

## Aboriginal Engagement Committee Meeting

11 September 2014

1:30 p.m. in Dr. Roger Epp Conference Room 2-004

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Jérôme Melançon (Chair)	Allen Berger	Glynnis Hood
	Petra Cegiely	Trina Harrison	Craig Webber
	Mike Clermont	Brittany Johnson	Michelle Pratt (Recorder)

### REGRETS:

#### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m.

#### 2. Agenda

The agenda was accepted as presented with a change in the order – Design will be discussed first and then the Communication Strategy.

**MOTION: HARRISON/CLERMONT**

**CARRIED**

#### 3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes of 14 August 2014 were approved with the following amendments: Under Terms of Reference, it should read “a committee member who is of Aboriginal descent”; correction to the spelling of Wab Kinew’s last name.

**MOTION: HOOD/CEGIELNY**

**CARRIED**

#### 4. Remarks from Committee Members

- a. The Chair welcomed everyone.

#### 5. Business

##### a. Presentation of Design for the Space for Aboriginal Students –

Craig presented the design concepts. With a focus on the larger area of the lower level, a preliminary design has been developed that will be of benefit to a number of different groups. There are a range of programming opportunities in a number of areas: 1) programming space that can be closed to smaller workshop/classroom functions or opened up to facilitate a larger event in the entire area; 2) a room for Elders; 3) space for the administrative function of the Aboriginal Student Office; 4) an area for Aboriginal students to gather; 5) comfortable seating area for students to relax or study which includes recharging stations for electronics; 6) a social area around the existing pool tables.

The design elements of the space have been organized around the overriding theme of a Cree creation story. Initial response from members was that the design was beautiful and enchanting. The delicate details and the care and consideration that has gone into the project thus far were appreciated.

The next meeting of the larger consultation group is scheduled for September 26<sup>th</sup>. At that meeting Elders will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the protocol (if any) around the sacred story that is echoed throughout the design. Craig emphasized that it is a strong organizing element, but is not “out there” all the time.

Concerns were expressed about a possible expectation created at the meeting on May 28<sup>th</sup> of the development of space on the main floor of the Forum or outside the building. It was agreed that mention should be made of the smudge room on the main floor, and the cultural designs on the columns coming up from the downstairs area. It was suggested that there could be a floor treatment with the four cardinal directions done by the fireplace closest to the patio doors which is directly over the room for the Elders. Anything being considered for the main floor should be subtle taking into consideration the funds that are available for the project and the need to

ensure the budget covers the furnishings and the cultural components while leaving some funds for programming.

Furnishings for the space should have a high degree of flexibility i.e. must be able to be moved quickly and easily and stored in available storage space/areas.

The agenda for the meeting on September 26<sup>th</sup> was discussed. It was agreed that the meeting will highlight the design to date, allowing for feedback/questions/concerns. The concept of student legacy projects will be added for discussion, seeking input from Elders as to what the opportunities might be that would create significance. Also the name of the area needs to be settled. To proceed with the cultural design elements, an invitation will be extended for anyone who may want to contribute to advise of their availability. The outcome is to become more efficient, but not exclude anyone who wants to be involved. The timeline would be to bring the final design back to the larger group by the end of November. Tenders would then be sent out early in 2015 for construction to begin May 1<sup>st</sup> if at all possible.

Mention was made of the need to see that the Founders' Hall project stays on target, because the office area designated for the administrative function for the Aboriginal Student Office is being utilized for faculty offices until the Founders' Hall renovation is complete. If it falls behind, it would impact this project.

In summary, Allen will welcome everyone, Craig and Ben will present the design. The meeting will be opened up for a Q&A and then the conversation will be shifted to the naming. Next will be the discussion of what comes next and who wants to be involved. Jérôme and Allen to share the duties of the Chair.

- b. **Communication Strategy – FAQ's** – the documents are great, one comment was that the link for the Aboriginal student project does not include "Aboriginal student" in the title or the link. The link is entitled "Downstairs Forum Renovation FAQ". Allen agreed it could be changed. Jérôme asked for volunteers to work on the Communication Strategy with Christopher. Trina Harrison volunteered and Jérôme will work with them as well.

- c. **Projects –**

**Territorial Acknowledgement Statement** – the statement has not been shared with North Campus as yet, but it is on the website and Jérôme has received great positive feedback from staff and students.

**Teaching Seminar** – On September 22<sup>nd</sup> during the Teaching Seminar a documentary about teaching indigenous themes and students will be shown.

**Prayer Room** – As only a very preliminary conversation has been had between Petra and John Crier at which several questions were raised, it was agreed that the space will not be promoted at the moment. John has been invited to the meeting on September 26<sup>th</sup> and hopefully he can attend so Petra can show him the space and answer his questions. Mike advised that the room still needs a timer installed so the fan will shut off automatically. It was also determined that appropriate signage will be needed.

- 6. **Next Meeting Date – to be determined – first week of October – Michelle to send out a Doodle Poll.**

- 7. The meeting adjourned at 3:02 p.m.

**MOTION: JOHNSON/CLERMONT**

**CARRIED**