about removing the cap before the boundaries were removed. He stated that Métis were supposed to be responsible harvesters and there was already a tremendous amount of pressure on game with the current boundaries in place.

Ms. Teillet responded that there was no evidence that there would be an increase of people hunting, who had never hunted before, for example. It would simply be a shift to a system that could be accountable and provide reporting that was not there previously.

Mr. Madden said that the Métis boundaries map had been created in 2004 based on the knowledge available at the time. He recognized that some of the boundaries did not make sense, however, the Métis Nation would get there. He noted that ultimately, the larger rights holder was the Métis Nation and eventually, even the Métis Nation boundaries would need to be broken down.

President Lipinski thanked Ms. Teillet and Mr. Madden for their informative presentations and recognized the hard work that they did on behalf of the Métis Nation.

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADJOURNED

The 19th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held August 26-28, 2012 adjourned on Day 2 – August 27, 2012 at 12:31 p.m. and agreed to reconvene on Day 3 – August 28, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.

DAY 3 – TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 2012

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY RECONVENED

The 19th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held August 26-28, 2012 reconvened on Day 3 – August 28, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.

16. OPENING REMARKS

Chair Picotte provided an overview of the previous day's activities. She invited Vice-Chair McBride to recognize the Queen's Jubilee Medal winners. Chair Picotte then outlined the agenda for the day.

17. DEVELOPING AN MNO APPROACH TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Madden referred participants to the PowerPoint entitled "*Moving Forward on Métis Economic Development*". The presentation focused on the following: Direction from 2011 MNO AGA; Work Undertaken in 2011/2012; "Nation-Building" Versus "Jobs & Income"; MNO Governance and Business Flow Chart; The Tlicho Experience; The MMF Experience; and, Next Steps.

Questions and Discussion

Mr. Madden said that business decisions needed to be made on business sense, meaning running a business with a view to running profits, as opposed to dealing with socio-economic challenges within communities. However, any profits could be used to address those socio-economic challenges. He noted that the "nation-building" approach had clear lines and division between business operations and governance operations.

He mentioned that the MNO structure was unique. The MNO was an organization that had various levels of government working together, whether it was the Regions, Community Councils or the PCMNO. However, for various economic or cultural initiatives, there were needs to incorporate separate vehicles.

Mr. Madden stated that one of the challenges was that Community Councils also had separate economic development corporations. That model had not been entirely successful because communities often did not have the necessary supports in place in order to file the taxes and product annual reports. What had happened was that some of those corporations had incurred significant debts, often dissolving and those liabilities then had to be paid by the MNO. Mr. Madden stated that any new systems had to have checks and balances in place.

President Joe Paquette, MNOVC, commented that the MNOVC did not qualify for the New Relationship Fund, even though the Council interfaced with various proponents, as Community Councils also did. He asked if there were any funding opportunities that the MNOVC could access to further develop the Council.

Mr. Madden said that there were a number of activities that the MNO wanted to undertake, such as providing funding for Veterans' activities or youth activities, however, funding was not available. Currently, the MNO did not have any "unrestricted funding". However, any profits earned through any MNO economic development corporation would be considered "unrestricted funding" and could be used for Veterans' activities, for example. Mr. Madden continued that the only option currently, was to approach government for work that the MNOVC may want to do, although, often the needs of organizations did not align with government priorities.

President Lipinski said that implementing the Voyageur Development Fund was a significant and necessary step forward to continue to expand the organization. In four (4) years, the MNO had significantly reduced its debt and that had taken considerable work and having to say "no" to many requests for funding. The MNO needed revenue streams that were not tied to government funding.

Mr. Joe McBride, Ottawa Métis Regional Council, commented that the Dog Rib Nation leadership was in crisis and there was a risk of the band leadership being dissolved. He asked what safeguards were in place to protect assets in the event that the MNO experienced crisis as well.

Mr. Madden said that he was not aware that the Tlicho were in crisis, however, the whole point was to separate the political organization from the business corporation. He continued that even if the MNO experienced some bumps in the road, the business side of the MNO would still be operational.

