

**MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL  
WOMEN OF THE MÉTIS NATION  
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Minutes of the Women of the Métis Nation National Assembly held October 23-24, 2010 in the Canadian Room, Saskatoon Inn, 2002 Airport Drive, Saskatoon, SK, prepared by Jana Anderson, Raincoast Ventures Ltd.

**DAY 1 – OCTOBER 23, 2010**

**1. OPENING CEREMONY**

**1.1 Opening Prayer**

The Assembly was called to order at 8:36 a.m. Elder Yvonne Gariepy offered an Opening Prayer.

**1.2 Opening Remarks – May Henderson – Métis Women Saskatchewan**

May Henderson, Vice-President, Métis Women of Saskatchewan, extended a welcome to all delegates and formally introduced special guests: Métis Nation – Saskatchewan (MN-S) President Robert Doucette; and Métis National Council (MNC) President Clément Chartier.

**2. OPENING REMARKS**

**2.1 Métis Nation – Saskatchewan President Robert Doucette**

MN-S President Doucette welcomed the Women of the Métis Nation (WMN) to Saskatchewan, and acknowledged that the Assembly was taking place on the traditional settlement territory of the Moosewood Plains. He thanked Elder Gariepy for the Opening Prayer, and expressed appreciation to his wife and family as well as his aunties and mother for their ongoing support. MN-S President Doucette acknowledged the guidance of Métis women throughout history and the growth of the WMN as a result of this continued support. He wished the Assembly success in its deliberations.

**2.2 Clément Chartier, Métis National Council President**

MNC President Chartier welcomed delegates to the Assembly and acknowledged Elder Gariepy for the Opening Prayer. He commented on the historical importance of the Assembly which was being reconvened for the first time in two years as a result of the hard work and collective efforts of the WMN. This was supported by the MNC Board of Governors (BOG) which agreed by consensus to ensure there were women's voices in all initiatives throughout the Métis Nation. He acknowledged 2010 as the "Year of the Métis Nation", celebrating the accomplishments of Métis as a people and commemorating past leaders, and commended MN-S on the success of Batoche 2010.

MNC President Chartier spoke of MNC's pride in its democratic accountability, noting that women accounted for 62% of the members of the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) Board of Directors, and approximately 40% of the overall elected leaders at the MNC Annual General Assembly (AGA).

Delegates were advised that in September 2008, the MNC signed a Métis Nation Protocol with the federal government which was meant to re-establish a relationship with Canada, to address women's and Indian Residential School issues; the exclusion of Métis in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC); and Métis engagement in governmental processes. MNC President Chartier expressed support for the voice of women in all processes including the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group looking specifically at education and violence against women.

MNC President Chartier commented on the federal government's position with respect to obtaining core funding for the WMN noting that it would involve incorporating separately from the MNC. The BOG had been working diligently over the past two years on solutions and delegates were advised that in June 2010, it adopted a policy acknowledging the priority for the WMN to incorporate as an institution of Métis Nation governance based on bylaws and a reporting mechanism to the MNC, Governing Members, the AGA, and the federal government. The WMN National Spokesperson would be invited to each BOG meeting and the AGA to provide a report. The BOG also committed to enabling the WMN to appoint, where possible, representatives on all MNC committees, task forces, panels, and commissions. Funding available, they would also be invited to be part of MNC delegations to major national and international meetings.

Delegates were encouraged to attend the upcoming National Métis Child & Wellness Conference to be held November 4-5, 2010 in Winnipeg, MB.

### 3. INTRODUCTION OF CO-CHAIRS

May Henderson, Vice-President, Provincial Métis Women of Saskatchewan, provided an overview of her background experience as a past President of Prince Albert, Métis Local #7, as Executive Director of the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre, and as a Board member of the Provincial Métis Housing Corporation. Ms. Henderson commented on her pride in being Métis and celebrating "2010: Year of Métis Nation".

Ms. Henderson introduced Michelle Le-Clair Harding as the Assembly Chair and Louise Oelke as the Co Chair, and thanked the MNC for its support of the WMN.

Ms. Henderson read aloud comments from Monell Bailey, President of the Saskatchewan Métis Women, who welcomed delegates across the homeland to the conference and extended regrets that she was unable to personally attend. She expressed appreciation to MNC President Chartier, the Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians (OFI), the MNC Executive Director and MNC staff for their dedication and hard work in ensuring the WMN Assembly was convened. Ms. Bailey acknowledged provincial Métis women leaders present and wished all delegates success in their deliberations.

### 4. ROLL CALL

The roll call was undertaken (refer to Appendix A for a list of voting delegates). In response to a suggestion that alternates should be recognized, Chair Le-Clair Harding noted that past practice allowed for two alternates per province. Delegates were advised alternates would sit outside the table until called upon to fill a seat for one of the 10 voting delegates allowed per Governing Member. Observers were requested to comment or provide statements through the provincial representatives only.

### 5. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

**It was MOVED (May Henderson, MB) and SECONDED (Melanie Omeniho, AB)**

That the Agenda for the Women of the Métis Nation National General Assembly scheduled October 23-24, 2010, be accepted with amendment vary the order to consider Item 7, Governance Discussion, in advance of the lunch health break on Day 1.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 01-10-23-10)**

Chair Le-Clair Harding introduced MNC staff present at the meeting and acknowledged guests from OFI: Lisa Boyce, Analyst and Jeff Betker, Negotiator; and from MNC: Adrian Mrdeza, Special Advisor to the President, and Maureen Richards.

## **Health Break**

The Assembly recessed at 9:23 a.m. and resumed at 9:40 a.m.

## **6. BUSINESS MEETING**

### **6.1 Approval of the 2007 General Assembly Minutes**

*Related materials provided in the Women of the Métis Nation AGA Agenda package: Minutes of the Métis National Council, Women of the Métis Nation, Annual General Assembly, held March 31-April 1, 2007.*

Co-Chair Oelke led the meeting in a review of the distributed 2007 Annual General Assembly minutes. All Motions and Request for Action items were reviewed and status updates were provided.

#### **It was MOVED (Muriel Parker, MB) and SECONDED (Donna Wright, BC)**

That the Minutes of the Women of the Métis Nation 2007 Annual General Assembly held March 31-April 1, 2007 be adopted with amendment to the Listing of Delegates to correct the spelling of delegates names as follows: Ontario: Alison Croft, Shirley Pantu, Evelyn Powley, Pauline Salnier; BC: Samantha Sansregret; and Saskatchewan: Jacquie Bouvier.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 02-10-23-10)**

### **6.2 Report on Women of the Métis Nation Activities 2007-2010**

*Related materials provided in the Women of the Métis Nation AGA Agenda package: Women of the Métis Nation, Policy Proposals, National Aboriginal Women's Summit, Corner Brook, Newfoundland, June 20-22, 2007.*

Melanie Omeniho, Women of the Métis Nation Alberta, provided an update report on activities. At the 2007 Assembly, the WMN agreed to work collectively on priorities and a set of policy documents were developed. While there had been no direct funding for activities following that meeting, efforts continued through teleconference calls and with the support of the MNC.

The WMN participated in the National Aboriginal Women's Summit (NAWS) held in June 2007 at which the draft WMN policy proposals were presented. As a result of the Kelowna Accord, a subsequent Summit was held in Yellowknife in 2008 with WMN participation. Ms. Omeniho expressed concern that as a result of the lack of political support for the 2008 Summit, the federal government had indicated that another NAWS would not be funded.

Despite a lack of funding, WMN participated at various other events including the recent Métis Economic Development Conference held in Calgary, AB, October 21-22, 2010. Former WMN National Spokesperson Rosemarie McPherson attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> Indigenous Leaders Summit of the Americas held in April 2009 in Panama at the invitation of the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC).

Métis women also presented to the Minister for Status of Women and discussed issues specific to Métis women including: violence against women and the review of the Sisters In Spirit Initiative. While Ottawa did commit \$10 million under the 2010 federal budget to address violence against Aboriginal women, there had been no suggestion yet as to how that money would be spent.

