

NETWORK WINTER GATHERING REPORT

Monday, February 24, 2014

Batshaw Youth and Family Centres

5 Weredale Park, Westmount

ADOPTED ON DECEMBER 9, 2014

RÉSEAU
pour la stratégie urbaine
de la communauté
autochtone à Montréal



Montreal
Urban Aboriginal
Community Strategy
NETWORK

ATTENDANCE

See the list of participants in the appendix.

AGENDA

1. Words of Welcome and Opening Prayer with Mike Standup
2. Songs of Welcome with the *Buffalo Hat Singers* Drum Group
3. Adoption of the Agenda and of the Fall Gathering Report
4. Presentation and Adoption of the Election Process
5. Accomplishments of the Education and Employability Circle of the MAMU NETWORK – Employment Fair and Reference Tools
6. Ka Mamukanit Presentation, Montreal Aboriginal Youth Socio-Professional Integration Project
7. Closing of Nominations and Interests – Presentation of Candidates
8. Future Delivery Model of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) – AANDC and NAFC Press Release
9. Accomplishments of the NETWORK’s Youth Committee
10. Accomplishments of the NETWORK’s Health Committee and Progress of the Health Centre Project
11. Community Announcements
12. Statistics Canada Presentation – Data from the Aboriginal Peoples Survey and the National Household Survey
13. Accomplishments of the NETWORK’s Social Services Committee and Circle of Care, Justice and Homelessness Subcommittees
14. New Communications Committee of the NETWORK
15. Accomplishments of the NETWORK’s Art·Culture Committee and Progress of the Cultural Centre Project 2017
16. Elections for the Co-Chair Position
17. Participation Survey and Draw for Gift Cards
18. Closing Prayer with Mike Standup

1. WORDS OF WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

Odile Joannette acted as meeting chair for the morning session. She declared the meeting open at 9:15am and invited Mike Standup to deliver the opening prayer.

2. SONGS OF WELCOME WITH THE BUFFALO HAT SINGERS DRUM GROUP

Odile thanked Mike Standup and invited the Buffalo Hat Singers to perform their songs of welcome.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OF THE FALL GATHERING REPORT

Odile thanked the Buffalo Hat Singers for their performance. She also thanked the Batshaw Youth and Family Centres for its collaboration and hospitality since many NETWORK meetings have been held there since the beginning of NETWORK activities in 2008.

Resolution 2014-02-24 / 01

It was moved by Geneviève Collard and seconded by Alana-Dawn Phillips:
THAT THE AGENDA BE ADOPTED AS PRESENTED.

Adopted by consensus.

Regarding the Fall Gathering Report, Odile explained that the Steering Committee was not able to send it out two weeks before the present meeting, contrary to its commitment. Its adoption could thus be postponed to the next Gathering. The members were willing to adopt it immediately.

Resolution 2014-02-24 / 02

It was moved by Sylvain Vollant and seconded by Paige Isaac:
THAT THE FALL GATHERING REPORT OF OCTOBER 31, 2013 BE ADOPTED.

Adopted by consensus.

4. PRESENTATION AND ADOPTION OF THE ELECTION PROCESS

Odile invited the members to see the Terms of Reference adopted in February 2013 (found in the documentation package). The changes thus appear on pages 8 and 9. They aim for the Co-Chairs to be elected by the members at the Gatherings rather than by the Steering Committee, as was previously the case. This being the case, the process that was applied in February 2013 was a unique case. It is now a question of formally endorsing the amendments in order to integrate them into the Terms of Reference.

The desire was to introduce advanced polling in order to allow individuals who are not available to attend the Gatherings to be eligible to vote. However, the limited human resources of the NETWORK make it complex to conduct such a process. Therefore, the Steering Committee proposes to adopt an election process that is similar to that found in any type of organization, which is on-site with the persons present. The section referring to advanced polling has thus been deleted.

Odile read the articles related to the election of Steering Committee Representatives and that of the Co-Chairs with the proposed amendments. She named the Aboriginal members of the Steering Committee who are eligible for the position of Co-Chair: Dolorès André, André Dudemaine, Paige Isaac, Carrie Martin, Bérénice Mollen-Dupuis, Alana-Dawn Phillips, Sylvain Vollant and herself. (The list is found in the accompanying kit.) These persons are not necessarily candidates, and there was no prior consultation to verify their interest.

Resolution 2014-02-24 / 03

It was moved by Geneviève Beaudet and seconded by Sylvie Cornez:

THAT THE TERMS OF REFERENCE WITH THE AMENDMENTS TO THE ARTICLES RELATED TO THE ELECTION PROCESS CONCERNING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE AND THE CO-CHAIRS, SPECIFIED IN THE DOCUMENT "TERMS OF REFERENCE ADOPTED ON FEBRUARY 22, 2013", BE ADOPTED.