18. RESOLUTIONS

18.1 Special Business Resolutions

Chair Picotte indicated that Special Business Resolutions could not be considered by the Assembly because there was less than 2/3rds of registered delegates present. She noted that there were 120 registered delegates present and approval of the Special Business Resolutions required 136 votes. Chair Picotte recognized the Resolutions Committee to lead the process.

Questions and Discussion

The suggestion was made that Special Business Resolutions occur on Day 1 or Day 2 of the Assembly. Chair Picotte stated that Simple Resolutions had to be dealt with on the last day of business, however, the PCMNO would consider moving Special Business Resolutions to Day 1 or Day 2 of future AGAs.

Chair Picotte raised the issue that some participants wanted to vote by secret ballot. She said that each vote would take 1.5 hours, however it could be done. Senator Malcolm Dixon, Great Lakes Métis Council, said that Special Business Resolutions could be voted on by secret ballot prior to the last day of business. Mr. Madden commented that each vote would take 1.5 hours and it would be functionally impossible to vote by secret ballot unless the Assembly was seven (7) days long. He said that motions should be addressed in a practical manner when there was a lot of business to be considered by the Assembly.

18.2 Simple Resolutions

Ms. Pauline Saulnier, Resolutions Committee read the Simple Resolutions into the record.

Resolution #:	AGA-RES2012-001
Title:	AMENDMENTS TO MNO ELECTORAL CODE
Mover:	Cora Bunn
Seconder:	Richard Cuddy

WHEREAS a foundational principle of the MNO is to hold fair and democratic elections for the election of the Métis Nation's regional and provincial leadership;

AND WHEREAS the MNO has adopted the MNO Electoral Code for the conduct of its elections and held its most recent election in May 2012;

AND WHEREAS the MNO's Chief Electoral Officer tabled a 2012 Elections Report with the 2012 MNO AGA making a series of recommendations with respect to the conduct of future MNO elections;

AND WHEREAS the MNO wants to provide an opportunity for all MNO citizens to provide their comments and input on the MNO Chief Electoral Officer's Report as well as provide their comments and feedback on the MNO's 2012 Election process generally;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The MNO circulate the MNO Chief Electoral Officer's report throughout the MNO in September 2012 and provide an opportunity for all MNO citizens to provide their feedback on the report as well as provide their input on the MNO's 2012 election process generally until April 30, 2013.
2. All comments received by the MNO prior to April 30, 2013 will be considered by an independent Committee consisting of a representative from the MNO Community Councils, MNOYC and Senators as well as the MNO's legal counsel. The Committee will also be supported by the MNO's administration.
3. The Committee will be tasked with preparing a report based on comments received, along with proposed changes to the MNO Electoral Code. This report and the proposed changes to the MNO Electoral Code will be circulated throughout the MNO. These documents will also be tabled with the 2013 MNO AGA for its consideration and discussion.
4. Based on comments and feedback received from MNO citizens as well as the 2013 MNO AGA, a final redraft of the MNO Electoral Code will be tabled for the consideration and ratification of the 2014 MNO AGA.
5. No amendments will be made to the MNO Electoral Code while these consultations are ongoing or after the 2014 MNO AGA considers and makes changes to the MNO Electoral Code.
6. The appointees to the Committee will be Joanne Young (Hamilton/Wentworth Métis Council), Janine Landry (MNOYC) and Verna Porter (Senator).

RESOLVED (AGA-RES2012-001)

In Favour – 126
Opposed – 2
Abstention – 1

Resolution #:	AGA-RES2012-002
Title:	2013 MNO ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS
Mover:	Gary Lipinski
Secunder:	France Picotte

WHEREAS 2013 will also mark the 20 year anniversary of the creation of the Métis Nation of Ontario;

AND WHEREAS September 19th, 2013 will mark the 10 year anniversary of the Supreme Court of Canada’s historic decision in the Powley case;

