



FALL GATHERING REPORT

Wednesday, October 3, 2012

Batshaw Youth and Family Centres

6, Weredale Park, Montreal

ADOPTED ON FEBRUARY 22, 2013



ATTENDANCE

See the list of participants in the appendix.

AGENDA

Welcome songs with the drumming group Buffalo Hats Singers

1. Words of welcome and opening prayer with Mike Standup
2. Adoption of the agenda and report of the spring Gathering
3. Discussion and decision on the eligibility of government representatives for co-chairmanship
4. Steering Committee update: decisions to be taken
5. Launch of the Cultural manual for foster and adoptive parents of Aboriginal children – Social Services Working Committee
6. Presentation of the environmental assessment by Paul Watez
7. Health break with Lemon Cree
8. Presentation of the health needs assessment and launch of the database – Health Working Committee
9. Presentation of the Museum of Civilisation – Consultation with the Aboriginal community of Montreal by Caroline Lantagne
10. Youth Working Committee
11. Presentation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy
12. Community announcements
13. Songs with the drumming group Buffalo Hats Singers

Closing prayer with Mike Standup

Bounce Fit session with Lemon Cree

1. WORD OF WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER WITH MIKE STANDUP

Co-Chair Nakuset welcomed the participants and declared the meeting open at 9:25am.

She invited Mike Standup to recite the opening prayer.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND REPORT OF THE SPRING GATHERING

Nakuset reviewed the agenda and indicated that two modifications had been made since dancer Gilbert Niquay, as well as throat singers Nina Segalowitz and Taqralik Partridge were unable to be there.

It was motioned by Dolorès André and seconded by Pascale Annual:

TO ADOPT THE AGENDA PROPOSED WITH MODIFICATIONS.

Adopted.

It was motioned by Alana-Dawn Phillips and seconded by Sacha Rose Kiesman:

TO ADOPT THE REPORT OF THE SPRING GATHERING HELD ON MARCH 30 AND 31, 2012.

Adopted.

3. DISCUSSION AND DECISION ON THE ELIGIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES FOR CO-CHAIRMANSHIP

In the early development of the NETWORK, it was decided that community members (representatives of the Working Committees) could hold Co-Chairmanship positions. In contrast, it was not intended that such positions be held by a government representative. However, Co-Chair Odile Joannette worked for the Assmby of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL), which was considered a government authority. The chairing formula had proven effective until now, but it was up to the members to determine eligibility of these executive positions.

The Steering Committee is responsible for electing the people holding Co-Chairmanship. If, however, the community members were to express reservations concerning the election of a representative from a government agency to such a position, the Steering Committee would take this into account.

Certain people felt that only Aboriginal community members should be eligible for executive positions, but stated that this was not a judgment against Odile or the excellent work she has been achieving until now. There was in fact a nuance between the members originating exclusively from the community and who were elected to represent the community, and the members appointed by government authorities to represent the latter and who had de facto seats on the Steering Committee, even if their fundamental purpose was to serve the community.

Other participants were wondering if we should consider the AFNQL and Makivik in the same manner as other levels of government (federal, provincial and municipal). It was underlined that these were entirely controlled by Aboriginal people and that they do not perceive themselves as being governments, although they enjoyed the same status, under bylaws, within the Steering Committee.

The NETWORK was particular since it was established by members and comprised both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members. Allowing delegates of government authorities to sit as Co-Chairs would contribute to further illustrate partnership. In the strategic plan, and in the long term, this option would also lead to positive impacts. We must remember that the decisions were made collectively, and that Co-Chairs were to consult the members of the Steering Committee before adopting a position. We should thus continue to focus on innovation in order to build our community.

The following resolutions arose from the exchange.

It was motioned by Alana-Dawn Phillips and seconded by Catherine Joncas:

THAT REPRESENTATIVES IN CO-CHAIR POSITIONS:

- 1. SHALL BE PEOPLE FROM THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY; AND**
- 2. SHALL BE PART OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE.**

Adopted unanimously with 1 abstention.

It was motioned by Francine Buckell and seconded by Donna Lemay:

THAT REPRESENTATIVES IN CO-CHAIR POSITIONS SHALL BE HENCEFORTH ELECTED BY THE NETWORK MEMBERS GATHERED IN ASSEMBLY.

Adopted unanimously with 1 abstention.

It was motioned by Alana-Dawn Phillips and seconded by Tina Lee:

TO MAINTAIN THE STATUS QUO REGARDING EQUAL STATUS OF THE FIVE GOVERNEMENT AUTHORITIES REPRESENTED ON THE STEERING COMMITTEE.

