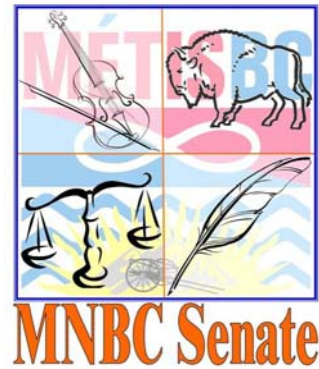


Senate Meeting Minutes

Kamloops, B.C., May 31, June 01-03, 2006

Senators present: Al Edkins, Ron Snyder, Philip Gladue, Don Beauchesne, Gerald Pope and Vernon District Métis Association's elder Charles "Smokey" Trumbley.



1. Call to Order at 09:00 hrs
2. Opening Prayer, conducted by Senator Beauchesne.
3. Correspondence and previous minutes
4. Committee Reports:
 1. Senator Legare to report on the capes or robes for the Senate. We discussed the different colour combinations and decided that the white cape would be very hard to keep clean, therefore the colours will be Blue for ordinary wear and Maroon for formal sittings of the Senate, all capes would have the symbols in white on them.
 2. The design of the crest on the Senate robes would be a wheel, quartered with Buffalo, Infinity symbol, Eagle feather and a Fiddle, this motif would also be carried over in to the Business cards for the Senators and Senator Phil Gladue will look into a template and layout for us.
 3. Senator Gladue to report the status of the Senate "bundle" he was to start putting together, he is progressing well and we were delighted to receive an Eagle feather from Senator Legare who received it from a member of his area for inclusion with our table bundle.
 4. Senator Edkins and Gladue to report on the Funding discussions with the Executive Director, this did not occur and we believe the funding issue will be fleshed out and resolved with meeting scheduled for the afternoon of the second day.
 5. Senators Beauchesne and Gladue to report on the progress of Business cards, see the comments under the "bundle" discussions both are being worked on.

All Senators to report on the progress to date of Elders for the Ethics Committee and search for Alternates in their respective Regions.

The debate was refocused on how we will show responsibility for ensuring that our conduct is above reproach and how we can instill confidence in the citizens that our overseeing group is well empowered to act as our Ethics Committee.

We feel that the best people to sit in judgement of us in case of charges is the very group that appointed us, namely the Regional Council and we therefore have unanimously agreed to endorse the position that any complaints about the conduct of a Senator shall be investigated and controlled by the Regional Council of the specified Senators Region and they shall have the right to decide what the judgement shall be in this case.

The search for Alternates is not going well in the Regions as no one appears to want the job as a developing Senator, we will continue to advance the message that it is imperative that we develop continuity in this requirement under the ratified Senate Protocol.

A discussion on the use and requirements of a log book for tracking spending, and the Senators to give a review of how they feel we can be fiscally responsible and we then need to develop our bargaining position for next year bearing in mind the added costs we will engender in the election year.

1030 hrs coffee break

5. Regional Senators Reports

Region 1:

1. Attended 3 community AGM's, 2 Community General meetings, 2 Regional Council Meetings, 1 Special Information Meeting and 2 Community Dinner gatherings; conducted 5 dispute interviews of which only one had the proper criteria to proceed to resolution hearings and it was left in the hands of the complainant to pursue, attended 3 graduation ceremonies to award the "Sash" to Metis students on graduation.
2. Advised on three mediation requests at an arms length; we need to discuss our rules vis-à-vis mediation, don't want to jeopardize impartiality by being involved in the actual mediation process only setting it up so the parties meet and the meeting can be chaired by the Regional Director or other disinterested party to keep us away until formal application is made to the Senator of the affected Region to conduct intervener status in the dispute.

I have been very active in developing a close working relationship with the First Nations in the Cowichan Valley and will be proceeding to continue this with other First Nations groups on the Island in the future.