AND WHEREAS the MNO wants to celebrate its accomplishments as well as highlight the ongoing advances in Métis rights that have been achieved as a result of the Powley case;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The MNO develop a 2013 anniversary logo marking the MNO’s formation and the Powley decision that can be used by the MNO throughout the year on letterhead, promotional materials, etc.
2. The MNO administration be directed to work with governments and other potential partners (i.e., Métis National Council, Chair of Métis Studies, etc.) to attempt to secure funding to hold a symposium on the Powley case in Ontario to coincide with the September 19th anniversary.
3. One of the goals of the symposium will be to commission papers and produce a book of legal and academic articles on the impacts of the Powley case and the advancement of Métis rights. The symposium will also look to include presentations on the impacts of Powley on average Métis citizens and Ontario Métis by telling the story of the creation of the MNO and its struggle to advance the Powley case, the personal stories from Elders and community members about the Powley case, etc.
4. The MNO will also attempt to hold a “Friends of the Métis” gala event, as a part of the symposium and AGA events.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA-RES2012-002)

Questions and Discussion

President Mitchell Case, MNOYC supported the Resolution and said that it would be important to have youth at the Symposium as well.

The suggestion was made that the development of an MNO flag be considered at the same time as the celebrations. President Lipinski stated that a motion had been passed previously with respect to the development of an MNO flag and it was currently being worked on by the MNO Communications Department.

A participant said that with respect to the book, it would be important for the MNOVC and Community Councils to showcase the wonderful additions they had made to communities and to Métis culture.

Resolution #:	AGA-RES2012-003
Title:	MNO HARVESTERS CARDS
Mover:	Louise Goulding
Seconder:	Richard Cuddy

WHEREAS the advancement of Métis rights and self-government is fundamental to the MNO;

AND WHEREAS ensuring that all Métis citizens can continue to practice their constitutionally protected harvesting rights as a part of their Métis culture is essential;

AND WHEREAS in the Powley case the Supreme Court of Canada recognized the Métis as a full fledged rights-bearing people and that historic Métis communities that continue to the modern day possess constitutionally-protected harvesting rights;

AND WHEREAS in order to be a Métis rights holder an individual must self-identify as Métis, be ancestrally connected to a historic Métis community and be accepted by the Métis contemporary community which is a continuation of the historic community;

AND WHEREAS the Supreme Court of Canada also stated that:

It is important to remember that, no matter how a contemporary community defines membership, only those members with a demonstrable ancestral connection to the historic community can claim a s.35 right. Verifying membership is crucial, since individuals are only entitled to exercise Métis aboriginal rights by virtue of their ancestral connection to and current membership in a Métis community.

AND WHEREAS the MNO established the MNO Harvesters Policy and Card system as a way to identify and defend Métis rights-holders who meet the Powley test and who are entitled to exercise Métis harvesting rights in their traditional territories;

AND WHEREAS in July 2004 the MNO negotiated an interim Four Point Harvesting Agreement with Ontario which recognized the MNO's Harvesters Card system as well as the MNO's identified harvesting territories based on credible Métis rights claims, but the agreement capped the number of Harvesters Cards the MNO could issue at 1250 until an independent review of the MNO Harvester Card system is conducted;

AND WHEREAS in order to increase that 1250 cap, and, ultimately have the cap completely removed (because there can be no cap on legitimate Métis rights-holders exercising their constitutional rights) the MNO wants to move forward on undertaking an independent assessment of the MNO Harvesters Card system;

AND WHEREAS in order to ensure the independent assessment demonstrates the highest percentage of objectively verifiable files possible in order to ultimately remove the cap on Harvesters Cards, the MNO needs to ensure that all Harvesters Card files are complete and show documented proof of a Métis ancestral connection to the historic Métis community, as required by the Powley test.