Adopted unanimously with 3 abstentions.

It was noted that Co-Chair elections were not announced in the agenda. Odile explained that, until the adoption of the above resolution, the Steering Committee was not to proceed with the election of the Co-Chair positions.

It was also underlined that the election procedure had just been changed, which would result in a modification to bylaws. Normally, we could not apply such modifications at the Gathering where it had just been voted, since it would come into effect at the next Gathering. Moreover, the election postponement would give candidates time to campaign and make themselves known throughout the community, including those who were unable to be present at this Gathering. We were hoping that candidates could write a motivation letter that would be distributed by e-mail within the NETWORK.

Odile specified that, in such a case, we would vote on a resolution to extend the mandate of Co-Chairs until the next Gathering.

It was motioned by Catherine Joncas and seconded by Devora Neumark:

TO EXTEND THE MANDATE OF THE TWO CURRENT CO-CHAIRS, NAKUSET AND ODILE JOANNETTE, UNTIL THE NEXT GATHERING.

Adopted unanimously.

Odile raised the fact that we had to develop an election procedure for the Co-Chair positions in order to facilitate the process.

It was motioned by Francine Buckell and seconded by Dolorès André:

TO MANDATE THE STEERING COMMITTEE TO PREPARE A PROPOSAL FOR AN ELECTION PROCEDURE THAT SHALL BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL AT THE NEXT GATHERING, BEFORE THE HOLDING OF ELECTIONS

Adopted unanimously.

It was motioned by Alana-Dawn Phillips and seconded by Brett Pineau:

**THAT ANY ELIGIBLE PERSON WISHING TO BE A CO-CHAIR CANDIDATE SHALL WRITE A MOTIVATION LETTER;
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THIS LETTER BE DISTRIBUTED TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE NETWORK INCLUDED ON THE MAILING LIST PRIOR TO THE FORTHCOMING GATHERING.**

Adopted unanimously.

It was suggested that the motivation letters be accompanied by the election procedure proposal prepared by the Steering Committee, in order for the members to be informed of them prior to the next Gathering. The suggestion was well received.

4. STEERING COMMITTEE UPDATE: DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN

Odile presented the report as follows:

I. Activity report and financial report for last fiscal year

The accountability report for 2011-2012 was accepted by all financial partners. An activity report was also carried out. It notably contained the 2011-2012 reference to strategic planning undertaken by the Steering Committee, including transversal priorities for 2012-2017 as voted in assembly last year.

As for the financial report, Odile recalled that the 2011-2012 budget amounted to \$141,809.00. An additional envelope was added to this amount and came from the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) for special projects. Each Working Committee was invited to present proposals; funds were thus allocated to certain Committees for temporary coordination. This envelope was transmitted to the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal; it can be found in an appendix to the annual report.

Last fiscal year closed with a deficit of \$112.00, which was covered by the First Nations Human Resources Development Commission of Quebec, the fiduciary partner.

II. New financial application for fiscal year 2012-2013

It was originally planned to submit an application for 2012-2017 in order to correspond to the transversal priorities established for five years and to also bring stability to the NETWORK and be able to rely on the commitment of partners. However, the changes which occurred in the UAS program limited the renewal of funding to two years. The Steering Committee has thus prepared applications for two years for its different financial partners, which were the UAS, the City of Montreal and the First Nations Human Resources Development Commission of Quebec (FNHRDCQ) The latter committed for two years, while the other partners committed for one year only.

In summary, the forecasts for fiscal year 2012-2013 amounted to \$67,000.00 for human resources, including payroll deductions, and of \$85,104.00 in operating expenses for a total of \$152,104.00. All amounts were confirmed, except for the contribution of the Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones (SAA), which should not be a problem.

III. Review of the NETWORK's general principles

The Steering Committee undertook a review of the general principles. A consultation took place, but the compilation was still underway.

This review also related to the NETWORK's role. The NETWORK relied on unanimously adopted principles, such as transparency, accountability and respect, which were found in the regulations. That said, discussions led us to reflect upon three items which could be added, if the community so wished:

- Distribution of information through the newsletter and the web site;
- Autonomy of the Working Committees;
- Non-partisanship of the NETWORK and its Working Committees.

Odile had written a review on the NETWORK's values and functioning, that she submitted to the Steering Committee, who extracted certain paragraphs. Odile read them by specifying that this was not however a recommendation from the Steering Committee. It was just a draft of observations called to be enriched by the comments of community members.