Métis women presented to the Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples with respect to the role Métis women play in governance and on how to promote and strengthen those roles. Delegates were informed that all verbal presentations made were available online through the federal government. The WNM had been working with MNC staff on developing a database and repository of documents that would be available on the MNC website and accessible to all Métis women across the homeland.

Ms. Omeniho spoke on the need for inclusion of Métis women voices and expressed support for moving forward collectively to ensure this occurred.

**It was MOVED (May Henderson, SK) and SECONDED (Annette Maurice, BC)**

That Michelle LeClair-Harding be appointed as Chair and Louise Oelke as Co-Chair of the Women of the Métis Nation 2010 National Assembly.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 03-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Muriel Parker, MB) and SECONDED (Pat Letendre, SK)**

That the verbal report on the Women of the Métis Nation Activities 2007-2010 be accepted as presented.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 04-10-23-10)**

**7. Governance Discussion**

**7.1 Overview of Incorporation – Procedures and Requirements**

Chair Le-Clair Harding encouraged delegates to review the distributed *Women of the Métis Nation, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Draft Bylaws*. As part of the review, delegates from each of the Governing Members would be allotted time to caucus and bring forward any resolutions with respect to the proposed Bylaws.

General discussion ensued on the process for considering the draft Bylaws. Support was expressed for the suggestion that the Bylaws be reviewed article by article, with minor amendments discussed and accepted by the Assembly collectively, and significant or controversial changes considered by resolution. Support was further expressed for considering any resolutions with respect to the direction of the WMN as part of Agenda Item 10, “Priorities and Planning”.

Delegates expressed support for the suggestion that Article 4 of the draft Bylaws be redrafted and included in the “Principles”.

**Agenda Varied**

The Agenda was varied to consider Item 11, Métis Nation Forum on Economic Development Report on Gender Initiatives, at this time.

**11. MÉTIS NATION FORUM ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT ON GENDER INITIATIVES**

John Weinstein, MNC Chief Administrative Officer, provided an overview of his background experience, including his assistance on the Métis Nation Protocol and initiatives flowing from the Protocol. He noted that economic development was a key initiative flowing from the process and that it was supported by the current federal government. He commented that the need for Métis specific strategies was pivotal to the Protocol. With resources provided, the MNC Economic Forum II was held October 21-22, 2010 in Calgary, AB and an Economic Development Strategy was developed. It included recommendations for Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) with respect to how to restructure programs in order to be consistent with the Strategy.

Mr. Weinstein noted that INAC was interested in funding pilot projects with respect to gender based economic development related issues including access to capital and business formation. MNC felt that any new economic development initiatives would need to be channeled through MNC and its governance structure and it was the MNC's position that Métis women should have input into this process. As such, MNC had advised INAC that they would not participate until after the WMN National Assembly.

Mr. Weinstein confirmed that the government also expressed a desire to address financial literacy. MNC felt the best approach would be to have any new initiatives dealt with on a Métis-specific basis, delivered through proven accountable institutions in full consultation and collaboration with Métis women. As such the government agreed to provide MNC with its own resources for a pilot project on improving access to capital for Métis women. He noted that addressing financial literacy was already occurring with other capital corporations and that there were some Métis business officers already providing these services. It was MNC's position that any pilot should be run by Métis women already skilled in this area or offered as a service under existing Métis Human Resources Development Agreements (MHRDAs).

General discussion ensued during which delegates offered:

- governing structures need to engage Métis women to ensure that the efforts meet the needs in the various regions;
- there was \$42 million in court ordered funding from the TD Bank; one related proposal was for a project where women saved one third with the TD Bank boosting the savings by two thirds;
- business planning was complex and challenging; the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) simplified the process under a strategy for homelessness where they required simple format, plain language business plans; the MNC should work with government and lobby for simplifying the business plan process and creating a tool to assist women write a business plan;
- the term "financial literacy" was complex;
- women do not need others to write a business plan for them – they need to be able to understand and develop their own business plan so they can explain it, understand it and run the business;
- the province of BC does not have capital corporations and most people are faced with going to a local tribal council where they do not often receive a warm reception; and
- at the MNC Economic Development Forum, delegates were advised that Nexum was willing to pay for economic development trade show business activity; women should look into participating and accessing this funding.

In response to questions, Mr. Weinstein advised:

- although the Minister announced \$1 million for pilot projects on access to capital and financial literacy, the breakdown per project was unknown;
- it would be challenging to establish a national program on financial literacy;
- MNC was working to access an equitable portion of the \$ 1million in funding;
- it was likely the financial literacy pilot project would cover developing a business plan;
- there may be opportunities to utilize business support officers attached to business advisory services;
- one of the biggest complaints at the MNC Economic Development Forum was that the INAC website dealing with procurement was far too complex; and
- the scope of any financial literacy projects would be identified by individual project owner(s).

## Health Break

The Assembly recessed at 10:58 a.m. and resumed at 11:17 a.m.

### 7. Governance Discussion (cont'd)

#### 7.2 Presentation of draft Women of the Métis Nation – Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak By-Laws

*Related materials provided in the Women of the Métis Nation General Assembly Agenda package: Women of the Métis Nation, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Draft Bylaws.*

Kathy Hodgson-Smith, Legal Counsel Consultant, introduced Lynne Nistiuk who was assisting her on efforts to align the WMN goals required to incorporate.

Ms. Hodgson-Smith reviewed the distributed *Women of the Métis Nation, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Draft Bylaws*. Delegates were encouraged to comment on whether there was consensus for the general structure. She noted that an opportunity would be provided to review the specific details of each clause. Delegates were informed that the draft Bylaws were developed to fit within MNC Governing Member's provincial organization structures. For the purposes of the Bylaws and federal incorporation, the current meeting was considered the "Inaugural Meeting" which would trigger the incorporation process. Once the WMN National Assembly approved moving forward with incorporation, the Bylaws would need to be approved and included as part of the incorporation application. An "Interim National Spokesperson" would be elected until an Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held appointing the National Spokesperson.

Ms. Hodgson-Smith noted that the Canada Corporation Act included age and capacity requirements. Under the draft Bylaws, to run for election, a person must be a Métis woman, and the Interim National Spokesperson would be elected from amongst the official delegates present at the current National Assembly. The definition of "director" included: a director of the WMN, registered under federal law, was a Métis Woman, holding office of a Provincial Spokesperson and/or holding office of National Spokesperson and who was not a designate. Elections would be staggered and as elections from the Governing Members changed, directors would also change. The language used for "delegate" recognized the various processes of the governing regions.

Ms. Hodgson-Smith confirmed the draft Bylaws proposed that: the WMN Board was distinct from the directors and would consist of the National Spokesperson, Provincial Spokesperson and designates for Provincial Spokespersons. Quorum of the Board would be four directors, one of which would be the National Spokesperson or her designate. Board voting was 50% plus one of the votes cast. In the event that the National Spokesperson was not able to attend a Board meeting the Vice-Chairperson would Chair. There was power for the Board to "remove for just cause" but votes cast would need to be unanimous to do so. The draft Bylaws reflected that the National Spokesperson plus any one other Director were designated signatories on behalf of the WMN. Delegates were advised that a seal was not legally necessary but could be obtained if desired.

Delegates were further informed that the proposed Bylaws suggested the Board would appoint on one year terms a Vice-Spokesperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Portfolio Chairs as required. Any delegate in attendance at an AGM was eligible to run for the position of National Spokesperson and any Métis woman or National Spokesperson in attendance at an AGM was eligible to run for the position of National Spokesperson. Ms. Hodgson-Smith expressed concern that in situations where one person held two offices of the National Spokesperson and Provincial Spokesperson, there could be a potential for conflict of interest. Delegates were encouraged to provide comment on this issue.

With respect to the AGM, the draft Bylaws reflected that quorum would be determined by 50% plus one of the invited delegates; voting on questions would be 50% plus one of the votes cast; and AGM votes to amend the Bylaws would be two thirds of the votes cast. The WMN would need to appoint an auditor and set appropriate fees at each AGM.