AND WHEREAS there are some MNO Harvester Card files that do not have complete documentation in them and the MNO Registry's ongoing efforts to attempt to get those Harvesters Card holders to complete their files have been unsuccessful since these cards with incomplete files continue to be automatically renewed;

AND WHEREAS these incomplete files have the potential to undermine the integrity of the MNO Harvesters Card system in an independent review even though the majority of Harvesters

Card files are complete and the ongoing delays in undertaking an independent assessment of the MNO Harvesters Card system is not allowing the MNO to issue Harvesters Card to other MNO citizens who have completed Harvesters Card files due to the 1250 cap;

AND WHEREAS it is the goal of the MNO AGA to have the 1250 cap removed as soon as possible in order to allow all legitimate Métis rights-holders to have a MNO Harvesters Card and exercise their Métis harvesting rights;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The MNO Registry be directed to write letters to all MNO Harvesters Card holders with incomplete files requesting that additional documentation be provided in order to complete their files pursuant to the requirements the MNO Harvesters Policy, which is consistent with the Powley test. These letters will be sent out by the end of November 2012. Each letter will state the following:
 - a. it is being sent on the direction from the MNO AGA;
 - b. the MNO Harvester Card holder has until November 30, 2013 (12 months) to ensure that their Harvesters Card file is complete.
 - c. if the Harvester's file is not completed prior to November 30, 2013, the Harvester's Card will be cancelled and provided to the next MNO citizen on the list who has a completed MNO Harvester Card file that has been waiting for one of the MNO's 1250 cards;
 - d. any paid administration fee (\$20/year) for future years will be returned to a Harvester who has their Harvesters Card cancelled by the MNO;
 - e. if their Harvesters Card is cancelled on November 30, 2013 they will be able to re-apply for a MNO Harvesters Card in the future once their file is complete and if MNO Harvester Cards are available for issuance;
 - f. the letter in no way affects MNO citizenship and does not question whether an individual is Métis;
 - g. the process is being undertaken in order for the MNO to successfully complete an independent review of the MNO Harvesters Card system which will allow the MNO to comply with the Powley test as set out by the Supreme Court of Canada and remove the negotiated 1250 cap in the future so all MNO citizens who are rights-holders can obtain Harvesters Cards in the future.
2. The MNO administration be directed to attempt to secure funding in order to undertake community workshops to assist MNO Harvester Card holders and others in completing their Harvesters Card and/or citizenship files.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (RES-2012-003)

Abstention – 1

Questions and Discussion

Ms. Theresa Stenlund, Councillor, Region 1, PCMNO agreed with the motion and information outlined, however, she suggested that the MNO keep the administration fee for cancelled cards because of the administrative work involved. President Lipinski agreed that there were high administration costs with issuing the Harvesters Cards, however, it would simplify the process by returning the money paid by Harvesters when their Cards were cancelled.

The question was raised as to whether or not there would be an appeals process. Mr. Madden responded that an appeal process was outlined within the Registry and the Harvesting Policy and those policies would apply to the current process.

A participant asked whether the time frame of one (1) year was reasonable in trying to obtain lost documentation. Ms. Louise Goulding felt that one (1) year was reasonable and if individuals were still unable to obtain the documentation necessary within that time frame, they could always reapply at a later date.

President Lipinski commented that in reality, an agreement was done in 2004 where a member of the Negotiating Team informed every Community Council that Harvesters Card files needed to be completed. He said that every community meeting that he had attended across the province, he had informed harvesters that incomplete files would need to be addressed.

Ms. Joanne Young, Hamilton-Wentworth Métis Council suggested that correspondence sent to Harvesters outline the missing documentation required as opposed to sending a generic letter. Mr. Madden said that the purpose of the letters was to ensure that communities were looking at incomplete Harvesters files and the issue was actually identifying what documentation was missing and then finding that documentation.

The concern was raised about whether or not there was a process in place should some Harvesters not receive a letter indicating that their file was incomplete. For example, would the letters be sent by registered mail.

Mr. Madden commented that there were obligations on MNO citizens to update their files as well. He did not believe that the onus should be put back on the MNO to ensure that every single Harvester with an incomplete file was contacted. He said that some addresses were not kept up-to-date and the MNO would follow-up on any returned mail, however, it was not the MNO's responsibility to chase down every incomplete file.

The question was raised as to how an individual could get a Harvesters Card without getting a Citizenship Card. Mr. Madden responded that the Harvesters Card was issued to Métis who were ancestrally connected to an historic Métis community. He said that some Métis may come from Slave Lave and the Red River and would not meet the *Powley* test, even though they were Métis Citizens. The Harvesters Card system looked at whether individuals met the *Powley* test.