*Regarding the **distribution of information**, the NETWORK has developed communication tools for the community, allowing the sharing and dissemination of information that could also arise from outside of the NETWORK's direct activities. Individuals and organizations members of the NETWORK will therefore be able to access any public information, known to the NETWORK, allowing them to determine if they wish to participate in the various community initiatives or not.*

The following question arose: was the newsletter a tool used by the Steering Committee and the Working Committees to make their activities known or could it also have served the entire community and its organizations, allowing members to have access to a maximum amount of information (and mentioning the sources)? Recently, the newsletter included a disclaimer stating that "only articles signed by the NETWORK were to reflect the NETWORK's views". This disclaimer was intended to protect the NETWORK.

One member recalled that it was already permitted to publish information through the newsletter and web site, under the condition that the comments shall not be defamatory or harmful to other Aboriginal organizations or people. It was always possible to have contradictory opinions and make them known, with certain limitations. Odile confirmed that the Steering Committee had already addressed the issue along the same lines, that is, by choosing to make the communication tools available to the entire community, but by defining criteria which would justify publication refusal (for example: racist or hateful comments).

This exchange led to two other items: **autonomy of the Working Committees** and **non-partisanship of the NETWORK**. Odile read a summary text addressing these issues.

Autonomy of the Working Committees

The six Working Committees, who meet on an almost monthly basis, are forming the expertise of the NETWORK in each of the fields of competence for which they are mobilized. They are autonomous entities of the NETWORK, which means they have each developed bylaws that are specific to their operating mode and have implemented action plans that are specific to the challenges of their fields of activities. However, they still have roles and responsibilities specified in the NETWORK's bylaws as well as in its strategic plan. In addition, they work in compliance with the NETWORK's vision, mandate and principles.

Non-partisanship of the NETWORK and its Working Committees

The NETWORK is an initiative promoting unity and positive results rising from collaborative efforts between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals as well as between public, private and community sectors. It can therefore in no case be considered as a pressure group. It works within the Steering committee with representatives from the federal, provincial and municipal governments, the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador and Makivik Corporation. The NETWORK has therefore to refrain from publicly taking any partisan position regarding political decisions in terms of aboriginal affairs or regarding organizational conflicts that may arise in the community. The NETWORK considers that political decisions and organizational conflicts are a source of division among community members, since the NETWORK's foundation of principles is collective interest, and it will in no case prefer to publicly take position in such circumstances. When the NETWORK is informed that a political decision or an organizational conflict has a negative impact on the quality of life of Montreal's Aboriginals, he shows moderation in its comments and loyalty to its partners by avoiding associating with positions or initiatives taken by groups or organizations that would likely call into question its neutrality, its objectivity and the quality of its partnerships. That does not mean the NETWORK would remain silent if the quality of life of Montreal's Aboriginals was affected by the impacts of a political decision or an organizational conflict, but it would rather choose, in its efforts towards finding a solution, a collaborative approach, of dialogue and awareness, instead of one of quarrel, protest or confrontation.

André Dudemaine proposed to provide means to preserve the NETWORK's neutrality and allow Aboriginal organizations that were in contact with each other, and beyond the links with public and semi-public organizations, to make their common voice heard, by signing a position according to their respective ownership. If a position was to be taken, as a courtesy for the officials with whom we worked and with whom we must establish a good relationship, it should be collectively adopted, but individually endorsed by each organization. This would not be an official position, but rather a topic of discussion.

Devora wished for a linguistic clarification prior to ruling on the proposal. What did “*non-partisanerie*” mean in French since in English there were major differences between “advocacy”, “representation” and “non-political”?

Odile found herself unable to provide the clarifications asked. It was rather up to the community members to agree on the scope of the terms used and their equivalence in French and in English. It would have been appropriate also to collectively consider the limits – or the absence of limits – to recognize, based on the Working Committees' autonomy.

The time provided for this item had expired. Alana believed that this issue had to be thoroughly discussed. She had read the summary text in its English version and had detected differences with the text she had read in French. There were also significant nuances between *advocacy* and *politics*, and the paragraph read created confusion between these terms. She considered that there was place for representation / advocacy / activism outside of the partisan politics (*playing politics*). She wished to maintain good relations with the NETWORK's government representatives. However, if the situation was

to arise where she would have to defend her community's interests, she would choose to do so, and would not accept being told that she was not allowed to do so.