Adopted by consensus.

**5. ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE EDUCATION AND EMPLOYABILITY CIRCLE OF THE MAMU NETWORK –
EMPLOYMENT FAIR AND REFERENCE TOOLS**

Paige Isaac presented the accomplishments of the Education and Employability Circle of which she is Co-Chair. She explained that the committee changed its name in order to shorten it. She introduced Tina Lee, who also sits on the Working Committee.

Since the last meeting, the Circle has continued working on the preparations of the MAMU Fair that will be held on March 21, 2104 from 11:00am to 5:00pm. She invited the participants to take posters announcing the event in order to advertise it within their networks.

In addition, the Circle has updated the Montreal Aboriginal Reference Guide on Education, Training and Employment. Copies, in French and in English, are also available on-site.

New recruits have joined the Circle. The members are very motivated, and Paige said she was satisfied with the work accomplished.

Questions and comments

Are there any tables still available for organizations wishing to participate in the MAMU Fair? Yes, they are reserved for employers and organizations that offer jobs or internships. The contact information is found on the poster.

**6. KA MAMUKANIT PRESENTATION, MONTREAL ABORIGINAL YOUTH SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION
PROJECT**

Marjolaine Thernish, Project Manager at the Ka Mamukanit Centre, said that it welcomed its first cohort in August 2011. To date, 60 youth have benefited from the project. A fifth cohort should be starting in April 2014.

In March 2012, the City of Montreal, which has been funding the Centre since its inception, contacted the Centre to verify its interest in participating in an assessment as part of an agreement with the *Ministère de l'Emploi et de Solidarité sociale*. It aimed to analyze the interventions of the Centre during its implementation stage in order to better understand the impacts. The Centre responded favourably to this request. A call for proposals was launched in March 2012 and the *École nationale d'administration publique (ÉNAP)* was selected to carry out this mandate which was entrusted to Professors Martin Goyette and Céline Bellot. They are in attendance today to present the results of their assessment to the NETWORK; it focused on the first two cohorts.

Mr. Martin Goyette thanked the NETWORK for its invitation. He referred to several studies conducted by the First Nations Human Resources Development Commission of Quebec showing that the unemployment rate is much higher among the Aboriginal youth of Montreal than the general population.

To conduct the study, the researchers used the following methodology:

- literature review;
- interviews with project stakeholders (project designers, coordinator, workers);
- contacts with the project partners;
- interviews with 23 youth who participated in the project.

The study, now published¹, focused on the implementation of the Ka Mamukanit Centre and its initial results. Mr. Goyette stated that the Centre is currently faced with a challenge that is often encountered by organizations when at the same stage, which is that of ensuring its sustainability at the financial level. He mentioned that when analyzing integration programs, it is often done by isolating the other spheres of the youth's life. However, in this case, the design was based on a holistic vision so that the youth could wholly and harmoniously integrate the transition towards adulthood, beyond the purely professional component.

To conclude, there are two key issues.

Regarding the design of the interventions, it includes several interesting aspects, but they are not necessarily put in place once they are developed. It is therefore important to continue the implementation.

In addition, it would be necessary to reflect on the mode of recruiting youth so that they are similar in terms of their needs, which would allow designing common modules; or if youth with specific needs are recruited, it is necessary to find ways to individualize the interventions accordingly.

7. CLOSING OF NOMINATIONS AND INTERESTS – PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES

Odile stated that this stage does not involve the actual voting but the nomination of persons who the members wish to propose as candidates. She opened the nomination ballots and verified if the nominated persons wished to run for the position. Each in turn, they declined, with the exception of Sylvain Vollant who accepted his nomination.

Being the only candidate, Sylvain Vollant was elected as Co-Chair by acclamation.

Sylvain Vollant introduced himself. He is Innu from Pessamit. For the two past years, he has been working as a street outreach worker in Montreal. He wishes to be Co-Chair of the NETWORK in order to bring something new to the community, having recently come to Montreal, and to share his experience.

8. FUTURE DELIVERY MODEL OF THE URBAN ABORIGINAL STRATEGY (UAS) – AANDC AND NAFC PRESS RELEASE

Odile stated that she is the Montreal representative within the National Caucus of Urban Networks. She prepared a written presentation for the members of the Caucus, which she distributed to the participants.

¹ http://www.crevaj.enap.ca/CREVAJ/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/1052/Rapport_projet_kama_vf.pdf.

The Steering Committee asked the AANDC representative to come and make a presentation to the NETWORK, but she said that she had no information to give other than what already appears on the website. However, Odile, through her role in the Caucus, was able to access information that she wished to share.

