



**MÉTIS NATION – SASKATCHEWAN
PROVINCIAL MÉTIS COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**

held June 8, 2020

Minutes of the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan (MN-S) Provincial Métis Council (PMC) Regular Meeting scheduled June 8, 2020 at 10:00 a.m., held at the Batoche Outdoor Venue, Batoche, Saskatchewan.

PRESENT:

Glen McCallum, President	Penny Hurton, Western Region 2A
Gerald Morin, Vice-President, Chair	Derek Langan, Eastern Region 2A
Earl Cook, Treasurer	Billy Kennedy, Western Region 1A
Lisa McCallum, Secretary	Tammy Mah, Les Filles des Madeleine
Jaycee Bell, Youth Council	Sherry McLennan, Western Region 2
Mervin “Tex” Bouvier, Northern Region 3	Leonard Montgrand, Northern Region 2
Marg Friesen, Eastern Region 3	Sherry Soll, Eastern Region 2
Wendy Gervais, Western Region 3	

ALSO PRESENT:

Norman Fleury, Elder	Felix Merasty, Veteran
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MN-S OFFICE:

Julia Burns, Communications	Adel Panahi, Director of Health
Mark Calette, Senior Director, Administration	Richard Quintal, Chief Executive Officer
Dorothy Myo, Senior Director of Policy and Research	Riva Farrell Racette, Legal Counsel

RECORDING SECRETARY:

(minutes prepared from recording)

Jessi Connaughton, Raincoast Ventures Ltd.

AGENDA VARIED

The order of the Agenda was varied throughout the meeting. Items are indicated in these minutes in the order in which they were considered.

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Glen McCallum called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. and confirmed that Vice President Gerald Morin would Chair the meeting.

2. OPENING PRAYER

Elder Norman Fleury offered an Opening Prayer.

3. APPOINTMENT OF THE RECORDING SECRETARY

It was MOVED (Marg Friesen) and SECONDED (Leonard Montgrand)

That the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan Provincial Métis Council appoints Raincoast Ventures Ltd., as Recording Secretary for the June 8, 2020 meeting.

CARRIED (200608-01)

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was MOVED (Leonard Montgrand) and SECONDED (Sherry McLennan)

That the Agenda for the June 8, 2020 Métis Nation – Saskatchewan Provincial Métis Council meeting be adopted as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Opening Prayer
3. Approval of Minute Taker
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Review of the Minutes:
 - 5.1 Approval of the Minutes
 - 5.2 Business Arising from the Minutes
6. President's Report
7. COVID-19 Updates:
 - 7.1 Minister of Health
 - 7.2 Regional COVID Updates
8. Resolutions:
 - 8.1 ELCC Michif Project
 - 8.2 Elected Leadership access to Housing programs
 - 8.3 Building Lease / Purchase
 - 8.4 Saskatchewan's Position on Métis Rights
9. Legislative Direction & Information:
 - 9.1 Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Citizenship Act
 - 9.2 Saskatchewan Métis Elections Act 2007
10. Other Business:
 - 10.1 Report from Secretary McCallum
 - 10.2 Financial Updates
11. Conclusion / Closing Prayer.

CARRIED (200608-02)

It was confirmed that PMC members present either had their Métis Citizenship Card, or that their Métis Citizenship Card was currently being processed.

5. REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

5.1 Approval of the February 27, 2020 and March 28, 2020 PMC Minutes

Secretary Lisa McCallum read aloud the resolutions indicated in the draft minutes.

It was MOVED (Leonard Montgrand) and SECONDED (Mervin “Tex” Bouvier)

That Minutes of the February 27, 2020 and March 28, 2020 Métis Nation – Saskatchewan Provincial Métis Council Meetings be approved, as presented.

CARRIED (200608-03)

5.2 Business Arising from the Minutes

No items were considered.

6. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

President McCallum recognized some of the challenges Métis citizens faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, and offered comments on:

- The implementation of the MN-S COVID-19 Task Force
- The \$7.325 million in funding from the federal government for the COVID-19 response
- Impacts in Northwestern Saskatchewan, and the partnership established between the MN-S and the Meadow Lake Tribal Council (MLTC)
- Continued negotiations with the Government of Canada with respect to harvesting rights, the Île-à-la-Crosse boarding school, and legislation for the MN-S’ self-government agreement
- The effects of the pandemic restrictions on the 2020 Métis Nation Legislative Assembly and upcoming MN-S elections.

10 OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Report from Secretary McCallum

Secretary McCallum acknowledged hardships Métis families and communities experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

During discussion, comments were offered on:

- Compliance with established Métis citizenship criteria
- Governing Members’ relationships with the Métis National Council (MNC)
- Seeking enhanced accountability and transparency within the MNC
- The feasibility of all Governing Members attending a General Assembly for the election of a National President and a Special General Assembly to dialogue on the Métis Nation of Ontario’s suspension
- Respecting agreements between Governing Members and the federal government
- The importance of the MN-S working in the best interest of Métis citizens in Saskatchewan, without political interference.

7. COVID-19 UPDATES

7.1 Minister of Health

Marg Friesen, Minister of Health, extended appreciation to members of the COVID-19 Response Task Team, who worked diligently to ensure the MN-S’ response met the needs of MN-S citizens.

A summary of COVID-19 response efforts was provided, including:

- MN-S will take a cautious approach to the Province of Saskatchewan’s re-opening strategy
- Expenditures to date (excluding the MLTC/MN-S partnership in the northwest) include:
 - \$335,000 for childcare supports; \$10,000 allocated to each region
 - \$902,700 for household supports; \$75,000 allocated to each region
 - \$3.8 million, which was cash managed to provide support to citizens
 - \$230,000 initially invested for personal protective equipment (PPE); \$340,000 was added for more PPE
- The MN-S’ response is being assessed to identify best practices, prior to a second wave
- A Métis-specific mental health support program was established in collaboration with the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO)
- A Métis citizen coordinated a group of seamstresses to produce cloth masks for Métis citizens:
 - \$35,000 was provided to purchase fabric, supplies and sewing machines
 - Over 5,000 masks were produced
- Weekly “Virtual Kitchen Parties” were hosted every Saturday night
- Commendable on-the-ground supports were provided in some regions
- Isolation units, mobile testing, food and sanitation supplies were provided in the northwest
- A strategic back-to-work plan is being developed for the MN-S offices
- The MN-S purchased laptops to support families transitioning to virtual school instruction.

During discussion, comments were offered on:

- One-on-one meetings with regional representatives to discuss the COVID-19 response
- Challenges in identifying Métis citizenship registry applicants
- A third-party review initiated by President McCallum to assess the MN-S’ COVID-19 response.

7.2 Regional COVID-19 Updates

7.2a) Northern Region 3

Mervin “Tex” Bouvier provided updates from Northern Region 3, which included:

- Partnerships were established with locals, villages and hamlets, to provide phased-in supports
- Meetings ensued between representatives from Métis and First Nation communities, the Saskatchewan Health Authority and some provincial politicians
- The purchase of food and supplies for the northwest was supported by the MN-S.

7.2b) Western Region 2

Sherry McLennan provided updates from Western Region 2, which included:

- Applications for funding and other supports, were received by phone and were tracked in a database; a schedule was established for adjudication and distribution
- The application forms were later revised to gather additional information
- Gift cards were provided, to minimize the handling of goods.

7.2c) Les Filles des Madeleine

Tammy Mah provided updates from Les Filles des Madeleine (LFDM), which included:

- LFDM received \$135,000 in supports from MN-S
- More than 1,000 hampers and cleaning kits were distributed across the province; seniors and the recently unemployed were the focus of the first round of distribution.