Carole Chouinard believed that we had to go beyond the perceived gap between governments and Aboriginal organizations. Government representatives surely never had the will to impose anything on Aboriginal organizations. The debate on neutrality came from the fact that we never deeply understood all the ins and outs of a situation. This arose following a difficult situation encountered by an organization. She recalled that the NETWORK's original purpose was to collaborate rather than become a pressure group. Each organization was entirely free to militate as it wished. The NETWORK's role was to disseminate information, but the public and political stances belonged to each organization. Otherwise, this would lead to division. In that sense, we had to ensure that the NETWORK remained neutral.

It was motioned by Carrie Martin and seconded by Paige Isaac:

TO MANDATE THE STEERING COMMITTEE TO SPECIFY THE REASONS EXPLAINING THE IMPORTANCE OF HOLDING, AT THE NEXT GATHERING, A MORE EXTENSIVE DEBATE ON THE NATURE OF THE NEUTRALITY EXPECTED FROM THE NETWORK;

TO HAVE THE REVIEW OF THE SUMMARY DOCUMENT CARRIED OUT, BY ENSURING CONSISTENCY OF THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH TERMINOLOGY, AND TO TRANSMIT IT TO ALL MEMBERS, USING THE MAILING LIST, AT LEAST ONE MONTH BEFORE THE NEXT GATHERING.

Adopted unanimously.

5. LAUNCH OF THE CULTURAL MANUAL FOR FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENTS OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN – SOCIAL SERVICES WORKING COMMITTEE

Nakuset invited the members of the Social Services Working Committee that were present to join her: Alana-Dawn Phillips, Garnett Forbes, and Cathy Caroll.

At first, the Committee's discussions focused largely on Batshaw Youth and Family Centres. Afterwards, several issues emerged, such as homelessness and justice, which led to the establishment of sub-committees. Initially, the members had discussed what could be done regarding children in foster care. Aboriginal children should ideally be cared for by Aboriginal families, but reality was different. As an alternative, the Committee developed a guide aimed at non-Aboriginal families.

Over the last year, a study was conducted on children in emergency situations, and the gathered data presented an upsetting picture concerning Aboriginal children and especially Inuit children. Close to 30% of foster children during the past year were of Aboriginal/Inuit descent. This situation motivated the Committee to work closely with the NETWORK in order to recruit foster families for these children.

Nakuset and the representatives from the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal and from Batshaw Youth and Family Centres had attended various pow-wows as well as the Land InSights event in order to recruit foster families. In addition to these efforts, the Committee had decided, two years ago, to develop a guide prepared by Marcelle Durrum, Barbara McDonald Simon, Alana-Dawn Phillips and Irene Qavavauq. Although Garnett and Carol did not participate in the drafting of the guide, they did however attend all the planning meetings and contributed expertise as well.

Alana added that the guide would also be useful for organisations offering services to Aboriginal people, such as the different Centres de la Petite Enfance and other institutions in the social services area.

Nakuset stated that the official launch was held at Batshaw Youth and Family Centres on November 9, 2012, since the Guide had been primarily designed for the benefit of this organisation. She specified that Quebec was the only province to develop such a guide, other interveners from the other provinces not having those kinds of concerns.

As for follow-ups on this development, we discussed establishing an emergency line to obtain advice and even the establishment of a transition house program for young people in foster care reaching the age of 18 and who have no place to go.

Alana concluded by saying that this was an evolving document which would be updated and enriched in light of experiences and comments from social agents intervening with young people and from parents themselves. She invited the people present to share their comments and she expressed her willingness to get involved again in such a rewarding project.

6. PRESENTATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT BY PAUL WATTEZ

Odile invited Paul Wattez, the consultant hired to conduct an environmental assessment, to present the results of his research.

The study was conducted in the summer of 2012. The title retained was: *Une communauté hétérogène engagée sur la voie de la collaboration (A Heterogeneous Community Committed to the Path of Cooperation)*.

It comprised two parts: a bibliographic research and analysis, and an empirical research and analysis. It focused on three aspects:

- profile of the Aboriginal community in greater Montreal;
- profile of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizational members of the NETWORK providing services to the Aboriginal population;
- profile of potential partnerships between these organizations.
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For the empirical research, two data collection methods were used, which were a questionnaire and an interview, and were applied to two groups of distinct people:

- people responsible for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations and their employees;
- Aboriginal clients of the organisations and any other Aboriginal people living in greater Montreal.