She mentioned that the UAS had the objective, at the outset, of inviting urban Aboriginals to group together. AANDC, with other partners, encouraged the establishment of the NETWORK. She drew attention to the budget allocation that appears in the table of expenditure (also distributed on-site). For 2012-2013, AANDC's funding contribution to the NETWORK amounted to \$62,052. This contribution comes from a total envelope of \$13.5 million for all of Canada, of which \$250,000 was available for Quebec. It is important to remember that these are not significant amounts for projects in Quebec.

She reviewed the history of the UAS. Since April 1, 2013, the UAS funds as well as three other programs come under the regional office of AANDC, which had no previous experience in managing urban programs. The UAS and the three other programs were then renewed until March 31, 2014, after which time the programs must be evaluated by the Cabinet. In June 2013, AANDC announced that a series of consultations would be held with the community to determine how the programs should be harmonized in order to better serve the territory as a whole. The resulting recommendations were submitted in the fall of 2013, and gave rise today to an official announcement regarding the changes in the delivery of the program.

For the National Caucus of Urban Networks, it was important to take into account a study commissioned by Heritage Canada in 2008, which was conducted by university researchers. It revealed that there are 6,000 urban Aboriginal organizations in Canada. The Caucus concluded that the funds should be accessible to these other organizations and not exclusively to the 119 Native friendship centres and that they should be taken into account when reflecting on the program delivery.

The Caucus consists of 15 cities, and Montreal ranks eighth in terms of the size of the Aboriginal population. The numbers appearing in the table on demographic data will be revised to take the last census into account. Each of these cities has a friendship centre. The Caucus held a discussion about the relationships with the friendship centre in each of the cities. In certain cases, they are very harmonious (ex.: Vancouver, where there are two friendship centres). In Montreal, in 2013, the situation was more difficult because the Native Friendship Centre of Montreal (NFCM) saw its funding removed. Since then, the NETWORK has developed new relationships and members of the NFCM serve on some of the Working Committees. As for the new Montreal Native Community Development Centre (MNCDC), it has recently endowed itself with a director. The Executive Director, Philippe Meilleur, is present in the room.

In conclusion, the changes brought are of two types. First, the four existing programs will be merged into two as of April 2014, namely:

- Urban Partnerships (with an annual budget of \$7 million); will be managed by the regional office of AANDC;
- Community Capacity Building (with an annual budget of \$43 million); delivery will be shared with the National Association of Friendship Centres.

The total amount of funding for Aboriginals however decreased from 52 to 50 million dollars. Many questions remain unanswered. An information session will be held in March 2014.

Questions and comments

What can be anticipated by the \$2 million decrease of the overall budget?

A teleconference was held between the Caucus and Headquarters during which the question was raised. Among the questions most frequently asked, some are about the savings the government expects to achieve with this re-

design. It may be presumed that this concern provides a partial answer. In addition, the analysis of the applications will now be carried out by the Association of Friendship Centres rather than AANDC, which can also be a source of savings. Can it be foreseen, by the same token, that AANDC may undertake a review of its structure? The answer provided remained quite vague, though it suggests that there may be a restructuring. For its part, the Association will receive 15% in administrative fees on the \$43 million that it will have to manage.

However, a certain division is being felt. And Odile said she deplores the fact that currently, several division strategies of the government have been observed. Besides the urban funds, one may mention the new act on education, the Employment Insurance and Income Security reforms, the re-opening of the National Aboriginal Resource Allocation Model, etc. Since they consist of the same funds, some will win and others will lose. Odile told the Co-Chair of the National Caucus that, more than ever, it is essential to convey the message that we must remain united. It is important that the reaction of the communities be opposite to that which seems to be sought. On the contrary, there is a need to continue towards the development of partnerships and collaborations. Thus, it emerged from a meeting she had with the management of the Native Friendship Centre of Montreal during the time it had suffered a funding cut, that there are tremendous needs and there is place in Montreal to start up initiatives and to implement various resources. It is therefore necessary to unite in a spirit of complementarity. This is the discourse of the NFCM as it does not see a problem in another Aboriginal centre opening because there are still many needs to be fulfilled. It is also the purpose of the NETWORK.

Philippe Meilleur, the new Director of the MNCDC, took the floor to introduce himself. He took up his duties last week. He was made aware of the context of the creation of the Centre and the divisions that had then arisen. However, his mandate is to establish links in the same perspective as the NETWORK, understand the perceptions involving the provision of services in Montreal and identify areas that need support and complementarity. In particular, he aims to serve families, who are less affected by the NFCM. He invited the members of the NETWORK to share their ideas with him because he wishes to devote the next months to listening to the comments of the community and to becoming involved in the NETWORK.