A participant asked whether the MNO was able to provide support to help Harvesters find their missing documentation. Mr. Madden stated that the MNO currently did not have the capacity to do that.

President Lipinski stated that the passing of the motion was a remarkable step forward towards getting the cap removed.

Resolution #:	AGA-RES2012-004
Title:	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Mover:	Sharon McBride
Seconder:	Pauline Saulnier

WHEREAS pursuing economic development is an important part of building strong Métis communities and a strong MNO;

AND WHEREAS the MNO AGA wants to ensure that economic development is pursued in a transparent, accountable and business-like manner, which does not put the MNO, Community Councils or individual MNO citizens at financial risk;

AND WHEREAS the MNO has commissioned work and opinions based on other best practices for aboriginal economic development and the identification of legal issues to protect the MNO, Community Councils and individual MNO citizens when economic development is pursued;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. the MNO AGA direct the PCMNO to continue its work on developing MNO economic development model and to adopt a MNO Economic Development Policy that can be implemented at all levels of the MNO; and,
2. the MNO AGA direct the MNO to pursue economic development opportunities that will assist the MNO in paying off its remaining debt and allow the MNO to increase the amount of discretionary funding that is not tied to program and service delivery.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA-RES2012-004)

Resolution #:	AGA-RES2012-005
Title:	MNOYC POLICY AND PROCEDURES
Mover:	Mitchell Case
Seconder:	Janine Landry

WHEREAS the MNOYC strives to meet the goals laid out in the Statement of Prime Purpose;

AND WHEREAS there are currently no policies and procedures speaking directly to youth governance;

AND WHEREAS a strong youth voice is essential for the future of the MNO;

AND WHEREAS the MNOYC has taken time to develop a draft policies and procedures manual by creating a Governance Working Group, which met multiple times via conference call and finalized the draft Policies and Procedures on February 19, 2012;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

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1. The 2012 MNO Annual General Assembly direct the PCMNO, MNO staff and administration to coordinate with the MNOYC in order to review and revise with a view to implementing the draft Polices and Procedures developed by the MNOYC Governance Working Group on February 19, 2012; and,
 2. This process be completed by the 2013 Annual Assembly.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA-RES2012-005)

Question and Discussion

President Lipinski requested a friendly amendment, so that the PCMNO would have an opportunity to review and ratify the draft policy and procedures to ensure that the document was consistent with the MNO by-laws.

A participant suggested that it would be beneficial if all of the resolutions put forward would be consistent with the MNO policies and by-laws. Mr. Madden said that the Resolutions Committee reviewed the simple resolutions and put them into proper form. He mentioned that friendly amendments often improved and enhanced resolutions brought from the floor.

Resolution #:	AGA-RES2012-006
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RESOLUTION NOT CONSIDERED BY ASSEMBLY BECAUSE MOVER WAS NOT PRESENT
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Resolution #:	AGA-RES2012-007
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RESOLUTION WAS WITHDRAWN BY MOVER
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Resolution #:	AGA-RES2012-008
Title:	MNO AGA ENTRY
Mover:	Senator Ruth Wagner
Seconder:	Pauline Saulnier

WHEREAS the dignitaries of the Métis Nation of Ontario, Government and proponents open the AGA in the canoes;

AND WHEREAS our MNO President mentioned that we should encourage our youth to be future leaders;

AND WHEREAS the MNO has the MNOYC;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. at each future AGA, an additional canoe be added for our youth representatives, subject to funding being secured.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA-RES2012-008)

Question and Discussion

President Lipinski mentioned that each year, the MNO transported two (2) Métis Voyageur canoes and a Red River Cart to the AGA and also stored them throughout the year. He said that often, it was unknown how many dignitaries would be participating in the AGA procession. The PCMNO was included in the procession and he believed it was representative of the Métis Nation. In addition, there would be additional costs and consequences of adding an additional canoe.

Ms. Pauline Saulnier, Councillor, Region 7, PCMNO said that she supported the resolution and believed that fundraising could cover the costs of an additional canoe.