❖ **Profile of the Aboriginal community in greater Montreal**

Demographically, the Aboriginal population in greater Montreal has been growing, having increased by 60% between 2001 and 2006 to reach a number of around 18,000, which corresponds with the Statistics Canada data. We should however underline biases that could lead to underreporting of the Aboriginal community. This represents 16.5% of the total Aboriginal population in Quebec compared to 14% in 2001.

In the city of Montreal, 7,600 people declared an Aboriginal identity, making Montreal the most important urban Aboriginal community in the province of Quebec.

On the other hand, the Aboriginal population is very young and younger than Montreal's population in general: its median age is of 33.4 years compared to 38.8 years for the population in general.

Geographically, there were some similarities between Montreal's urban Aboriginal community and the Aboriginal communities in Quebec.

The profile furthermore revealed the current realities of the Aboriginal community which was in a precarious situation and mostly worse than that of the non-Aboriginal population, on the basis of four factors:

- education and training;
- activity;
- income;
- housing.

❖ **Profile of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizational members of the NETWORK providing services to the Aboriginal population**

In terms of organisations, a distinction was established between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations: out of 137 organisational members of the NETWORK, 61% were non-Aboriginal and 42% Aboriginal. However, most of the non-Aboriginal organisations had set up a range of services specific to Aboriginal people.

❖ **Profile of partnerships**

People that were interviewed mentioned that there was already collaboration between organisations before the creation of the NETWORK, but that it was only casual between certain groups. Since the creation of the NETWORK, this collaboration had improved.

However, we identified certain limitations and negative impacts about organisations, notably:

- the exchange of information rather than true partnership;
- working in silos from Working Committees and internal working;
- the variable effectiveness between Working Committees; some being more developed than others.

That being said, respondents acknowledged a positive impact of the existence of the NETWORK on the Aboriginal community, mainly resulting from the projects implemented since its creation. However, most respondents qualified that the positive impact on the community was based on three aspects:

- the relative newness of the NETWORK;
- the difficulty in assessing the impacts on the community on a daily basis;
- the NETWORK's orientations that are mainly aimed at organizations.

In conclusion, the commitment of the Aboriginal community in greater Montreal to collaboration is indisputable, but requires further work.

Paul mentioned that the study's limitations arose from the adaptations made to certain methodological tools, but especially from the time of the year in which it was conducted, which coincided with a popular vacation period, and which reduced the number of questionnaires that might have been submitted within the time specified.

7. HEALTH BREAK WITH LEMON CREE

Nakuset welcomed a very special guest, Theresa Ducharme, the Executive Director and founder of Lemon Cree. This organization is largely known in many communities across Canada for the promotion of health using various recreational means.

8. PRESENTATION OF THE HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND LAUNCH OF THE DATABASE – HEALTH WORKING COMMITTEE

Nakuset invited Sacha Rose Kiesman from the Health Working Committee to do the presentation. Sacha underlined the cooperation from the members of the Committee as well as the support from several organizations, notably Concordia University and the Government of Canada. She thanked the members of the research and drafting teams.

Launch of the report was held on June 27, 2012 at Concordia University; the study is available on the NETWORK's website.

She mentioned that, despite the numbers of Aboriginal people living in Montreal, there was still no health centre, unlike in Ottawa and Toronto, which have highly equipped and truly holistic institutions. In the short term, its objectives were to make recommendations based on specific data, and in the longer term, to establish a fully functional holistic health center in Montreal.

The research aimed to demonstrate the importance and nature of the needs in terms of health and healing services and to identify the determinants of these needs in the Aboriginal population of Montreal. It was also intended to figure out the extent to which existing services were responding to these needs.

The research included 80 individual interviews with health service users, 94 interviews with service providers and 21 health narratives by the service users. Furthermore, 19 service providers took part in a focus group. The research revealed that the overall health of the Aboriginal population was rather poor (average of 3 on a 10-point scale).

As for traditional healing services, spirituality and ancestral knowledge, several respondents mentioned the bond that was still holding them to their communities while living in an urban area.

The overall conclusion of the study revealed that the general health system responded to the general health needs according to service users; however, according to the service providers, the most basic needs were not covered, particularly concerning the overall well-being of this population. Moreover, multiple and often cumulative impacts were making access to health care difficult, discrimination representing the most significant barrier.

The next steps consisted in finding a suitable place to open the holistic health center, but also elaborating a strategy to mobilize decision-makers, updating the flaws in the current health system and undertaking educational work pertaining to cultural needs.

Sacha added that the Health Working Committee also completed an online database to facilitate access to various resources.