Odile mentioned the press release published on February 6, 2014 and found in the documentation package. She said she will disseminate the information obtained at the March 2014 meeting in the newsletter. She stated that the distribution list is now comprised of 720 members representing 145 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations. It is a great success.

As treasurer of the NETWORK, she has the responsibility of preparing funding applications. The Steering Committee agreed to submit its applications for the next year to both Luc Dumont's office (regional office of AANDC) and the Association of Friendship Centres. She does not know if management will be as decentralized on a regional basis.

9. ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE NETWORK'S YOUTH COMMITTEE

Sylvain Vollant explained that the Youth Working Committee has not yet undertaken any activities. However, he is making preparations to officially launch the Committee. Meetings are held periodically in order to discuss the vision that should underlie the Committee.

Mélanie Lumsden added that the Committee has ten members from different backgrounds, which she considers positive given the slow start-up of the Committee.

10. ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE NETWORK'S HEALTH COMMITTEE AND PROGRESS OF THE HEALTH CENTRE PROJECT

Sean Yaphe, Committee Coordinator, presented the three main files of the Health Working Committee.

- Health Centre

The Committee is studying three potential directions to give to the health centre. He is in contact with the *Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec* in order to prepare a funding application consisting of a wider proposal. Indeed, the *Regroupement* wishes to implement various health service points across Quebec for urban Aboriginals. He is also working with the Health and Social Services Working Committee to determine the most relevant services to implement into the proposal at the outset.

Contacts were also established with the *Médecins du Monde*; a group of doctors are working in collaboration with the Health Committee who wish to assist in the implementation primary health care services in Montreal through the *CLSC*, *CSSS* or community organizations such as the Old Brewery Mission.

Recently, the *CLSC de la Montagne* launched a project entitled *Village Santé*. Once the Montreal Children's Hospital moves to the Glen Campus, the building could be used to implement a health village where various health services can be provided. It is hoped that the Aboriginal health centre can be established within this project.

In parallel, the Committee is working on preparing its own proposal in order to define different avenues for the design of the health centre.

- Sweat Lodge

The Committee is currently studying ways to secure funding for the hiring of a full-time coordinator to be able to offer ceremonies year-round.

- Research on Dental Care

A dentist connected to McGill University is conducting research on access to dental care for Aboriginal people in Montreal. He has called on the Committee to assist with the development of the research questions and to possibly recruit participants.

Questions and comments

Concerning the research, Alana-Dawn Phillips wished to know if it is at the point where there is a need to contact organizations. It is not yet the case. She expressed her interest in participating in the research because her organization, the Rising Sun Childcare Centre, has its own dental program.

Does the development of the health centre include a strategy for homeless Aboriginals, other than the links with the Old Brewery Mission. It is indeed possible that Aboriginals do not identify with the centre. And is there a possibility of going into the streets to directly provide health care to homeless persons who do not visit these centres?

For the moment, various options are being considered in terms of primary care. Thus, the Committee has not yet decided with which organizations it will collaborate. The Old Brewery Mission recently acquired a new building where certain services could be offered. As for services provided in the street, it is precisely the model used by *Médecins du Monde*, who also have street outreach workers who visit community organizations to help different populations. The Committee is examining various models, including that of the *CLSC du Sud-Ouest / Verdun* where a doctor could be present once a week in the morning and where a nurse could be present at all times. And if participation warrants it, a street nurse could also be added.

11. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

➤ Trickster

Mélanie Lumsden, member of the NETWORK's Youth Working Committee, works at Exeko, an organization involved in the field of education and culture. She wished to present the Trickster project, which involves theatre, circus and storytelling. A first edition was held at the Native Friendship Centre of Montreal last year and resulted in a show presented in January 2014 which included about ten participants. It was a success, the hall was full.

Registrations are currently open to Aboriginal candidates between 8 and 16 years of age. There are 30 places available between April and June 2014. The workshops are bilingual and focus on the development of self-confidence through creativity. They are facilitated by performers from *Cirque du Soleil*. Promotional posters are available on-site in both languages.

For more information: melanie.lumsden@exeko.org

➤ Wapikoni Mobile

Karine Gravel stated that Wapikoni Mobile is celebrating its tenth anniversary and several activities are planned to underline the event. For example, a screening will be held this evening at 7:00pm at the *Cinémathèque* as part of the *Rendez-vous du cinéma québécois*. Five participants have travelled from Kitcisakik, Lac-Simon and Manouane on this occasion to take part in a panel.

On March 8, 2014 Quebec Native Women will be celebrating its 40th anniversary in collaboration with Wapikoni Mobile at the *Économusée du Fier Monde* at 7:00pm. It will be a "women's party".