In response to questions, Mr. Hodgson-Smith advised that a prior set of draft WMN bylaws had been used to develop the new draft. Delegates would need to discuss the vision and purpose; and a “general purpose” was also required to be included in the Bylaws.

### **Health Break**

The Assembly recessed at 12:01 p.m. and resumed at 1:06 p.m.

### **7.2 Presentation of draft Women of the Métis Nation – Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak By-Laws (cont’d)**

Utilizing an overhead, Kathy Hodgson-Smith, Legal Counsel Consultant, reviewed each Article and Clause of the *Women of the Métis Nation, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Draft Bylaws*. She advised that:

- Bylaws should identify the minimum requirements with policies then establishing specific direction;
- Article, 4, “Purpose of the WMN” should be minimized;
- “Inaugural meeting” referred to the current National Assembly of October 23-24, 2010;
- Clause 1.10 was not standard and could be included or removed;
- a review of whether to outline the Métis Women’s provincial organizations in Article 3 would be completed;
- Article 3 reflected that all regional disputes would be resolved regionally and not by the WMN;
- the “priorities and planning” exercise under Agenda Item 10 would provide clarification on what should be included in Article 4;
- a review of Article 4, Clauses 4.2, 4.3 and 4.8 would be completed and a new draft Article 4 presented to delegates on Day 2;
- a review of the term for the Secretary and Treasurer (two years, staggered) would be completed;
- the current structure did not include an Executive Committee, it identified Board directors with duties; and
- there would be no impact on the organization if delegates recommended combining the positions of Secretary and Treasurer.

Delegates offered the following comments relative to the Draft Bylaws:

- suggestion that “just cause” would need to be clearly identified;
- using the term “spokesperson” versus “spokeswoman” could be a policy decision;
- a process for identifying a Portfolio Chair could be identified outside the Bylaws;
- concern with respect to clause 1.14 that resources to hold meetings were limited and a meeting would need to be held to appoint a Portfolio Chair; if clause 1.14 were to remain, the term, “Portfolio Chair” should be removed;
- suggestion to list the Métis Women’s provincial organizations in Clause 3.4;
- concern that if the name of the Métis Women’s provincial organizations were changed, Article 3 of the Bylaws would need to be amended;
- suggestion that clauses 4.2 and 4.3 be combined and included in the “purpose”;
- suggestion that the positions of Secretary and Treasurer be combined;

- members of the Board were elected by each of their governing regions and a Board of five should not have the authority to remove a Board director for “just cause”; this would take away the authority of the respective governing organizations;
- the Bylaws could determine what authority the Executive Committee does/does not have;
- consider the different levels of authority given to a Secretary and a Treasurer;
- suggestion that the Secretary and Treasurer be elected for three year terms;
- one year terms for Secretary and Treasurer had been identified to ensure there was no vacancy should a director no longer be a provincial representative;
- consider the benefits of longer terms for the Secretary and Treasurer with staggered positions;
- concern that “named Board positions” were automatically assumed as an “Executive”;
- suggestion that for clarity, the Bylaws should include a removal section clarifying the director removal process;
- suggestion that the Executive Committee should be all five Board Directors and the National Spokesperson;
- the reporting mechanisms should be clarified and done through policies;
- an Executive would be limited in its authority, was responsible to report back to the whole Board, to take minutes and have them accepted by the Board – perhaps a new process should be considered;
- review the flow of responsibility and accountability and how the Board will report to the Assembly;
- consider creating an Executive Committee with clearly identified parameters on its role and authority;
- suggestion that there should either be a four member Executive or quorum increased to five;
- create checks and balances by making the Executive appointments a one year term;
- Saskatchewan was in favour of four positions and not combining the positions of Secretary and Treasurer;
- Ontario was in favour of four positions;
- concern that the term “Spokesperson” was only one function of the leadership, that it could be considered a step down from the position of “President” and having women as a “Spokesperson” was not an equal position to “President”;
- support for increasing Board quorum to five with roles and responsibilities being identified which would discern the role of the Executive;
- support for using the term “President” instead of “Spokesperson”;
- Manitoba has considered changing the name to “Provincial Leader”;
- an Executive of three would be more beneficial as increasing the number to five or six could create difficulties for achieving quorum;
- nationally, Industry Canada identified specific functions for the positions of Secretary and Treasurer;
- the National Spokesperson should have a title equal to other national women’s Associations of Canada (e.g., Pauktuutit and NWAC), or the same kind of recognition will not occur; and
- in the past “Spokesperson” created concern that it reduces the position internationally and with other organizations – support for use of “President” and Vice-President”.

## **Health Break**

The Assembly recessed at 2:33 p.m. and resumed at 2:55 p.m.

## **7.2 Presentation of draft Women of the Métis Nation – Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak By-Laws (cont’d)**

Kathy Hodgson-Smith, Legal Counsel Consultant, continued the review of the draft Bylaws, advising that:

- Clauses or Articles requiring further discussion could be moved to policies;

- Clause 7.2 was required under statute;
- the Bylaws did not restrict attendance at an AGM – only who was eligible to vote;
- regions would need to decide whether alternative wording was needed for Clauses 7.13-7.14;
- under the MNC bylaws, the National Spokesperson would have 90 days to resign from a Provincial Spokesperson position once she was elected as a National Spokesperson;
- when taking on a directorship one committed to act in the best interests of the corporation and a designate would only exercise the director’s vote;
- the National Spokesperson was elected to represent women nationally for a separate organization (the WMN) , with a separate set of duties; these duties would conflict with that of a Provincial Spokesperson;
- it was proposed that the National Spokesperson would not have a vote except for breaking a tie; this mirrored the national governance structure;
- it was important to see the WMN within the Métis Nation governance structure;
- Article 8, quorum should be discussed by the regions in caucus;
- a review of whether to use the wording “voting” or “invited” delegates would be conducted;
- the Bylaws needed to establish signing authorities;
- Clause 9.1 only identified that two signatures were required with Clause 9.2 identifying that policies would direct the signing authority;
- a review of whether to use the term “Chief Administrative Officer” under Clause 10.4 would be completed;
- Article 19 was taken from federal legislation;
- Article 20 identified that proper liability insurance would need to be in place to protect Board directors;
- it would be beneficial to provide a presentation to all Board directors at a future Board meeting to ensure they were clear on their roles and responsibilities;
- clarification would be provided with respect to whether Clause 22 would need to be removed after the first AGM; it would likely remain but become silent; and
- a dissolution clause would be added to the draft Bylaws.

In further discussion with respect to the Draft Bylaws, delegates commented that:

- the Provincial Spokesperson position in Manitoba was a volunteer position and there were parameters that could be included with respect to identifying a conflict of interest;
- concern that the WMN would be asking an elected official to give up their elected position to act in a national capacity and if that seat were given up and another person from the same province was on the Board, there could still be a potential conflict of interest;
- the issue of conflict would not be removed if the National Spokesperson had no vote, it would still exist whether the clause was included or not in the Bylaws;
- support for creating a national organization recognized by the MNC and the federal government, with funding for the National Spokesperson position;
- concern that if participation at an AGM must be all five of the Governing Members, a veto vote could occur;
- concern that Clauses 9.1 and 9.2 did not clarify the procedure or process for signing authority and that the liability was onerous;
- consider identifying that signatories must have the signature of the National Spokesperson and one Board director plus one of either the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Chief Financial Officer (CFO);
- suggestion that under Clause 11.1, another term for the word “Chief” be used;
- concern that requiring a resolution for the execution of documents on behalf of WMN could result in the delay or inability to put forward a funding proposal; a lack of funding to meet to obtain a Board resolution could be a problem;

- in the past the WMN was not responsible for financial instruments and did not have any liabilities so no insurance was obtained;
- it was important to acknowledge the roles, responsibilities of Board directors and their potential liabilities; and
- as long as a director was acting in the best interests of an organization, they were covered by the Corporations Act and Industry Canada.