9. PRESENTATION OF THE MUSEUM OF CIVILISATION – CONSULTATION WITH THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY OF MONTREAL

The Museum of Civilisation had been presenting a permanent exhibition on Quebec's Aboriginal people for 14 years, and it involved consultations with Aboriginal people of various nations.

A reflection was initiated in order to repeat this exhibition. The team focused on how to proceed, and defined an overall vision for closer ties and the will to work together with the Aboriginal community in order to increase awareness on the current reality and on new challenges.

The exhibition was pursuing the following objectives:

- increase awareness to reflect unity and diversity;
- put the relationship with the land in perspective;
- foster the understanding of identity affirmation;
- put these considerations in perspective with the Aboriginal reality at an international level;
- highlight the exchanges of First Nations and Inuit with non-Aboriginal populations and work to tear down prejudices that were still stigmatizing Aboriginal men and women;
- succeed in showing the contributions made by Aboriginal societies to Quebec society;
- meet the challenge to identify what was particularly strong in the recent Aboriginal identity, notably in the 20th century;
- highlight the dynamics between men and women and intergenerational dynamics.

Achieving these objectives presented a big challenge, especially in a limited exhibition space. It had been thus decided to proceed collaboratively and to call upon Boîte Rouge Vif who is affiliated with the University of Quebec in Chicoutimi. Their wish was that Aboriginal people would be able to share their history, their concerns and what they wished to say about themselves; they wanted the visitors to know of their culture.

A tour of the communities was organized. In order to implement the overall concept and determine the communities to visit, a consultative assembly was formed with members appointed by the political authorities, to represent each of the First Nations as well as the Inuit. The assembly also advised the team on the content of consultations to conduct as well as on certain significant elements that would be selected for the exhibition.

All of the project's phases were thus achieved collaboratively, for example by calling upon Aboriginal filmmakers. The exhibition concept was tabled in June, 2012. The project is currently at the screenwriting phase, and the new exhibition should be launched on October 2, 2013.

During the visits to communities, the team was also made aware of the importance of the urban reality. It was still searching for information on this reality, which explained the presence of Ms. Lantagne to this gathering, with her colleague, Jean Tanguay. She invited the members of the NETWORK to make suggestions and to discuss their concerns so that the exhibition could reflect, in the fairest possible way, the various aspects of Aboriginal reality, including those of the urban area.

10. YOUTH WORKING COMMITTEE

Odile recalled that it was difficult to mobilize youth within formal structures, and creating a representation for them was complex for the NETWORK. Several organizational members of the NETWORK who were intervening with young people had expressed interest to join such a committee. However, the NETWORK's orientation aimed toward that this representation should be made by youth and for youth.

She reported that in August 2012, she participated as a mentor, in "*Autochtones et Québécois: collaborer pour le changement*", (Aboriginals and Quebecers: a Partnership for Change) at the Institut du Nouveau Monde summer school. The theme this year was "*On passe aux actes*", (time to act) meaning that we would work together at developing projects. One of the ideas selected was to set up a youth committee, in which Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth would cooperate together. Furthermore, other ideas emerged, including the suggestion that one of the roles of the Youth Committee would be to support the other Working Committees in implementing their respective projects.

She mentioned that the Ka Mamukanit center, a socio-professional integration program for youth, offered their office as a possible meeting space for the proposed committee, outside of their regular activity hours.

She read the statement prepared by the youth who had participated in summer school. The mission of the Youth Committee aimed at contributing to improve the quality of life of young Aboriginal people in urban areas, on both individual and organizational levels. The adopted objectives were the following:

- stimulate citizen participation;
- develop the NETWORK and organizational structure for young people;
- promote the NETWORK and existing services for young Aboriginal people;
- provide a forum for to young Aboriginal people in Montreal;
- develop projects responding to issues deemed high priority by youth.

The supporting group, formed by the summer school, also identified the needs and sources of funding.

The list of tasks to achieve comprised:

- establishing a timetable for the Youth Committee launch;
- electing the members;
- hiring a coordinator.

11. PRESENTATION OF THE URBAN ABORIGINAL STRATEGY

Odile recalled that on September 4, 2012, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada had announced through a press release that the Office of the Federal Interlocutor (OFI) had been abolished and that the UAS program would now report to the Regional Affairs Office. In such a context, she took the initiative to invite Karen Mackarous, UAS Federal Representative, to explain what was likely to happen to the program, and what would the impacts of these changes be for the NETWORK in Montreal.