7.2d) Eastern Region 2

Sherry Soll provided updates from Eastern Region 2, which included:

- Food hampers were provided to citizens in need, through a partnership with Co-Op; the hampers included a \$100 gift card and were delivered in collaboration with the LFDM
- Cleaning kits were distributed; more have been ordered in preparation for another wave
- A Local established a community garden; families were provided seeds and garden space.

7.2e) Western Region 2A

Updates were provided from Western Region 2A, which included:

- A formula for expenditures for each Local was developed
- Funds provided and applications received, have been tracked in a database
- Over 400 food hampers were distributed, with help from youth.

7.2f) Métis Youth Council

Jaycee Bell provided updates from the Métis Youth Council, which included:

- There has been an increase in youth applications for citizenship cards, to access Housing and Early Learning and Childcare (ELCC) supports
- An “Act of Kindness” movement is being discussed to support Elders during the pandemic
- Issues around mental health and anxiety as a result of the pandemic, are being reviewed.

Health Break

The meeting recessed at 11:45 a.m. and reconvened at 12:30 p.m.

7.2g) Northern Region 2

Leonard Montgrand provided updates from Northern Region 2, which included:

- Northern communities faced a number of challenges, including infrastructure issues and a lack of space for community members to isolate
- Frontline workers assigned to checkpoints and distributing provisions, were commended
- White Birch Lodge functioned as an isolation centre for some citizens, to ensure compliance with health orders.

7.2h) Western Region 3

Wendy Gervais provided updates from Western Region 3, which included:

- Locals were supported in dealing with emergency needs; food hampers, PPE and cleaning supplies were distributed through the command centre in Regina
- Community gardens were acquired; a partnership was established with the University of Regina to address food security
- “Buckets of Fun” will provide families with summer activities; Métis youth who are aging out of care, require support
- The Regional Coordinator / Community Navigator was commended for her ongoing support.

7.2i) Eastern Region 2A

Derek Langan provided updates from Eastern Region 2A, which included:

- 330 hampers, valued at \$150 each, were distributed to community members
- Cheques were issued for \$200 - \$500, depending on household composition
- An isolation camp was established at Crescent Lake.

7.2j) Northern Region 1

Earl Cook provided updates from Northern Region 1, which included:

- Citizens expressed appreciation for the MN-S' supports in the northwest.

7.2k) Western Region 1A

Billy Kennedy provided updates from Western Region 1A, which included:

- Funding was distributed through the major centres
- Locals submitted reports on how the funding was provided
- Approximately 170 cheques were issued; families in need received \$400 and individuals in need received \$200.

7.2l) Eastern Region 3

Marg Friesen provided updates from Eastern Region 3, which included:

- A needs assessment determined that 54% of Eastern Region 3 citizens are Elders and seniors; efforts focussed on providing their prescriptions, medical supplies, food hampers and PPE:
 - The region's Elder Care Model can be provided to all regions in Saskatchewan
- 16,800 pounds of food, 560 masks, 620 pairs of gloves, and information on how to properly use PPE was distributed; household sanitation kits were provided with support from LFDM
- Efforts ensued with municipalities to collaborate on COVID19 emergency response plans.

8. RESOLUTIONS

8.1 ELCC Michif Project

Earl Cook, Minister of Education, introduced a resolution on entering into a partnership agreement, to develop a pilot project that supports the future of the Michif language.

During discussion, comments were offered on:

- Including Dene and French Michif in the pilot project
- A Memorandum of Understanding with the Northern Light School Division to include Michif, Dene and Cree in their curriculum
- Expanding the pilot project into other regions at a later date
- The provincial government's responsibility to provide funding for education
- The importance of specifying in the partnership agreement how the funds are to be spent
- Developing partnerships with regions to address individual language education needs
- MN-S involvement in hiring staff to teach the Michif language
- Allowing ample time to make adjustments if schools do not re-open in September 2020.