***Consensus Decision (01):***

*By consensus, it was agreed that the draft “Women of the Métis Nation Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Bylaws” would be amended to:*

- *replace “Le Femme” with “Les Femmes” throughout;*
- *Clause 1.7, ensure the legal Governing Members’ names were used;*
- *Clause 1.7, remove the hyphen between “Nation” and “British Columbia”;*
- *strike Clause 1.14 and Article 24 (as part of priorities and planning, the WMN would work on policies with respect to identifying a Portfolio Chair);*
- *Clause 3.3, add “in writing” after “withdraw”.*
- *Clause 4.3, delete “lobbyist”;*
- *Clause 7.16, delete the last sentence (already subsumed in Article 18);*
- *Clause 11.3, delete “and directing its’ debates”;*
- *strike Article 14 and cover it off in policy; and*
- *Clause 20.2.3, add “where funds are available”.*

It was agreed that regional caucuses would be convened in order to develop recommendations with respect to: the number for quorum at a Board meeting and an AGM; the national title (e.g., Spokesperson/President); which clauses to include in the “Purpose”; the structure of the Executive; whether to split or combine the role of Secretary and Treasurer; whether the National Spokesperson could also hold seat as a Provincial Spokesperson; whether any two Board members could be signatories; and whether one signatory must be the National Spokesperson.

**8. WRAP-UP AND OVERVIEW OF DAY TWO**

Chair LeClair-Harding reviewed the Agenda for Day 2, noting that Item 8, Governance Resolutions, would be continued. Delegates were then invited to caucus and develop recommendations for the Assembly with respect to governance and the draft proposed Bylaws.

**ASSEMBLY ADJOURNED**

The Women of the Métis Nation National General Assembly held October 23-24, 2010 adjourned on Day 1 – October 23, 2010 at 4:25 p.m., and set the time to reconvene on Day 2 – October 24, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.

## DAY 2 – OCTOBER 24, 2010

### ASSEMBLY RECONVENED

Chair Michelle LeClair-Harding reconvened the Assembly at 9:13 a.m. Elder Yvonne Gariepy offered an Opening Prayer.

### 8. GOVERNANCE RESOLUTIONS

Kathy Hodgson-Smith, Legal Counsel Consultant, welcomed comments from delegates with respect to outstanding issues and decisions on the *Women of the Métis Nation, Les Femmes Michif Michif Otipemisiwak Draft Bylaws*.

#### ***Consensus Decision (02):***

*By consensus, it was agreed that the Women of the Métis Nation, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Bylaws would reflect that:*

- *quorum at an AGM would be four out of five Governing Member women's organizations; and*
- *quorum at meetings of the Board would be four directors, one of which must be the National President (or Interim National President).*

In a discussion with respect to an Executive Committee, delegates offered:

- the Alberta delegation was in favour of four positions, although there was no need to specifically identify the term “Executive Committee”;
- the roles and responsibilities of the four positions should be referred back to the roles and responsibilities outlined by Industry Canada;
- Manitoba supported three positions with a combined Secretary/Treasurer role; and
- Saskatchewan supported two positions, one Secretary and one Treasurer.

#### ***Consensus Decision (03):***

*By consensus, it was agreed that the Women of the Métis Nation, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Bylaws would reflect that the four positions of: National President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, would form an Executive.*

Delegates offered the following comments with respect to “WMN Signatories”:

- Alberta supported all four executive positions as having signing authority with two officers having authority to sign with the National Spokesperson/President and a third director reviewing; this would result in three Board directors always being aware of all documents signed;
- Alberta supported two to sign, one of which must be the National Spokesperson/President and a fourth with authority to review which would be identified by way of Board motion
- the process for approval should be either the Secretary or Treasurer as they would be responsible for reporting back to the Board; the Treasurer reports back to the Board and Secretary has record keeping function authority; one of either would be an approver;
- Saskatchewan felt that the National Spokesperson/President and Treasurer should have signing authority; and
- Alberta noted that as a national organization, the Treasurer might not always be available and as such supported the National Spokesperson/President and any one of the other three Executive as signatories.

With respect to the suggestion that there should be one signatory consistent on every cheque and that it should be the Treasurer, delegates offered:

- Alberta was supportive of the Treasurer being the consistent signor; any of the other Executive could be a second signatory;
- Manitoba felt the process was being complicated and suggested that any of the four could be signatory; staff would be responsible for approving expenses and would be responsible for the budget; a Treasurer was rarely responsible for day to day duties;
- out of the non-Executive, suggestion to identify four, two of whom would be signatories;
- Alberta felt that identifying who approved documents should be under policy; and supported the four Executive positions as signatories with the position of Treasurer as the consistent signor;
- Saskatchewan was supportive of any two of the four Executive positions as signatories.

***Consensus Decision (04):***

*By consensus, it was agreed that the Women of the Métis Nation, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Bylaws would reflect that the National Spokesperson/President plus any one of the four executive positions would serve as the WMN signatories.*

On the issue of the title for the National Spokesperson and Vice-Spokesperson, delegates commented that:

- BC was supportive of the titles: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer; and
- Saskatchewan was supportive of the titles: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

With respect to whether a President could also hold a seat as Provincial Spokesperson, delegates offered:

- Alberta supported keeping the positions separate;
- Ontario supported keeping the positions separate;
- the position of Manitoba was:
  - concern that at the WMN has not consulted anyone with respect to the affect of using the title “President” when provincially the women are known as “spokesperson”;
  - concern that not all women at the Assembly were sitting as “elected” representatives;
  - the MNC process was that individuals who were elected in their home province and then elected the President at an AGA; this process is also followed by First Nations;
  - concern that there was a director from BC who was suspended and not sitting at this table; should that happen in future, the WMN Board would be down to five directors;
  - concern that our current structure was not strong enough to implement this;
  - suggest the proposed name change to President be taken back to the WMN Board to review the provincial processes for assigning delegates at this table, and to develop recommendations on a proposed structure and accountability for consideration at a future Assembly;
  - currently the province of Manitoba had the only representative elected as Provincial Spokesperson and that was what the position was legally known as in Manitoba;
- Alberta supported the title of “President” which has the same weight, authority, respect and value as other national Aboriginal women’s organizations; and
- Alberta supported keeping the positions as separate whereby a person could not hold the title as National Spokesperson/President and Provincial Spokesperson.

Manitoba delegates suggested that it would be beneficial to provide a presentation at the next AGM regarding the different governance structures of the Governing Members.

**It was MOVED (Susan Dahlseide, AB) and SECONDED (Sharon McBride, ON)**

That the Women of the Métis Nation, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Bylaws reflect the titles of: President and Vice-President.

**CARRIED (Motion: 05-10-23-10)**

(36 delegates in favour, 11 delegates voting in opposition)

**9:59 a.m.**

Delegates from the Métis Women of Manitoba departed the meeting.

**It was MOVED (May Henderson, SK) and SECONDED (Annette Maurice, BC)**

That the Women of the Métis Nation (WMN) bylaws reflect that if a Provincial Spokesperson is elected as the WMN National President, she must resign as leader of the Governing Member women's organization within 90 days of election.

**CARRIED (Motion: 06-10-23-10)**

(34 delegates in favour)

Ms. Hodgson-Smith advised that the Bylaws would define "Provincial Spokesperson" as "the Métis woman leader of a Governing Members' women's organization".

A delegate from MNBC expressed support for a secret ballot voting.

**Health Break**

The Assembly recessed at 10:02 a.m. and resumed at 10:24 a.m.

**Roll Call and Confirmation of Quorum**

Roll call was conducted by Co-Chair Oelke (refer to Appendix B for a list of voting delegates). Chair Le-Clair Harding confirmed that quorum was present and that the conduct of business would resume.

Delegates from British Columbia led the Assembly in the singing of a "helping song" in honour of the Métis women present and Manitoba representatives who departed. A delegate requested that the Métis National Anthem be played as part of the opening at future AGMs.