Through Wapikoni Mobile, 660 films were made by youth. One of the ways Wapikoni is supported is by using these films to animate events. One may contact Wapikoni to inquire about films that would be appropriate for a given topic.

➤ Artial

Anaïs Janin, who is non-Aboriginal, founded the *Artial* (arts and social) organization in order to build bridges between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals through the arts. She is seeking Aboriginal candidates to serve on the organization's board of directors (BOD). The BOD applied to the City of Montreal for a grant to support the organization of workshops for artists in popular education centres in the South-West and Central-South neighbourhoods. Such an experience took place in 2013 with the *Centre de formation sociale Marie Gérin-Lajoie* which was very well received, and the organization would like to repeat the experience in 2015 and 2016. Currently, the organization has three partners and wishes to expand its base. For the moment, the organization does not receive any funding and is seeking to recruit persons who can help it evolve.

For more information: info@artial.qc.ca

➤ **Rotaract**

Sean Yaphe, president of the Rotaract organization, explained that the organization brings together young professionals and students who wish to volunteer and provide services to the community, such as leadership, personal development, fundraising, etc.

For more information: <mailto:sean.yaphe@mail.mcgill.ca>

➤ **Quebec Native Women (QNW)**

Since December 2013, Alana Boileau is the Coordinator of the Justice and Public Safety program at QNW. On her arrival, funding was available to work on the issue of missing or murdered Aboriginal women in Quebec and it had to be spent before the end of March 2013. After consulting various persons, she came to the conclusion that, for all intents and purposes, there are almost no data on this subject in Quebec. The amazing initiative of Sisters in Spirit, whose funding was abolished in 2010, had primarily collected data in English, which does not provide a representative picture of the situation. Therefore, QNW decided to undertake its own research and to hire a researcher to conduct a small-scale study because the available funding does not allow sending a hired person into the communities to conduct the study as she would have liked.

She therefore invited the participants to disseminate the information about the job opening, which consists of a research contract. She also asked, if possible, to refer the researcher to persons in the communities who would be willing to share information and the approach that should be used, especially in terms of the way to ask questions about such a sensitive reality.

For more information: <mailto:justice@faq-qnw.org>

What are the parameters of the research, what is being sought?

First, numerical data are being sought. And to know if there are geographical regions where the problem is more concentrated. And to understand what resources and services would be needed to prevent the perpetuation of this reality.

There is mention of violence, but are any specific areas being targeted?

What was collected by the Sisters in Spirit pertained only to the cases of 22 women. And in cases where data were available, they involved women who died at home, which is different from the situation elsewhere in Canada. It is important to obtain more information and, at the same time, avoid approaching families that have already responded.

➤ **MAMU Fair**

Geneviève Collard, from the Montreal Urban Service Centre of the First Nations Human Resources Development Commission of Quebec (FNHRDCQ), is collaborating with Paige Isaac and the Education and Employability Circle. She extended an invitation to persons who wish to get involved, on a voluntary basis, on the day of the MAMU Fair, March 21, 2014.

For more information or to give your name, please call Gabrielle Powers–Langlois, at (514) 283-0901.

➤ **Cultural Activities**

André Dudemaine announced the upcoming release, at the *cinema Excentris*, of the film “Rhymes for Young Ghouls” that was filmed in Kahnawake with actor Jeff Barnaby of Listuguj and which won an award at the TriBeCa Festival in New York.

He also mentioned the presence of Cree artist, Kent Monkman, in Montreal, who is exhibiting a piece at the McCord Museum.

12. STATISTICS CANADA PRESENTATION – DATA FROM THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLES SURVEY AND THE NATIONAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

Nakuset took over as meeting facilitator. She presented the Buffalo Hat Singers who opened the afternoon session with their songs.

She invited Cindy Gosselin, Advisor for the Aboriginal Liaison Program for Quebec at Statistics Canada, to present the results of the Aboriginal Peoples Survey and the National Household Survey.

Cindy pointed out that in 2010, the government abolished the use of the long form that was formerly mandatory for the census; it was replaced by the National Household Survey (NHS), which is completed on a voluntary basis. Previously, one household out of five received the long form, and four households out of five received the short form. In 2011, one household out of three had to complete the full version of the NHS, and two out of three completed the abridged version. However, in the Aboriginal communities, the entire population received the full version of the NHS.