Mr. Madden said that many resolutions were administrative in nature. He stated that the AGA should not financially bind the MNO when the Assembly may not have a full understanding of the financial situation. He suggested a friendly amendment to the resolution. The mover and seconder were in favour of the amendment.

Senator Cecile Wagar, Oshawa and Durham Métis Council, stated that her Council had a 26-foot birch bark canoe that could be loaned to the youth for each AGA, however, costs for liability and transportation would need to be covered.

Resolution #:	AGA-RES2012-009
Title:	CITIZENSHIP INFORMATION TO COMMUNITY COUNCILS
Mover:	Cora Bunn
Seconder:	Marlene Davidson

WHEREAS it is important for Community Councils to know who their new citizens are;

AND WHEREAS the Métis Nation of Ontario has new citizen's contact information on the MNO citizenship application;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. the MNO AGA provide direction to the MNO administration that the MNO Registry provide updated citizenship lists to each MNO Community Council on a bi-annual basis.

RESOLVED BY CONSENSUS (AGA-RES2012-009)

Question and Discussion

A friendly amendment was suggested that the updated citizenship lists be provided to each MNO Community Council on a bi-annual basis. The mover and seconder agreed to the amendment.

Resolution#:	AGA-RES2012-010
RESOLUTION WAS WITHDRAWN BY MOVER	

Resolution#: AGA-RES2012-011
RESOLUTION WAS WITHDRAWN BY MOVER

Resolution#: AGA-RES2012-012
RESOLUTION WAS WITHDRAWN BY MOVER AND REFERRED TO THE PCMNO

Resolution#: AGA-RES2012-013
RESOLUTION WAS WITHDRAWN BY MOVER

Resolution#: AGA-RES2012-014
RESOLUTION WAS WITHDRAWN BY MOVER

Resolution#: AGA-RES2012-015
RESOLUTION REQUIRED A BYLAW AMENDMENT AND WAS NOT PUT TO THE FLOOR SINCE IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A SPECIAL BUSINESS RESOLUTION

Ms. Pauline Saulnier thanked the Resolution Committee members including Senator Ray Bergie and Mr. Mitchell Case. She also thanked the support staff of Mr. Andy Lefebvre; Mr. Glen Lipinski; and, Mr. Jason Madden.

19. CLOSING REMARKS

President Lipinski said that it had been an amazing few days. He thanked the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Council for hosting the meeting and recognized the historical significance of the community. He stated that the MNO continued to move forward on many fronts and he was proud of the numerous achievements, whether it was the participation of the Veterans or having the largest youth contingent at an AGA.

He said that it was important to continue to mentor children and youth because they were the ones that would change the world. He continued that the MNO could learn from other success stories, such as the work being done by the MNA in advancing Métis rights. President Lipinski believed that with respect to the Harvesting Cards, the motion that was supported by the Assembly would eventually lead to the removal of the cap on harvesters. He said that the support provided for the MNO economic development resolution would lead to a debt-free organization with revenue generating streams.

In closing, President Lipinski thanked Chair Picotte and Vice-Chair McBride for doing a remarkable job throughout the AGA. Finally, he thanked all of the Métis Citizens who were in attendance and who also worked hard in local communities. He wished everyone safe travels home.

President Lipinski then presented Senator Brenda Powley with a Voyageur Canoe Plaque and thanked the Community Council for hosting the AGA and providing such great hospitality to make the AGA a special occasion.

Senator Brenda Powley said that it was an honour to receive the gift and she thanked everyone in the community and the Council members who had put so much time and effort into hosting the Meeting.

Chair Picotte mentioned that the total attendance for the 19th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario was 380 people. Senator Ross and Senator Ruth Wagner played Amazing Grace on the fiddle and harmonica.

ADJOURNMENT

The 19th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held August 26 – 28, 2012 concluded on Day 3 – August 28, 2012 at 11:42 a.m. Senator Reta Gordon closed the AGA with a prayer.

This is a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the 19th Annual General Assembly of the Métis Nation of Ontario held August 26 – 28, 2012 and incorporates any and all corrections made at the time of adoption.



Tim Pile, Secretary/Treasurer



France Picotte, Chair