Elder Garipey offered a Prayer.

**8. GOVERNANCE RESOLUTIONS (cont'd)**

Kathy Hodgson-Smith, Legal Counsel Consultant, read aloud revised wording for the "Purpose" in the proposed bylaws.

**It was MOVED (Susan Dahlseide, AB) and SECONDED (Donna Wright, BC)**

That the "Purpose" of the *Women of the Métis Nation (WMN) Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, Bylaws* shall reflect:

- *The WMN is enabled by motion of the Metis National Council Board of Governors and formed to enable Metis women within the Metis Nation to take an active role within Metis Nation governance, in addition to their right to participate fully in all elected offices in such governance.*
- *The WMN will work within the Metis Nation governance structure, specifically with the Metis National Council and the Governing Members, to represent the interests of and promote leadership by Metis women at the local, provincial, national and international levels.*
- *The WMN will work with Metis Women from across Canada and Metis Nation Government for the empowerment and participation of Metis Women.*

- *The WMN will function as an advocacy body to speak and represent the Metis Women's agenda and perspective nationally.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 07-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Annette Maurice, BC) and SECONDED (Victoria Pruden, BC)**

That the Women of the Métis Nation adopt the *Women of the Métis Nation Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, Bylaws* with amendments as presented.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 08-10-23-10)**

Ms. Hodgson-Smith confirmed that including a “purpose statement” was legally required in the Bylaws and that the purpose would be moved to follow the definitions. Delegates were informed that a dissolution clause would be added, and the Bylaws would be revised and then submitted as part of the incorporation documents. A copy of the approved Bylaws would be emailed to delegates. Delegates were further advised that there was funding available to cover the costs of incorporation.

**It was MOVED (Donna Wright, BC) and SECONDED (Melanie Omeniho, AB)**

That the Women of the Métis Nation approve moving forward with incorporation under the *Women of the Métis Nation Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, Bylaws* as adopted.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 09-10-23-10)**

**9. ELECTION OF INTERIM PRESIDENT OF THE WOMEN OF THE MÉTIS NATION**

**9.1 Overview of Voting Procedures**

Utilizing an overhead, Kathy Hodgson-Smith, Electoral Officer, reviewed “Rules Governing the Election of the Interim National President” as follows:

***“Women of the Métis Nation: Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak  
Rules Governing the Election of the Interim National President***

*These rules are passed pursuant to the Women of the Métis Nation: Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Bylaws, Article 18, and shall govern the election of the Interim National President of the WMN at the Inaugural meeting of the WMN, October 23 - 24, 2010, in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.*

**A. Definitions**

*“WMN Bylaws” means the Bylaws adopted at the Inaugural Meeting of the WMN.*

*“Citizen of the Métis Nation” means pursuant to the Métis National Council Definition of Métis.*

*“Delegate: means a Métis Woman, determined to be an eligible representative to the Inaugural Meeting of the WMN, as provided for in the respective Constitutions and/or Bylaws and/or governance mechanisms of the Governing Members and pursuant to the Bylaws of the WMN.*

*“Governing Members” means the Governing Members of the Métis National Council, specifically, Métis Nation British Columbia; Métis Nation of Alberta; Métis Nation – Saskatchewan; Manitoba Métis Federation; and the Métis Nation of Ontario.*

*“Inaugural Meeting” means the first meeting of the WMN set for October 23-24, 2010, in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.*

*“Interim National President” means the first National Spokesperson elected from amongst the delegates of the Inaugural Meeting and who shall serve as the first National President pursuant to WMN Bylaws.*

*“Métis Woman” means a woman who is a citizen of the Métis Nation, over the age of 18 years.*

*“Provincial Spokesperson” means a Métis Woman who is determined, pursuant to the Constitutions and/or Bylaws and/or governance mechanisms of the Governing Members, to hold the office of a Provincial Spokesperson of the Métis Women in that jurisdiction.*

*“WMN” means Women of the Métis Nation: Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak*

### **B. Candidate Eligibility**

*An eligible candidate for election to the office of the Interim National President, at the Inaugural Meeting shall:*

- *Be a woman;*
- *Be a citizen of the Métis Nation;*
- *Be over the age of 18 years, on or before the date of election, with capacity to contract under law;*
- *Be a delegate to the inaugural meeting of the WMN;*
- *Be a resident of Canada;*

### ***Burden of Proof***

*The burden of proof of eligibility rests with the candidate.*

*Eligibility shall be sufficiently proven with Federal or Provincial government-issued identification, Métis Nation identification, and/or if accompanied by a statutory declaration of the same.*

### ***Criminal Record Check***

*A candidate for the Interim National President shall declare that they have had no criminal convictions for an indictable offence; that they have not been found guilty of, or plead guilty to any criminal offence and that they are not currently facing criminal prosecution for any criminal offence at the time of the declaration. Qualify by the time limits (10 years).*

### **C. Office of the Interim National President**

#### ***Term Length***

*The Interim National President of the WMN shall hold office for a term of one year from the date of the election or until the first Annual General Meeting of the WMN following the Inaugural Meeting where an election of the National President shall take place.*

### **D. Voting Procedures**

#### ***Eligible Voters***

*All delegates to the Inaugural Meeting of the WMN shall be voting delegates for the purposes of electing the Interim National President.*

*Each delegate, in attendance at the time of the casting of votes, shall cast one vote by way of roll call.*

***Casting a Ballot***

*Voters shall be in attendance at the time of the voting. There shall be no proxy voting.*

*Voting shall be by show of hands or by secret ballot as determined by motion of a majority of the delegates to the Inaugural Meeting.*

*The number of votes cast shall be determined by the Chief Electoral Officers at the time of the casting of votes and recorded in the minutes of the WMN Inaugural Meeting.*

***Nominations***

*Any delegate to the Inaugural Meeting may nominate a candidate for election by voicing a nomination, or submitting a nomination in writing to the Chief Elector Officers at the time of nominations. All nominations will be noted by the Chief Elector Officers and recorded in the minutes of the WMN Inaugural Meeting.*

*All nominations must be seconded by a delegate. All seconded nominations will be noted by the Chief Elector Officers and recorded in the minutes of the WMN Inaugural Meeting.*

***Accepting or Rejecting a Nomination***

*A nominee must accept a nomination in person, indicated by voicing of consent to be nominated, or by submitting a written consent, at the time of nomination.*

*Any nominee that does not accept nomination, must indicate by voicing the rejection, or providing written notice of the rejection of the nomination to the Chief Elector Officers, at the time of the nomination.*

*All acceptances or rejections of nominations by a nominee will be noted by the Chief Elector Officers and recorded in the minutes of the WMN Inaugural Meeting.*

***Counting of Ballots***

*A Scrutineer to be in attendance with the Chief Electoral Officers at the time of the counting of the votes.*

***Breaking of a Tie***

*A tie will be broken by the Chief Electoral Officers putting the names of the two candidates with the tie vote on a piece of paper into the hat and draw out the winners name.*

***Appeals for Electors or Nominees***

*An Appeal may be made in writing to the Chairpersons of the Inaugural Meeting, before the closing of the Inaugural Meeting.*

*All appeals will be noted by the Chief Elector Officers and recorded in the minutes of the WMN Inaugural Meeting.*

*The unanimous decision of the Chief Electoral Officers shall be final and binding.*

*Outstanding disputes will be the proper subject matter of the courts, or as agreed by motion of the majority of delegates to the Inaugural Meeting at the time of acceptance of these rules.*

### ***Election Officers***

*The Chairpersons to the Inaugural Meeting shall be deemed to be the Chief Elector Officers for the purposes of the election of the Interim National President of the WMN, and the implementation of these rules.*

### ***Election Results***

*The results of the election for the Interim National President shall be announced to the delegates at the Inaugural Meeting and recorded in the minutes.*

*The results will be announced no later than the close of the Inaugural Meeting.”*

### **It was MOVED (Melanie Omeniho, AB) and SECONDED (Sherry Arko, BC)**

That the Women of the Métis Nation approve the *Women of the Métis Nation Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, Rules Governing the Election of the Interim National President* with amendment to:

- the Criminal Record Check Clause to qualify the time limit of 10 years, and note that convictions were for an indictable offence; and
- the addition of a scrutineer under “Counting the Ballots”.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 10-10-23-10)**

### **It was MOVED (Muriel Stanley Venne, AB) and SECONDED (Sherry Arko, BC)**

That the election for the position of Interim National President of the Women of the Métis Nation be by secret ballot box.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 11-10-23-10)**

## **9.2 Voting**

Electoral Officers Michelle Le-Clair Harding and Louise Oelke called for Nominations for the Position of Interim National President for the Women of the Métis Nation (WMN).