It was MOVED (Earl Cook) and SECONDED (Leonard Montgrand)

WHEREAS the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S) is a leader in the preservation and revitalization of Métis language, culture and heritage;

AND WHEREAS the MN-S recognizes and affirms the centrality of preserving the language of the Métis people, providing Métis citizens the tools and opportunities to learn their language and ensuring that the cultural heritage of the Métis is protected;

AND WHEREAS Regina Public Schools, Regina Catholic Schools, Saskatoon Public Schools, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, and Ile-a-la-Crosse School Divisions are willing, capable and passionate partners with a proven track record of building strong collaborations that will support the MN-S in enhancing the place of the Michif language in Saskatchewan;

BE IT RESOLVED that the MN-S Provincial Métis Council (PMC) authorize the Minister of Languages and Minister of Education to enter into a partnership agreement between the MNS and Regina Public Schools, Regina Catholic Schools, Saskatoon Public Schools, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, and Île-à-la-Crosse School Divisions to develop a one-year pilot project to support the future of the Michif Language, and La Loche Community Schools to support the future of the Michif Language and Dene Language; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the PMC authorize the release of \$2 million to fund this pilot project from September 2020 to June 2022.

CARRIED (200608-04)

8.2 Elected Leadership Access to Housing Programs

It was MOVED (Sherry McLennan) and SECONDED (Leonard Montgrand)

That the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan Provincial Métis Council approves removing the moratorium on elected official's ability to apply for the Housing Program.

CARRIED (200608-05)

8.3 Building Lease/Purchase

Richard Quintal reported that to support the continued growth of the MN-S government, the Secretariat had explored options for expanding the MN-S office facilities. He acknowledged:

- Infrastructure required to serve the needs of MN-S citizens
- Two potential purchases: a four-story office on 20th Street East and a parcel of prime development land situated next to the Broadway Bridge
- Two potential purchasing options: leasing both properties with the option to purchase (for \$6.8 million), or an immediate purchase of both properties (for \$6.3-6.4 million).

During discussion, comments were offered on:

- The building design, including a public servicing kiosk and a large boardroom
- Using the new building on 20th Street East as the headquarters for MNS administration, with parking availability and enhanced security
- Ensuring MN-S office space complies with the *Accessibility Act of Canada*.

It was MOVED (Mervin "Tex" Bouvier) and SECONDED (Leonard Montgrand)

That the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan (MN-S) Provincial Métis Council approves:

- The purchase (without lease) of the office at 310 20th Street East, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and the adjacent lot at the base of the Broadway Bridge; and
- Maintaining the existing MN-S office space, until its lease has expired.

CARRIED (200608-06)

8.4 Saskatchewan’s Position on Métis Rights

It was MOVED (Marg Friesen) and SECONDED (Leonard Montgrand)

That the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S) Provincial Métis Council supports the Government of Saskatchewan fully respecting the MN-S as the duly constituted government of Métis in Saskatchewan and Métis Section 35 rights;

WHEREAS the Government of Saskatchewan repeatedly refuses to engage with the MN-S on matters associated with the Métis Section 35 rights, including the Crown’s duty to consult, Métis and MN-S land rights and claims;

WHEREAS the Government of Saskatchewan, in a letter dated May 1, 2020, to President McCallum from Minister of Environment Duncan, stated that the government of Saskatchewan does not recognize the asserted Aboriginal title, and related land and resource rights of Métis in Saskatchewan, and instead relies on its antiquated and ill-informed “First Nations and Métis Consultation Policy Framework” (June 2010), to justify its dishonourable and illegal position and behaviour;

WHEREAS the Government of Saskatchewan refuses to engage with the MN-S on a government-to-government basis and continues to do either nothing to support, or in some instances even obstruct, MN-S initiatives including gaining greater certainty over Métis harvesting rights, a settlement of the Île-à-la-Crosse Boarding School matter, the COVID-19 crisis, and proper Crown consultation on projects that affect Métis Section 35 rights, among many other issues; and

WHEREAS the MN-S seeks to support and safeguard Métis Section 35 rights in Saskatchewan, including Métis rights to land and resources;

BE IT RESOLVED that the MN-S President and Vice President be authorized to do all things reasonably necessary, including pursuing litigation, to have the Government of Saskatchewan:

- a) Fully recognize the MN-S as the government of the Métis in Saskatchewan on a government-to-government basis;
- b) Fully recognize and respect the Métis Section 35 rights including the land and resource rights of Métis in Saskatchewan; and
- c) Consult properly with the MN-S in accordance with the MN-S policy on the Duty to Consult, passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2007.