Karen mentioned that the budget adopted on March 29, 2012 comprised a large number of job and program cuts across Canada.

On April 1, 2012, three programs were transferred from Canadian Heritage to Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, namely:

- Aboriginal Friendship Centres Program;
- Cultural Connections for Aboriginal Youth;
- Young Canada Works for Aboriginal Urban Youth.

These programs were transferred to the OFI. Yet, the budget from March 29, 2012 included the dismantling of the OFI as of September 4, 2012. Consequently, the three programs mentioned above were integrated into the UAS. As for the OFI, it was disbanded and the UAS was integrated into the Regional Operations Branch.

Karen indicated that she did not have enough information at this stage and that she could not really explain the program's new operations, since the changes were still too recent. Therefore, she could not specify the part of the program regions would be inheriting, nor if she would remain assigned herself. At that moment, this information was unavailable and other changes were to be expected.

Organisations who wished to obtain funding from the federal government were invited to submit their applications, and they would be processed on a case-by-case basis. If they are unable to follow-up on the requests, they would refer them to other sources of funding, in order to be able to continue supporting the projects.

The exception to which reference was made concerned designated cities. There were currently six cities, plus one (Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Winnipeg, plus Vancouver) identified as being "designated cities". They were receiving a lump-sum payment each year to enable financing various projects. Outside of these designated cities, any organisation can apply for funding directly to the UAS.

Montreal had attempted to get the status of a designated city but the UAS was starting to depart from this framework and was thus not expecting to add any new cities. It was also not yet able to determine the orientation in which it would evolve by next fiscal year. Nevertheless, it was not because a city was not recognized as "designated" that efficient projects could not be achieved within it. Montreal was a good example, its achievements being widely acknowledged across Canada.

12. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

❖ Native Women's Shelter of Montreal

Nakuset, the Executive Director of the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal, announced that a fund raising activity was to be held on October 9, 2012 at the Rialto Theater. The Shelter was celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. The fundraising was aiming to develop a transition house to support women who were leaving the Shelter; the objective was to raise \$25,000.00.

❖ Native Friendship Centre of Montreal (NFCM)

Allan Harrington informed the assembly that the NFCM was organizing cultural evenings every Wednesday night, at 6:00pm., which would be attracting many families. These would give rise, from time to time, to fundraising activities. Other initiatives were undertaken by volunteers, since the Centre was still working to ensure its funding.

Among the partnerships, they underlined the one concluded with Exeko. He invited François-Xavier Michaud, co-founder of Exeko to join him. Exeko is an organisation which developed various projects for Aboriginal people. Two partnerships had been concluded with the NFCM, namely idAction, a mobile intellectual mediation clinic for homeless Aboriginal people (mobile library), which gave excellent results, and the Trickster Effect, which focuses on the transmission of tales and stories by Elders to youth and children, which would give rise to theater and performance workshops. The activities were held each Sunday at the NFCM from the end of October until the Christmas holidays; they are currently in the registration period.

❖ **Montreal Native Community Development Center**

Éric Cardinal, Coordinator of project developments for the Native community development center, recalled that an assembly for information and exchange had been held the week before. As of then, the project was supported by a sponsoring committee comprised of community members and which mobilized the community at large. This project aligned with the mission of the Aboriginal friendship centers and wished to be part of the Association of Friendship Centres. Its goal was to provide services that would complement those already existing for families mostly, but also for youth and Elders. It was not a matter of substituting the NFCM, but to be complementary to their services. A meeting was also held the week before and led to very interesting exchanges with a view to work in partnerships.

Currently, the sponsoring committee was conducting an information, awareness and mobilization campaign. The members of the NETWORK would soon be contacted to arrange a meeting aiming to determine the priorities for action.

❖ **Wapikoni mobile**

Nahka Bertrand worked for the Wapikoni mobile and announced that it was currently stopping in Montreal. It had a dedicated space at the Bonsecours Market's 11 Nations exhibition, and filmmaker tutors as well as interveners were available to young people.

The official launch was to take place on October 14, 2012 as part of the Festival of New Cinema, where we would have the opportunity to see the movie selection for 2012.

Also, a benefit concert was to be held on October 29, 2012, with the participation of Samian.

Odile declared the Gathering closed at 3:30pm. She thanked the members for attending.

13. SONGS WITH THE DRUMMING GROUP BUFFALO HATS SINGERS

Odile thanked the members of Buffalo Hats Singers for their participation and invited them to conclude this day with their songs.