Delegates were then provided with Nominations and Declarations forms and were informed that the Executive would be appointed at the first Board meeting.

Electoral Officer Le-Clair Harding then called a second and third time for nominations. As no further nominations were received, the Electoral Officer called for nominations to be closed.

Electoral Officer Le-Clair Harding then read aloud the written Nominations and Consents submitted as follows:

### **It was MOVED (Annette Maurice, BC) and SECONDED (Suzie Hooper, BC)**

That Clara Morin Dalco be nominated to serve as Interim National President for the Women of the Métis Nation.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 12-10-23-10)**

Clara Morin Dalco consented to the nomination.

### **It was MOVED (Mavis Taylor, SK) and SECONDED (Jennifer McGillis, SK)**

That Michele Nault McIsaac be nominated to serve as Interim National President for the Women of the Métis Nation.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 13-10-23-10)**

Michelle Nault McIsaac consented to the nomination.

**It was MOVED (Sylvia Holt, AB) and SECONDED (Amanda L'Hirondelle, AB)**

That Melanie Omeniho be nominated to serve as Interim National President for the Women of the Métis Nation.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 14-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Sharon McBride, ON) and SECONDED (May Henderson, SK)**

That Melanie Omeniho be nominated to serve as Interim National President for the Women of the Métis Nation.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 15-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Lorelei Chernow, AB) and SECONDED (Joanne Gunville, AB)**

That Melanie Omeniho be nominated to serve as Interim National President for the Women of the Métis Nation.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 16-10-23-10)**

Melanie Omeniho consented to the nominations.

Electoral Officer Le-Clair Harding introduced the following nominees for the position of Interim National President for the Women of the Métis Nation: Clara Morin Dalco, Michele Nault McIsaac and Melanie Omeniho.

**Health Break**

The meeting recessed at 11:40 a.m. and resumed at 12:03 p.m.

**Remarks from Candidates**

Nominees offered comments regarding their eligibility and interest in the position of Interim National President for the Women of the Métis Nation.

**Health Break**

The meeting recessed at 12:20 p.m. and resumed at 1:03 p.m.

**9.3 Election**

**Roll Call**

Chair Le-Clair Harding conducted roll call and confirmed a quorum was present.

**Break for Voting**

The Assembly was apprised that voting stations were open in the adjacent Brass Room. The meeting recessed at 1:08 p.m. to conduct the vote for the position of Interim National President for the Métis National Council, and reconvened at 1:54 p.m.

**9.4 ELECTION RESULTS – ANNOUNCEMENT OF SPOKESPERSON AND ACCEPTANCE REMARKS**

Michelle Le-Clair Harding, Chief Electoral Officer, declared the election process for the Women of the Métis Nation (WMN) Interim National President position closed. Chief Electoral Officer Harding reviewed the ballots received, noting that 40 ballots had been cast and that no ballots had been spoiled.

Chief Electoral Officer Le-Clair Harding announced that Melanie Omeniho had been elected the WMN Interim National President for a term of one year or until the election of the National President at the first AGM.

Interim National President Omeniho thanked delegates present for their confidence and extended a commitment to support all women of the Métis Nation.

**It was MOVED (Annette Maurice, BC) and SECONDED (Victoria Pruden, BC)**

That the Women of the Métis Nation direct that:

- the ballots and account sheet used in the election process be sealed and provided to Kathy Hodgson-Smith, Legal Counsel Consultant, for the duration of the appeal period as identified in Rules Governing the Election of the Interim National President; and
- following the appeal period, that the ballots and account sheet be destroyed.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 17-10-23-10)**

**Health Break**

The Assembly recessed at 2:08 p.m. and resumed at 2:18 p.m.

**Agenda Varied**

The Agenda was varied to consider Item 12 before Item 10.

**12. GUEST SPEAKERS RE: FUNDING CRITERIA AND OPPORTUNITIES**

**12.1 Office of the Federal Interlocutor – Jeffrey Betker**

Jeffrey Betker, Senior Policy Analyst, Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians (OFI), congratulated Melanie Omeniho on her election as Interim National President.

Mr. Betker reviewed an overhead presentation titled, “The Office of the Federal Interlocutor For Métis and Non-Status Indians” which provided an overview of OFI and two key funding areas: the Basic Organizational Capacity (BOC); and Federal Interlocutor Contribution Program (FICP). An outline of the goals and objectives of each type of funding available to recipients under the programs and an understanding of the types of organizations eligible for funding under these programs, was provided.

Mr. Betker provided an overview of the role and mandate of OFI, noting that the office was under INAC, led by Minister John Duncan. OFI was the lead for managing Métis Aboriginal rights issues and had a presence in BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario. An overview of the main business lines including the FICP and BOC for Métis and Non-Status organizations, the *Post Powley* response (Métis Aboriginal Rights), and the Urban Aboriginal Strategy, was provided.

Lisa Boyce, Analyst, OFI, continued the presentation discussing capacity building. She reported that funding recipients were non-profit organizations, off-reserve, Métis Non-Status other appropriate Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal institution that was delivering an initiative or project in accordance with the general purpose of the fund. The main purpose of funding would be to develop the internal capacity of an organization. In addition to the main purpose of basic operational support/capacity, BOC was meant to enable Aboriginal organizations to influence and participate in federal policy and program development and decision making at all levels. Recipients would qualify if they were: recognized as an Aboriginal organization at a national, provincial/territorial or regional level; autonomous; and incorporated under Part II of the Canada Corporations Act or appropriate provincial/territorial legislation. Membership was restricted to a

defined or identifiable group and recipients could not be in receipt of any other core funding from any other federal department.

Subject to Ministerial approval, eligible expenses may include by proposal: salaries and employees; travel within Canada; training, meetings (i.e. Board, AGM), rent/utilities; property taxes, communications; taxes, communications, insurance, professional consulting/elder fees; audit/legal; equipment rental/service/purchase and costs associated with information technology.

In response to questions, delegates were advised: the definition of “representative” was “having the support of constituents”. This would include the WMN as they were representative of Métis women across Canada and the homeland. Mr. Betker clarified that there were several factors involving funding approval turnaround times including eligibility for funding, review of the proposal, and the “peer review process”. Once all conditions (no outstanding reporting or information), were met the contribution agreement would be developed.