*1200 hrs lunch break
Reconvene at 1330 hrs*

Region 2:

1. Status of the Chilliwack Community and the Mr. L. McElrevy situation , we know nothing as there has been a change in the Executive and we have not been apprised of whether they are in the stages of granting Mr. McElrevy a chance to hear the reasons for dismissal and give him a chance to state his position , Region 2 Director Frazer MacDonald is the person from the MNBC office who is to attempt to resolve this situation if possible without reverting to the Senate for formal investigation and resolve.
2. Senator Gladue has some tentative names for alternate and will continue working with the Communities, he is also heavily involved with the First Nations in the Canoe journey event coming up, he also informed us that the First Nations on the lower mainland want us involved in all cultural events with them, this a big positive step for us and a validation of the work we are doing as goodwill ambassadors as Senators.
3. It is with a sense of honour that we have been informed that Senator Gladue has been asked to let his name stand for an Aboriginal Citizens Award

Region 3:

1. Senator Beauchesne is in the process of working with all the Communities in getting an alternate and is going to schools and other venues to promote the jigging and square dancing and to tell about the Metis culture.
2. He will continue to travel to the other communities to give them an understanding of the Senate and its workings.

Region 4:

1. Senator Legare has been around to all the Communities and is getting ideas on what they want for the alternate and is conducting sessions to explain our function to

them; he has been extremely innovative in that he has taken staff with him to introduce them to the membership so that they have a first hand account on what they are doing for them.

2. He has been invited to a pow-wow in Creston and is a signatory of an Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement which involves First Nations and Metis.

Region 5:

1. There is no sitting Senator in this Region.

Region 6:

1. Senator Snider spoke to the problems of getting his Prince Rupert Community to correspond with him; he is to start travelling this month to the communities and will educate them as to the function of the Senate and our position in the scheme of things.

Region 7:

1. Senator Pope relates that he is just getting started in his Region and that the First Nations around there are not interested in backing the Metis in any manner, he spoke to concerns over the Citizenship appeal Board and that we cannot be seen as a rubber stamp group, we then debated our concerns over the process and our lack of knowledge in that area.
2. We then discussed the forms that will be required for all appeals and the need for a tracking system and if possible to make them easy for the layperson to understand and use we feel there is a real need for a registry person and Privacy Officer.

Break at 1500 hrs

6. Citizenship overview by Region and debate on problem areas.
7. We realize that there are requirements for training and education in this area preferably from a legal type person, and a registered genealogist.

*June 1/2006 Day 2
Call to order at 0900 hrs*

1. MNBC Executive Board to be invited in to the sitting for a discussion on the roles and responsibilities of the Senate in relation to the Constitution and the Acts which are our direct responsibilities.
2. Opening prayer
3. Combined Senate and MNBC Executive Board meeting , the regular Senate sitting will stand-down until this meeting is over and we go back into confidential discussions again within the regular meeting context.**(Note : The time has changed to 1:30p.m. to accommodate the MNBC Executive group)**
4. We open the joint session with the MNBC Executive Board and Senator Edkins speaks words of introduction and advises that there will be a media person coming this afternoon for pictures and an interview of the proceedings.
5. President Dumont then swears in Senator Beauchesne and Senator Pope.
6. Both sides then make comments on the need to work together and that personality conflicts should be put aside for the common good, President Dumont introduces Keith Henry as the C.E.O. and we are given a binder with pertinent Sections and Articles for our discussion, Keith Henry then proceeds to read through them all and we asks questions as they arise. Senator Edkins asks after the preamble and scope of the Senate are read from the Constitution if we

are indeed an independent Board , Joe Gereluk who is legal counsel for the MNBC answers that "You are indeed a separate and independent Board and that our function is to act as judiciary and to listen to and adjudicate challenges to the decisions of the Administrative agencies of the MNBC" ; Senator Edkins then states that we are satisfied with that position and wish to work in concert to ensure that all our citizens have access to the Senate for dispute solving after the Administrative persons and Boards have had an opportunity to resolve them at the lowest possible level , and further makes the point that no one has the right to deny a citizen access to the judicial system which President Dumont agrees to and states he believes that also , and we need to ensure that our Administrative persons act in a manner to ensure the people are listened to , we also believe that there should be a procedure set up to ensure due process for all Metis people , Senator Edkins then asked about the definition of "Fiduciary" in the non monetary sense as is expected of the Senate in upholding the Constitution and Acts of the governance sections of our society and was apprised of the fact they (the Senate) are expected to defend the Constitution and Governance Acts if there are challenges launched over their application and or implementation(we would expect this to be in conjunction with the Governance Committee).

