

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO

COMMUNITY COUNCIL ROLES SUMMARY

Introduction

This document is a general overview of the common Community Council (Council) roles, including the President, Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Senator, Women's Representative, Youth Representative, and Councilor-at-Large. The most successful councils are those that actively promote consensus-building through a collaborative and problem-solving approach. A more detailed description of each role, along with helpful guidance, is available for elected council members during council training.

Role of a Community Council

A Chartered Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Community Council is elected by MNO citizens living within its boundaries. As indicated in the Council Community Code (Bylaws), the prime purpose of a council is *“We seek to collectively promote our Métis Culture as well as promote and foster prosperity and economic self-sufficiency within our community. We resolve to work towards the recognition and affirmation of our existing Aboriginal and treaty rights, including our inherent right of self-determination and self-government. We affirm that we will represent the Métis citizens of this community under the values, principles and laws of the MNO as amended from time to time.”* Councils lead by example in following the [MNO's Code of Conduct](#), [Métis Rules of Order](#) and other MNO laws, policies and processes that enable effective and democratic governance. Governing documents and policies are available on the MNO's [website](#).

Role of the Community Council Executive

The Council Executive includes the President, Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Senator. Their collective responsibility is to coordinate activities, identify planning and capacity priorities, keep citizens informed, address concerns, and represent the Métis Nation of Ontario with integrity. The executive discusses key issues, collaborates, and then presents recommendations to the full council, where decision-making is made.

President Role

The President serves as the leader and spokesperson for the Council, sits on its executive, and oversees all its activities. They involve the executive and all council members in decision-making, develop and implement plans to promote unity and innovation, and keep citizens informed about the Council's work and the MNO. The President is responsible for managing council functions, identifying citizens' needs and issues, proposing strategies, and collaborating with the council and other elected leaders to address these. They also engage with the Regional Councillor, other council presidents, MNO leadership and Secretariat to advance the broader interests of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and ensure the council is well-informed. Effective Presidents motivate council members, delegate duties, and foster citizen involvement. They have the same council voting rights, privileges and responsibilities as a Councilor-at-large (Councillor).

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Chair

The Chair sits on the council's executive and presides over all council and executive meetings. They follow the Métis Rules of Order to maintain decorum, adhere to the agenda, and ensure that all council members have opportunities to contribute to discussions and decision-making. The Chair shall also step in when called upon by the President to take on some or all of the President's roles if the President is temporarily unable to perform their duties. In the absence of or upon the resignation of the President, the Chair shall assume the duties of the President. The Chair remains neutral and votes only to break a tie at Council meetings and has the same rights and responsibilities as a Councillor.

Secretary

The Secretary serves on the council executive, playing a vital role in advancing the Council's goals. The Secretary is responsible for recording meeting minutes, documenting action items, maintaining motion records, and managing written communications to keep citizens informed about council activities and broader engagement. The Secretary has the same voting rights, privileges and responsibilities as a Councillor.

Treasurer

The Treasurer sits on the council's executive and oversees the Council's finances. The treasurer ensures that pre-existing motions are in place before spending or reconciling expenses, collects receipts, and reports on the council's income and expenditures. They also ensure that spending priorities align with the Council's goals and that funds are used in accordance with funding parameters and the wishes of the citizens. The Treasurer has the same voting rights, privileges and responsibilities as a Councillor.

Senator

The Senator (age 55+) sits on the council executive and brings wisdom, experience, integrity, and traditional and/or spiritual guidance to the council. The Senator is a positive role model and peacemaker, providing unbiased, respectful guidance to the council. As a member of the council executive, the Senator participates in and votes at all executive meetings. The Senator also leads in delivering the opening and closing prayers at community events, or may appoint another MNO citizen to do so. The Senator has the same voting rights, privileges and responsibilities as a Councillor.

Women's Representative (Rep)

The Women's Representative on the Council acts as an advocate to advance women's perspectives, participation, and engagement, ensuring that the needs of Métis women are acknowledged and addressed.

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The Women's Representative interacts with women citizens within the council's jurisdiction, serves as a liaison between provincial and local government bodies, and offers the Council valuable insights and advice on women's issues. The Women's Representative has the same voting rights, privileges and responsibilities as a Councillor.

Youth Representative (Rep)

The Youth Representative on the Council plays a vital role in advocating for the interests of MNO citizens aged 16-29. This role offers Métis youth a platform to share their perspectives and engage in the path towards self-governance. While youth reps are not responsible for council activities related to citizens under 16, their opinions and support are valued. A youth rep, who is 18 years and older, is a full voting member of the council, with the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as a Councillor.

Minors: An elected or appointed youth under the age of 18 is a minor and does not hold any of the rights, powers, duties or liabilities of a Councillor. Minors on the council are not entitled to exercise a binding vote on any matter before the Council or any of its committees. This applies for the duration of the person's term, even if they reach 18 years during that term.

[MNO Policy #2016-001](#): Youth and Post-Secondary Representatives

Councillor-at-Large

A Councillor acts as a voting member of the council, attends all council and community meetings, helps identify priorities, and develops council policies and procedures. They participate in and support council activities. Each Councillor should contribute to decision-making, oversee the council's financial affairs, and assess the council's overall performance. Additionally, the council may assign a Councillor to lead specific initiatives or to serve on various committees representing the council's interests.

MNO Community Council Citizens

MNO citizens can help build a vibrant community! You can get involved by running for office, voting in the council election, attending or volunteering at council events, and supporting outreach efforts. Citizens can quietly observe council meetings and are encouraged to attend community general and annual meetings, which provide opportunities for citizens to come together, for the council to hear what matters to you, and for citizens to propose, discuss, and vote on motions that will support and shape the council.

Interested in serving or volunteering for your council?

Please visit the MNO's website for more information:

[Council Elections](#); [Council Vacancies](#); [Council Contacts](#)