The procedure normally followed by Statistics Canada consists of writing to the Chiefs of the communities one year before the census to request authorization to visit the respective communities to conduct a census of the population. In 2011, six communities refused access to Statistics Canada: the Mohawk communities of Kahnawake, Kanesatake, Akwesasne and Doncaster as well as Wendake and Rapid Lake. As for Essipit, the community gave its authorization; however, the response rate was very low and it was not possible to use the collected data. However, significant data was collected. Across Canada, 23 communities refused access to Statistics Canada. Also, in Ontario, forest fires prevented the Statistics Canada agents from visiting 13 communities; however, they were able to subsequently carry out the census.

Cindy drew attention to the information contained in the packages distributed to the participants. It includes a leaflet on the Aboriginal Liaison Program, a bilingual tool that provides demographic data by province and by territory as well as PowerPoint presentations pertaining to the two surveys. There is also a leaflet explaining how to browse the Statistics Canada website in order to find information relating specifically to Aboriginal peoples. She said that her team can help individuals find more personalized information and the service is free for individuals and Aboriginal organizations. Some information can be found in the “Archives” section.

She reviewed the different sections of the website beginning with the Aboriginal Population Profile based on the NHS. One can thus view the data for the metropolitan area of Montreal according to which the Aboriginal population now totals 26,225 individuals. On Montreal Island, it stands, rather, at 10,000 individuals. All data have been available since September 2013. The breakdown is by age group, marital status, and family characteristics. As for ethnic origin, a distinction is made between ancestry and identity. Other variables may be viewed, for example: religion, spoken language (non-official), knowledge of official languages, mobility, level of education, employment,

type and sector of occupation, housing, income, etc. The data are provided on an individual basis and according to household.

Louise St-Amour, who also works as Advisor for the Aboriginal Liaison Program, presented the results of the Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS) that was conducted across the country. It focuses on the off-reserve population, including the Métis and Inuit, contrary to the previous survey, and it was conducted in 2012 following the census that served as a sample. It was conducted among persons of Aboriginal ancestry or who identify themselves as Aboriginal. (See the copy of the PowerPoint presentation in the package. The data are also available on the website.) The data were published in November 2013; however, the analysis drawn from them will be available later this year.

Another survey was conducted by the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) among the communities, and is based more or less on the same questionnaire.

13. ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE NETWORK'S SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE AND CIRCLE OF CARE, JUSTICE AND HOMELESSNESS SUBCOMMITTEES

Nakuset is the Representative on the Steering Committee. She introduced Alana-Dawn Phillips who acts as Alternate and is Director of the Rising Sun Childcare Centre, in Verdun.

Nakuset explained that the Working Committee deals with many issues, so it created three subcommittees:

- Circle of Care: deals with the issue of children placed in foster care, in collaboration with Batshaw Youth and Family Centres;
- Justice Subcommittee;
- Homelessness Subcommittee.

Circle of Care

At the last Gathering, it was mentioned that the Subcommittee was seeking a new name, either the *iohahi :o* group or *Circle of Care*, and the latter was finally selected. As for the name *iohahi :o*, it will be given to a mentoring program similar to that of Big Brothers and Big Sisters, a program in which Aboriginal youth are provided support by Aboriginal adults. The Committee is working with Batshaw Youth and Family Centres and its team of volunteers to design an application form for interested persons. There are also plans to hire a person who would ensure a liaison between Batshaw and the Aboriginal community in order to recruit "Big Brothers" and "Big Sisters" and provide guidance and support. Use of this terminology is not authorized, however, because it is a reserved designation. Nakuset thus invited persons interested in participating in the *iohahi :o* to give her their name. She emphasized, however, that a background check will be carried out and persons with criminal records will not be accepted. The Subcommittee hopes that the program will be in effect as of late spring 2014.

The other project the Subcommittee is working towards is the creation of a foster home. It consists of a home that will be able to accommodate six or seven children. In fact, Aboriginal families often have many children. At the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal, Nakuset witnessed a situation in which a mother had six children and the children were separated and placed in different foster homes. The goal is to create a home where the children will be able to stay together. The Subcommittee is collaborating closely with Cathy Carroll of Batshaw to define the project and it is progressing well. However, it is not yet sufficiently advanced as to open a position. At the appropriate time, an announcement will be published in the newsletter to recruit an Aboriginal couple or a couple of whom one partner is Aboriginal (including same-sex). It is important that one spouse is employed.

Nakuset also mentioned the publication of the Cultural Manual designed for non-Aboriginal families who welcome Aboriginal children. It helps the parents to bridge the cultural gap. The manual can be downloaded from the

NETWORK's website. It is planned that 500 additional copies will be printed and will be made available at Batshaw and the Rising Sun Childcare Centre.

- *Justice Subcommittee*

The Subcommittee continues its work on the implementation of the Justpeace project that was discussed at the last Gathering. Since then, it has established a board of directors.