CARRIED (200608-07)

8.5 Métis National Council

During discussion on a resolution presented for consideration related to the MNC, comments were offered on:

- Governing Members relationships with the MNC
- Clarification needed regarding the Tri-Council’s process
- The established criteria for Métis citizenship
- The feasibility of holding meetings and assemblies during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was MOVED (Earl Cook) and SECONDED (Sherry McLennan)

WHEREAS the Métis Nation Saskatchewan (MN-S) is a founding member of the Métis National Council (MNC);

WHEREAS the President of the MN-S is a permanent member of the Board of Governors; and

WHEREAS the MN-S Provincial Métis Council (PMC) sits as members of the MNC General Assembly;

BE RESOLVED that the MN-S PMC supports the MN-S President McCallum in calling for a Board of Governors meeting with all five Governing Members;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MN-S PMC supports the calling immediately of a General Assembly for the election of a National President with all five Governing Members; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MN-S PMC supports a special MNC General Assembly, following the aforementioned election, with all five Governing Members, to have a national dialogue on the Métis Nation of Ontario suspension.

CARRIED (200608-08)

(Three members voted in opposition, one abstained)

9. LEGISLATIVE DIRECTION AND INFORMATION

9.1 Métis Nation of Saskatchewan Citizenship Act

Vice President Morin advised that the section of the *MN-S Citizenship Act* that states “all Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan are entitled to citizenship in the MN-S” must be repealed, as it conflicts with the MN-S Constitution.

9.2 Saskatchewan Métis Elections Act 2007

Vice President Morin informed that the *Saskatchewan Métis Elections Act, 2007* must be amended to accommodate the motion passed at the November 2019 MNLA that only those members with valid citizenship cards are eligible to vote.

9.3 Constitution of the MN-S

Vice President Morin added that the *Constitution of the MN-S* should be amended to remove the condition that the PMC must take a leave of absence when an election is called. Consideration could be given to a seven-day grace period, to accommodate the transition of new PMC members, following an election.

10. NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

10.2 Financial Updates

This item was not discussed.

10.3 Future PMC Meeting Discussion Items

The following items were suggested for the PMC’s future consideration: a revised MN-S pay scale for staff and elected officials; and a MN-S Citizenship Registry update.

11. CONCLUSION / CLOSING PRAYER

The meeting concluded with a Closing Prayer provided by Elder Fleury.

It was MOVED (Wendy Gervais)

That the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan Provincial Métis Council Meeting held June 8, 2020 now conclude.

CARRIED (200608-09)

(Time: 2:30 p.m.)

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LIST OF INFORMATION ITEMS

The following items were provided for information at the June 8, 2020 meeting:

1. Agenda for the MN-S Provincial Métis Council Regular Meeting scheduled June 8, 2020
2. Minutes of the MN-S PMC Regular Meeting held February 27, 2020
3. Minutes of the MN-S PMC Regular Meeting held March 28, 2020
4. Report titled, “Early Learning and Childcare Michif Project: Decision for Provincial Métis Council”

LIST OF ACRONYMS

The following acronyms are referenced in these minutes:

ELCC	Early Learning and Childcare
LFDM	Les Filles de Madeleine Secretariat Inc.
MLTC	Meadow Lake Tribal Council
MNC	Métis National Council
MNLA	Métis Nation Legislative Assembly
MNO	Métis Nation of Ontario
MN-S	Métis Nation - Saskatchewan
PMC	Provincial Métis Council
PPE	Personal protective equipment