7. We proceed to discuss the Budget issues which are necessary for the functioning of the Senate , each Senator speaks to a different section of the requirements as they see them for the operation of the Senate , we have broken them down into "fixed" and "variable" costs , bottom line "Fixed costs" are \$840 per month and the "Variable costs" are obviously unknown at this time but we spoke to the meeting that we understood the need for fiscal responsibility and were actively pursuing such a course in our deliberations , Treasurer Dave Hodgson asked us to submit a 9 month Budget to him at our earliest convenience , we agreed to do so and that Senator Edkins would do this.
8. Senator Snider made it known to the meeting that when we finish and the Senate reconvenes to talk over the issues and points made during our talks; that if the Senate is required to send a letter to the MNBC that it will be from all of us and that the Lower mainland and Island Senators (because of their proximity) will meet with the MNBC if they wish over points raised in the letter and will speak for all the Senate.
9. We finish the meeting at approximately 4:35 pm and adjourn for the day.

DAY 3 June 2/06
Opening prayer

1. Senator Edkins called the meeting to order and gave a lengthy overview of the proceedings from yesterday and asked if any found fault at what we heard, we felt that we must make sure the minutes are edited in such a manner as to be perfectly clear on what we heard from the MNBC Executive Board, and that it was not necessary for us to craft a letter stating our position on the facts as were debated yesterday.
2. Debate and overview of the new documents pertaining to the applications for Senate Dispute Resolution, Withdrawal of Dispute claim, Application for non binding mediation and other necessary archiving documents as required for legal and precedent setting decisions we will make and the need to create a library for those who will follow. These documents while being distributed would not be ratified until our session with Dean Trumbley and our need to get a better understanding of the liabilities inherent in the Citizenship Appeals Committee's future actions.
3. Dean Trumbley arrives and has with him his Father and Grandfather "Smokey" we stand down for a brief period of time to go and speak with respect to the honoured Elder of our Nation.

4. We then reconvene and Dean begins his presentation of the processes that we are facing and the legal challenges and pitfalls ahead of us, he also speaks of the Senates jurisdiction over the future BCMNR rules and violations that may attend these.
5. It becomes very apparent during our mutual discussions and exposure to the ramifications of the legal systems that evidentiary procedures and immaculate documentation are a primary requisite for our Senate.
6. We will need someone in the near future to come and give us the basics of how to sit in judgement of issues and the conduct expected of the judiciary in our society and Nation.
7. We need the input from an experienced office manager type for the setting up of an accounting and registering system for cases and how to maintain confidentiality at all times, a Senate Registrar or perhaps just a Registrar for all legal documents and we are suggesting this could also be the Privacy Officer as is required under Law in our Executive Board.
8. b) Debate is required as to the correct procedure when participating in Regional Governance Meetings, that is we need the Chairman of those meetings to advise us when there is a subject on the Agenda which will have the potential to be sent to the Senate for resolution, we can leave the meeting while this is discussed then return; and we need to add that to our Regional procedures and they become part of our defined duties.
9. M/S/C That Senator Edkins will submit a 9 month budget showing the fixed costs as we agreed on in our Caucus.
10. M/S/C/ That Senator Gladue and Senator Edkins meet with Dean Trumbley and legal counsel for the MNBC before the next sitting of the Senate to draft a series of the needed appeals and process documents into being for the full Senate to read and adopt.
11. M/S/C That Senator Edkins will have letter crafted up for Ms Josie Ahearn for the special donation of the twinned Eagle feathers that is now part of our bundle on the table when the Senate is sitting or when we do business as a full Senate.
12. We discuss the timing for the next Senate sitting and will firm this up for the two (2) days immediately before the AGM in Kelowna, we believe that these minutes will be declaration of our intent to the MNBC to arrange for the said sitting and Senator Edkins will follow up as the Interim Chairman of the Senate to ensure that there are no mistakes or miscommunications.

These minutes were a compilation of the notes from Senator Snider as Senate recording Secretary and the Agenda as drafted by Senator Edkins as the Interim Chairman of the MNBC Senate.

Approved: _____

Bill Thibeault, *Senate Secretary*