- *Homelessness Subcommittee*

The Subcommittee is pursuing the development of its action plan. It includes several partners from various organizations to whom it provides a space for dialogue and exchange of views. It is also collaborating with the Justice Subcommittee on the Justpeace project.

Allison Reid, Coordinator of the Cabot Square project, presented an update on the file. She said she is working with Vivien Carli of the Crime Prevention Centre and Marla Williams to develop a strategy related to the homeless persons who frequent Cabot Square and the surrounding neighbourhood. She pointed out that the initiative began a year ago and it took six to nine months of work to develop a strategy targeting frontline services, day centres, housing services as well as the residents of the area. In the past months, efforts have been focused on the actions to be implemented with regard to the changes that will soon affect Cabot Square. In fact, the Square will be closed as of June 2014 for re-development. Thus, there is a certain urgency to ensure that the people who frequent the Square are not displaced, that the services provided to them remain available and that it even be possible to provide additional services that are not yet in place.

Funding was thus obtained from the City of Montreal and the Ville-Marie borough to hire, as of April 2014, two support workers, one Aboriginal, attached to the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal and another at the YMCA, to work for a period of nine months with the target population, the Aboriginal population in priority. The day centre located nearby will serve as a base to provide services. Training will also be provided to the street outreach workers accordingly. And it will be ensured that communications are maintained during the closing of the Square in order to inform visitors about places where services can be obtained.

The project is now entering its second phase, which consists of enriching the supply of services in the west of Montreal. To this end, collaborations have been established with the Justpeace project, health services including mental health, legal services, etc. There is also discussion about developing a co-existence plan with certain workers in the housing sector. Moreover, some reflection is already being given towards the re-opening of Cabot Square, in a year and a half, and to the activities that could then be provided, including at the cultural level and ways to involve the Cabot Square regulars in this aspect.

14. NEW COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE NETWORK

Stéphanie Chiasson explained that she is the new Representative of the Communications Working Committee, which now has three members. A meeting is planned to be held in two or three week in order to define the objectives of the Committee. In particular, it will be its responsibility to prepare the February and March 2014 newsletters and she wishes to include a summary of the accomplishments of the Working Committees.

The Committee wants to purchase a laptop and has a budget of \$1,100.

She invited interested members to join the Committee.

15. ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE NETWORK'S ART●CULTURE COMMITTEE AND PROGRESS OF THE CULTURAL CENTRE PROJECT 2107

Odile, as well as Devora Neumark, sit on the Cultural Centre Ad Hoc Committee. Odile announced that the final budget, totalling \$30 million, was submitted to the *ministère de la Culture et des Communications* after it was revised to reflect the comments received following the preliminary feasibility study. For example, the level of use by the school network was considered too low and was raised so as to better reflect the potential of this sector. As a result, the architects were invited to review the configuration in order to provide three rooms large enough to welcome three school buses in one day. In addition, it was asked that a meeting room be provided that would be able to accommodate at least one hundred persons gathered in a circle.

A meeting was held with the Deputy Minister who established an interdepartmental table in support of the project. In the distribution of costs, Quebec will assume 40%, Canada 50% and the remaining 10% will come from various sources including the City of Montreal.

Devora added that its constitution as a non-profit organization should take shape within two weeks. The bylaws were prepared in collaboration with a business lawyer. The preparation of the bylaws took longer than expected because the aim was to ensure that they truly reflect the consensus-based decision-making formula, which represented a certain challenge with respect to the Canada Corporations Act. According to the lawyer, the wording used in the bylaws should be deemed acceptable and not unduly delay the legal constitution of the Centre.

A meeting should therefore take place in early March 2014 to bring together the various partners of the project who will, in particular, have to elect a provisional board of directors, which will lead to the actual founding meeting in April 2014. It is hoped that the membership will be as large as possible. Until then, there remains some work to accomplish in terms of the governance aspect, which was extensively addressed in chapter 5 of the feasibility study. For example, there was question of creating circles of expertise, such as circles of education, research, programming, culture and traditions.

Isabelle Picard was hired as Project Manager; she has previously worked on the *Hôtel-Musée de Wendake* project and also collaborated in the feasibility study. The *Quartier international de Montréal* is also collaborating in the project, given its expertise in the development of major infrastructure.

The work in progress includes sending letters to Inuit representatives, Makivik Corporation, Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees, Matthew Coon Come as well as regular communications with Regional Chief, Ghislain Picard, who supports the project. In particular, he requested a meeting with the new Mayor Coderre to discuss the project.

Along other lines, development of the virtual space of the Centre is being examined, which includes reflecting on ways to protect the copyright of cultural content that could be made available online. The Centre wishes to become a model with regard to policies, ethics and other management tools for Aboriginal peoples. In this respect, the Quebec government, for its part, is preparing to unveil a virtual cultural policy and vigilance is being exercised as to ensure that it takes First Peoples into account.