CLOSING PRAYER WITH MIKE STANDUP

Mike Standup recited the closing prayer.

BOUNCE FIT SESSION WITH LEMON CREE

The members were invited to participate in a fitness activity with Lemon Cree.

Appendix

No.	Name	First name	Organization
1	Achneepineskum	Norman	Buffalo Hat Singers
2	André	Dolorès	First Nations Human Resources Development Services of Montreal
3	Annoual	Pascale	Arts, racines & thérapies
4	Arnaud	Aurélié	Quebec Native Women
5	Beudet	Geneviève	Québec solidaire
6	Bergeron	Annie	Centres des femmes de Montréal
7	Bertrand	Nahka	Wapikoni mobile
8	Boudreault	Valérie	Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones
9	Brassard	Eric	Innutelecom
10	Brazeau	Carole	National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence
11	Brochu	Francine	Module du Nord Québécois
12	Cardinal	Éric	Aboriginal Community Development Centre of Montreal
13	Carroll	Andrea	RedWolf Community Strategies
14	Carroll	Cathy	Batshaw Youth and Family Centres

No.	Name	First name	Organization
15	Cash	Ted	Individual member
16	Chamichian	Ramélia	NETWORK
17	Charland	Justin	Buffalo Hat Singers
18	Chouinard	Carole	City of Montreal
19	Constantin	Louise	Centre St-Pierre
20	Côté	Karl	Buffalo Hat Singers
21	Coué	Laurent	Québec en forme
22	Coulombe	Natasha	Individual member
23	Drugge	Jeffrey	Health Canada
24	Eshkibok	Patricia	Individual member
25	Faribault	Marie	CSDM
26	Farquet	Valérie	Individual member
27	Forbes	Garnett	Batshaw Youth and Family Centres
28	Gareau	Jean-Marc	Individual member
29	Gershuny	Sandy	Individual member
30	Gosselin	Cindy	Statistics Canada
31	Goupil-Landry	Mélissa	Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse

No.	Name	First name	Organization
32	Grégoire	Simon	DEstiMundo
33	Harrington	Alan	Native Friendship Centre of Montreal
34	Irqumia	Allison	Makivik Corporation
35	Isaac	Paige	McGill University
36	Janin	Anais	Artial
37	Joannette	Odile	First Nations Human Resources Development Commission of Québec
38	Joncas	Catherine	Individual member
39	Kiesman	Sacha Rose	Montreal Urban Aboriginal Health Committee
40	Lacroix	Guy	City of Montreal
41	Landry	Véronique	Université du Québec en Abitibi-Temiscamingue
42	Lantagne	Caroline	Musée de la civilisation
43	Lépine	Julien	Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones
44	Lee	Tina	CPE Rising Sun
45	Legault	Louise	John Abbott College
46	Lemay	Donna	Quebec Native Women
47	Loiselle-Boudreau	Josiane	Individual member
48	Lord	Audrey	Individual member

No.	Name	First name	Organization
49	Mackarous	Karen	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
50	Martin	Carrie	Native Women's Shelter of Montreal
51	Michaux	François-Xavier	Exeko
52	Miller	Sophie-Claude	YMCA
53		Nakuset	Native Women's Shelter of Montreal
54	Neumark	Devora	Individual member
55	Paul	Monique	DEstiMundo
56	Peterson	Fiona	Individual member
57	Picard	Claude	Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador
58	Picard	Sandra	Individual member
59	Pineau	Brett	Native Friendship Centre of Montreal
60	Phillips	Alana-Dawn	CPE Rising Sun
61	Port	Ruth	Individual member
62	Raymond	Normand	Buffalo Hat Singers
63	Roberts	Donna	Health Canada
64	Sifu	Gabrielle	Projets autochtones du Québec
65	Simon	France	Centre Wampum

No.	Name	First name	Organization
66	Simon	Marie-Laure	Centre Wampum
67	Samoisette	Gilles	Innutelecom
68	Standup	Mike	Elder
69	Stephenson	Suzanne	Saint Elizabest First Nations, Inuit and Métis Program
70	Subron	Cynthia	Individual member
71	Tanguay	Jean	Musée de la civilisation
72	Thernish	Marjolaine	First Nations Human Resources Development Commission of Québec
73	Topping	Lucie	Centre Wampum
74	Voyer	Élise	Equitas
75	Wabanonik-Paradis	Evelyne	First Nations Human Resources Development Commission of Québec
76	Wattez	Paul	Anthropologist
77	Zamora Jiménez	Gustavo	Cercle des Premières Nations