## **10. PRIORITIES AND PLANNING**

Interim National President Omeniho welcomed comments on priorities and planning for the WMN. Delegates offered the following comments in a roundtable discussion:

- education and lifelong learning;
- include younger women in women’s organizations (mentoring);
- health, holistic healing and wellness approach;
- in an effort to streamline priorities, suggestion that the policy papers provided in the Assembly agenda packages be reviewed by the provinces and brought back to the national table by the directors from each of the provinces;
- seek core funding;
- create a communications network – provide information to other women;
- establish a plan for how the new President can be visible and encourage provincial activities;
- guide provincial organizations so they can create the capacity and do the work on policy papers;
- the position of National President needs to be defined and we need communications when the President meets with the MNC;
- communication sharing;
- we have more than enough capacity to develop a proposal for core funding – that is the first stage of priority and planning;
- as a grassroots person, one of the struggles is having money to travel to the communities to hear from them about what they want/need;
- to talk nationally you need to know what is going on at the grassroots level and to push an agenda forward we need to communicate with people in our areas;
- core funding is a priority but in addition, there is a need to support the women in the regions - feed the information back;
- work on building capacity, applying for grants and funding outside of OFI;
- messaging: start communicating that WMN is “in business”;
- we are on the right track with the vision especially on connecting with the women in the various provinces;
- consider the young women of the Métis Nation and that it would be beneficial to have a structure for their involvement as part of the succession;
- as the WMN evolves we need as much Elder involvement as we can get – we have many traditional knowledge holders and mentors;
- integrate the youth and have a strong Elder presence;
- develop and push for revitalizing our language;

- if you want to involve the Métis women youth, it should not be nationally, locally and regionally;
- we cannot ask Métis women youth to come represent the youth if they do not know where to start – consider how to guide them;
- now that WMN will be incorporated, Métis women need to be represented at all Committees, Board and structures and so policies need to be developed, especially with respect to how the WMN is involved with the MNC;
- as part of my involvement with Aboriginal Cancer Care Strategy, Susan Dahlseide, AB developed a proposal called the “Pink Sash Campaign” to address the issue of breast cancer; Métis women in rural communities have a much higher risk of having a mastectomy than in urban centres; Métis women need same access to health care no matter where they live; I have prepared that proposal to get that campaign off the ground and if the WMN want to take the project, I would be pleased to provide the proposal to them;
- it would be beneficial as we develop a web presence or information sharing process to offer up ideas/policies/proposals - be a place of information sharing;
- the MNBC youth structure is well established and if there is anything we can do to help Saskatchewan or any other region, just ask;
- the biggest challenge is capacity with youth – some are dropping out of school, having children; I hear the word “capacity” a lot – we have initiative but we often don’t have funding or capacity to even write the proposals;
- give youth more capacity and keep transferring knowledge when you can, that is helpful;
- let us do everything in a spirit which is open and transparent;
- support for working with the youth – our grandmothers opened doors for us; and
- we should honour our past National Spokespersons and Elders.

In response to suggestions raised, Interim National President Omeniho commented on the importance of communications. She advised that with the assistance of the MNC, the WMN was working on building a repository in the MNC database for documents/instruments (projects, proposals, minutes of meetings, etc.) that may be of interest to all Métis women. She advised that a secure portal component was also planned. Interim National President Omeniho encouraged youth to bring their experience and knowledge to the WMN and she expressed support for honouring Métis women Elders.

### **13. CLOSING CEREMONIES**

Chair Le-Clair Harding led a roundtable of closing comments. Delegates expressed their appreciation to the province of Saskatchewan for hosting the event, for the youth and staff for their assistance and support. The sentiment of being honored to be present with all of the beautiful, intelligent Métis women around the table was expressed.

Delegates extended congratulations to Melanie Omeniho on her election as Interim National President of the WMN and encouraged her to contact the Métis Women of Manitoba to welcome their ongoing participation.

Appreciation was extended to Chair Le-Clair Harding and Co-Chair Oelke for their efforts and Elder Yvonne Garipey was thanked for her participation and prayers. Delegates commented on the historical importance of the Assembly, the approval of WMN Bylaws, and the WMN’s imminent incorporation.

WMN Interim National President Omeniho acknowledged and thanked all women present for their support, participation and ownership of the WMN. She extended thanks to her family for their ongoing support. Noting that a motion would be presented at the 2010 MNC AGA,

declaring 2011-2020 as the “Decade of the Métis”, she expressed support and wished all delegates a safe trip home.

**CONCLUSION AND CLOSING PRAYER**

The Women of the Métis Nation National Assembly held October 23-24, 2010 concluded on Day 2 – October 24, 2010 at 4:06 p.m. Alternating between English and Michif, Elder Yvonne Gariepy and Annette Maurice offered a Closing Prayer.

\* \* \* \* \*

This is a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Women of the Métis Nation National Assembly held October 23-24, 2010, and incorporates any and all corrections made at the time of adoption.

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Michelle LeClair Harding, Chair

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Louise Oelke, Co-Chair

- Appendix A: List of Voting Delegates, Alternates and Guests Present - Day 1
- Appendix B: List of Voting Delegates, Alternates and Guests Present - Day 2
- Appendix C: List of Additional Material Provided in Agenda Package
- Appendix D: List of Acronyms
- Appendix E: List of Motions

**MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL  
WOMEN OF THE MÉTIS NATION  
ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**Day 1 - October 23, 2010**

**Appendix A  
Listing of Voting Delegates, Alternates and Guests present**

<p><b>British Columbia</b> Sherry Arko Leonora Fraser Joan Holmes Suzie Hooper Annette Maurice Leanne McFeeters Claudia Mitchel Clara Morin Dalcol Victoria Pruden Donna Wright</p>	<p><b>Alberta</b> Kathy Cunningham Joanne Gunnville Marianne Stepien Barb Courtoreille Muriel Stanley Venne Sylvia Holt Lorelei Chernow Amanda L'Hirondelle Sue Dahlside Melanie Omeniho Diane Schofeld (Alternate)</p>	<p><b>Saskatchewan</b> Pat Cairns May Henderson Pat Letendre Michele Nault McIsaac Darlene McKay Nancy Roy Margaret Ruda Donna St. Dennis Mavis Taylor Debbie Thomas Joanna Potinyada (Alternate) Jennifer McGillis (Alternate)</p>
<p><b>Manitoba</b> Sherry Bonnefoy Loretta Boulard Anita Campbell Marielee Nault Muriel Parker Wendy Parentault Rachelle R. Wilk Jay White Frances Chartrand Belinda Marentette</p>	<p><b>Ontario</b> Pearl Gabona Patricia Lejour Sharon McBride Phoebe Mandry Shirley Lynn Pantuso Brenda Powley Patricia F. Taylor Barbaranna Wright Colette Survoy Lise Pigeau</p>	
<p><b>Non-Voting Delegates/Guests</b> Clément Chartier, President, MNC Robert Doucette, President, Métis Nation – Saskatchewan (MNS) (Item 2.1 Jeff Betker, Negotiator, OFI Lisa Boyce, OFI Michelle LeClair Harding, Chair Yvonne Garipey, Elder</p>		<p>Robert McDonald, MNC Joanne Meyers, MNO Adrian Mrdeza, MNC Louise Oelke, Co-Chair Maureen Richards, MNC Wenda Watteyne, MNC John Weinstein, MNC</p>

**MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL  
WOMEN OF THE MÉTIS NATION  
ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**Day 2 - October 24, 2010**

**Appendix B  
Listing of Voting Delegates, Alternates and Guests present**

<p><b>British Columbia</b> Sherry Arko Leonora Fraser Joan Holmes Suzie Hooper Annette Maurice Leanne McFeeters Claudia Mitchel Clara Morin Dalcol Victoria Pruden Donna Wright</p>	<p><b>Alberta</b> Kathy Cunningham Joanne Gunnville Marianne Stepien Barb Courtoreille Muriel Stanley Venne Sylvia Holt Lorelei Chernow Amanda L'Hirondelle Sue Dahlside Melanie Omeniho</p>	<p><b>Saskatchewan</b> May Henderson Pat Letendre Michele Nault McIsaac Nancy Roy Margaret Ruda Donna St. Dennis Mavis Taylor Debbie Thomas Jennifer McGillis Joanna Potinyada</p>
<p><b>Manitoba</b> Delegates departed at 9:59 a.m.</p>	<p><b>Ontario</b> Pearl Gabona Patricia Lejour Sharon McBride Phoebe Mandry Shirley Lynn Pantuso Brenda Powley Patricia F. Taylor Barbaranna Wright Colette Survoy Lise Pigeau</p>	
<p><b>Non-Voting Delegates/Guests</b> Clément Chartier, President, MNC Jeff Betker, Negotiator, OFI Lisa Boyce, OFI Michelle LeClair Harding, Chair Yvonne Garipey, Elder</p>		<p>Robert McDonald, MNC Joanne Meyers, MNO Adrian Mrdeza, MNC Louise Oelke, Co-Chair Maureen Richards, MNC Wenda Watteyne, MNC</p>

**MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL  
WOMEN OF THE MÉTIS NATION  
ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
October 23-24, 2010**

**Appendix C  
List of Additional Material Provided in Agenda Package**

Related materials provided in the Women of the Métis Nation AGA Agenda package:

- Women of the Métis National Health Policy Paper;
- Women of the Métis Nation Policy Paper on Violence Against Métis Women;
- Letter dated October 8, 2010 to June Draude, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women from Wenda Watteyne extending an invitation to participate in the National Assembly of the WMN October 23-24, 2010;
- Letter dated October 8, 2010 to Rona Ambrose, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women, from Wenda Watteyne extending an invitation to participate in the National Assembly of the WMN October 23-24, 2010;
- Letter dated October 8, 2010 to Shelly Glover, Parliamentary Secretary for Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, from Wenda Watteyne extending an invitation to participate in the National Assembly of the WMN October 23-24, 2010;
- Letter dated October 1, 2010 to Bruce Dumont, President, Métis Nation British Columbia, from Wenda Watteyne extending an invitation to participate in the National Assembly of the WMN October 23-24, 2010;
- Letter dated October 1, 2010 to Gary Lipinski, President, Métis Nation of Ontario, from Wenda Watteyne extending an invitation to participate in the National Assembly of the WMN October 23-24, 2010;
- Letter dated October 1, 2010 to David Chartrand, President, Manitoba Metis Federation, from Wenda Watteyne extending an invitation to participate in the National Assembly of the WMN October 23-24, 2010;
- Letter dated October 1, 2010 to Robert Doucette, President, Métis Nation – Saskatchewan, from Wenda Watteyne extending an invitation to participate in the National Assembly of the WMN October 23-24, 2010;
- Letter dated October 1, 2010 to Audrey Poitras, President, Métis Nation Alberta, from Wenda Watteyne extending an invitation to participate in the National Assembly of the WMN October 23-24, 2010.

**MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL  
WOMEN OF THE MÉTIS NATION  
ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
October 23-24, 2010**

**Appendix D  
List of Acronyms**

AGM	Annual General Assembly
BOC	Basic Organizational Capacity
BOG	Board of Governors
CMHC	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
FICP	Federal Interlocutor Contribution Program
INAC	Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
ITK	Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
MHRDA	Métis Human Resources Development Agreement
MMF	Manitoba Métis Federation
MNA	Métis Nation of Alberta
MNBC	Métis Nation British Columbia
MNC	Métis National Council
MN-S	Métis Nation Saskatchewan
MNO	Métis Nation of Ontario
NAWS	National Aboriginal Women's Summit
NWAC	Native Women's Association of Canada
OFI	Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians
RFA	Request for Action
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
WMN	Women of the Métis Nation

**MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL  
WOMEN OF THE MÉTIS NATION  
ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
October 23-24, 2010**

**Appendix E  
List of Motions**

**It was MOVED (May Henderson, MB) and SECONDED (Melanie Omeniho, AB)**

That the Agenda for the Women of the Métis Nation National General Assembly scheduled October 23-24, 2010, be accepted with amendment vary the order to consider Item 7, Governance Discussion, in advance of the lunch health break on Day 1.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 01-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Muriel Parker, MB) and SECONDED (Donna Wright, BC)**

That the Minutes of the Women of the Métis Nation 2007 Annual General Assembly held March 31-April 1, 2007 be adopted with amendment to the Listing of Delegates to correct the spelling of delegates names as follows: Ontario: Alison Croft, Shirley Pantu, Evelyn Powley, Pauline Salnier; BC: Samantha Sansregret; and Saskatchewan: Jacquie Bouvier.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 02-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (May Henderson, SK) and SECONDED (Annette Maurice, BC)**

That Michelle LeClair-Harding be appointed as Chair and Louise Oelke as Co-Chair of the Women of the Métis Nation 2010 National Assembly.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 03-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Muriel Parker, MB) and SECONDED (Pat Letendre, SK)**

That the verbal report on the Women of the Métis Nation Activities 2007-2010 be accepted as presented.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 04-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Susan Dahlseide, AB) and SECONDED (Sharon McBride, ON)**

That the Women of the Métis Nation, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Bylaws reflect the titles of: President and Vice-President.

**CARRIED (Motion: 05-10-23-10)**

(36 delegates in favour, 11 delegates voting in opposition)

**It was MOVED (May Henderson, SK) and SECONDED (Annette Maurice, BC)**

That the Women of the Métis Nation (WMN) bylaws reflect that if a Provincial Spokesperson is elected as the WMN National President, she must resign as leader of the Governing Member women's organization within 90 days of election.

**CARRIED (Motion: 06-10-23-10)**

(34 delegates in favour)

**It was MOVED (Susan Dahlseide, AB) and SECONDED (Donna Wright, BC)**

That the "Purpose" of the *Women of the Métis Nation (WMN) Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, Bylaws* shall reflect:

- *The WMN is enabled by motion of the Metis National Council Board of Governors and formed to enable Metis women within the Metis Nation to take an active role within Metis*

- Nation governance, in addition to their right to participate fully in all elected offices in such governance.*
- *The WMN will work within the Metis Nation governance structure, specifically with the Metis National Council and the Governing Members, to represent the interests of and promote leadership by Metis women at the local, provincial, national and international levels.*
  - *The WMN will work with Metis Women from across Canada and Metis Nation Government for the empowerment and participation of Metis Women.*
  - *The WMN will function as an advocacy body to speak and represent the Metis Women's agenda and perspective nationally.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 07-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Annette Maurice, BC) and SECONDED (Victoria Pruden, BC)**

That the Women of the Métis Nation adopt the *Women of the Métis Nation Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, Bylaws* with amendments as presented.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 08-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Donna Wright, BC) and SECONDED (Melanie Omeniho, AB)**

That the Women of the Métis Nation approve moving forward with incorporation under the *Women of the Métis Nation Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, Bylaws* as adopted.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 09-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Melanie Omeniho, AB) and SECONDED (Sherry Arko, BC)**

That the Women of the Métis Nation approve the *Women of the Métis Nation Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, Rules Governing the Election of the Interim National President* with amendment to:

- the Criminal Record Check Clause to qualify the time limit of 10 years, and note that convictions were for an indictable offence; and
- the addition of a scrutineer under "Counting the Ballots".

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 10-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Muriel Stanley Venne, AB) and SECONDED (Sherry Arko, BC)**

That the election for the position of Interim National President of the Women of the Métis Nation be by secret ballot box.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 11-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Annette Maurice, BC) and SECONDED (Suzie Hooper, BC)**

That Clara Morin Dalco be nominated to serve as Interim National President for the Women of the Métis Nation.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 12-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Mavis Taylor, SK) and SECONDED (Jennifer McGillis, SK)**

That Michele Nault McIsaac be nominated to serve as Interim National President for the Women of the Métis Nation.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 13-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Sylvia Holt, AB) and SECONDED (Amanda L'Hirondelle, AB)**

That Melanie Omeniho be nominated to serve as Interim National President for the Women of the Métis Nation.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 14-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Sharon McBride, ON) and SECONDED (May Henderson, SK)**

That Melanie Omeniho be nominated to serve as Interim National President for the Women of the Métis Nation.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 15-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Lorelei Chernow, AB) and SECONDED (Joanne Gunville, AB)**

That Melanie Omeniho be nominated to serve as Interim National President for the Women of the Métis Nation.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 16-10-23-10)**

**It was MOVED (Annette Maurice, BC) and SECONDED (Victoria Pruden, BC)**

That the Women of the Métis Nation direct that:

- the ballots and account sheet used in the election process be sealed and provided to Kathy Hodgson-Smith, Legal Counsel Consultant, for the duration of the appeal period as identified in Rules Governing the Election of the Interim National President; and
- following the appeal period, that the ballots and account sheet be destroyed.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Motion: 17-10-23-10)**