In addition, the governments of Canada and Quebec are injecting significant funds to provide web access and high-speed internet access to remote communities, and the Aboriginal communities are particularly affected by these developments. Concretely, 10 communities were selected for the implementation, so that every Nation is represented. However, vigilance must also be exercised because the intent of the governments, though it seems to

be based on worthy objectives, must also respect the proper way of doing things and the expectations of the population into account. The *Société des Arts technologiques* has extensive expertise in ways to connect remote communities at a reasonable cost. Wapikoni Mobile should also be consulted. Representations were also made in order to have a representative of *Institut Tshakapesh* involved in the process since the Innu communities have explored various avenues in this field and, they too, have valuable expertise. It is also important to involve the First Nations Education Council, which contributed to spreading new technologies in the secondary schools and in the communities. It is now a question of making the governments recognize the expertise acquired by Aboriginals in the field of technology and using them to set realistic targets, so as to avoid driving the selected communities to failure.

To return to the physical project itself, close relations are maintained with the City of Montreal, whose main contribution must reside in the attribution of an implementation site for the Centre. The first choice remains the eastern segment of Viger Square. However, it was recently discovered – and even the City was not quite aware – that the site is 100% owned by the *ministère du Transport*. Therefore, there is a need to undertake negotiations with the *ministère du Transport*, and the *Quartier international* is taking action in this regard. Plan B would consist of finding an alternate solution in the Ville-Marie borough because it was the sector that was considered a priority in the focus groups. And, if necessary, Plan C would consist of implementing the Centre in the east, in the complex that combines the Botanical Gardens, the Biodome, etc. Meetings are planned with the Ville-Marie borough to make it aware of the economic development potential of the Centre.

Thus, there is a narrow window to finalize these aspects because the Centre is supposed to officially open in June 2017.

André Dudemaine added that the Arts•Culture Working Committee remains in the shadow of this major project it created in relation to the Centre, due to the emergencies and deadlines that are imposed. The Arts•Culture Working Committee now has to be revitalized, and meetings are scheduled for April 2014 in order to work towards re-building the Committee. He mentioned that while remaining the Committee Representative, he does not feel comfortable about participating in the Steering Committee, given that his mandate has clearly expired.

It goes without saying that once the legal constitution of the Centre is finalized, it and the Arts•Culture Working Committee will become two separate entities, which will not prevent the latter from maintaining links with the Centre.

Questions and comments

In its beginnings, the Committee recruited only Aboriginal members. Is there an opening for the Committee to integrate persons wishing to build bridges between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures?

Discussions previously took place with regard to the Committee's membership conditions, and indeed the question will have to be seriously examined. Therefore, the hypothesis raised here will have to be considered. The fact also has to be taken into account that the availabilities of the current members are limited and it would doubtlessly be useful to gather together all possible energy from various sources to support such a Committee.

Odile added that the Centre is a particularly structuring and unifying project for all the communities. She is calling on persons whose expertise could be put to use in the various circles.

The year 2017 corresponds to a series of anniversaries and there will be a need to watch for funding opportunities that will arise. More particularly, 2017 will mark the tenth anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Chief Shawn Atleo has in fact been solicited so that we can submit an application to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) in order for Montreal to be the host city for a celebration at the Cultural Centre, which has been temporarily designated for the purposes of legal constitution "Desti-Nations, International

Crossroads of Indigenous Peoples' Arts and Cultures". The strategy that was proposed to the AFN aims to have the support resolution come from a Mohawk Chief, which would be symbolic in terms of territory. Negotiations are underway with the Mohawk Nation in this regard.

André also underlined that 2017 will mark the 50th anniversary of Expo 67, the only exposition in the history of universal expositions to make a place for an independent "Indians of Canada" pavilion, which was important in the development of arts and cultures in particular, and in the current trend of First Nations assertion. The two Co-Commissioners were Max Gros-Louis and Andrew Delisle Sr., and we are still privileged to have them among us.

16. ELECTIONS FOR THE CO-CHAIR POSITION

This item was not addressed because the Co-Chair was elected earlier by acclamation.

17. PARTICIPATION SURVEY AND DRAW FOR GIFT CARDS

Before proceeding with the draw for gift cards, Nakuset presented a video depicting a Cree comedian living in Montreal, Charlie Hill, who died two months ago. He gained notoriety through his ironic self-mockery numbers relating to the image perceived of Aboriginals.

18. CLOSING PRAYER WITH MIKE STANDUP

Nakuset invited Mike Standup to deliver the closing prayer.

The Gathering ended at 2:45pm.