

**Minutes for Policy Advisory Committee Meeting
October 9, 2014 at 1:00 pm Central Time
Forest Inn, Sioux Lookout**

Committee attendance:

Doug Murray, member
George Macey, member
Gisèle Regimbal, member
Hal McGonigal, member
Charles Cirtwill, member

Harley D'Entremont, chair
Madge Richardson, member
Ray Riley, member
Thérèse Bergeron-Hopson, member

Committee members regrets:

Martin Bayer, member

Members, staff and guests in attendance:

Barb Eccles
Brian Tucker
Dawn Madahbee
James Cuddy, Senior Policy Analyst
Jamie Lee Yawney, Assistant to the President

Michael Atkins, Voting Member
Pierre Bélanger
J.P. Gladu
Ron Arnold, Advisory Council
Samantha Angell, Manager of Operations

1. Call to order

George called the meeting to order at 1pm and declared that quorum existed.

2. Approval of agenda

George reviewed the agenda and asked if anyone had any other items to add or change. No issues.

***Motion 1** to approve the agenda. Moved by Harley, seconded by Gisèle. CARRIED unanimously.*

3. Select chair

***Motion 2** to appoint Harley d'Entremont as Chair of the Committee. Moved by Thérèse, seconded by Hal. CARRIED unanimously.*

Harley took over all chair responsibilities and powers.

4. Approve minutes of meeting of April 9th, 2014

No issues.

***Motion 3** to approve the April 9th, 2014 meeting minutes. Moved by George, seconded by Hal. CARRIED unanimously.*

5. Business arising from minutes

None.

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6. Presentation of top 10 priority list

Charles explained how the research priorities for Northern Policy Institute are set through an iterative process involving ongoing discussions with stakeholders across the north and a comprehensive media monitoring effort. Items that are raised directly with NPI or repeatedly mentioned in the media are noted, recorded, and collated. The issues are then ranked based on how many times they appear in the various “filters”. NPI has eleven filters at present broken down into the following groups: seniors, youth, the broader public, the private sector, municipal, federal/provincial, grass roots/civil society organizations, aboriginal peoples, staff & experts, board & volunteers, and finally, media monitoring. Each quarter the top ten priorities are recalculated based on input from the prior quarter and this list is then included in stakeholder meetings in the following quarter.

Charles outlined the current top ten issues and provided examples of commissioned research that fall into those groupings. As the priority setting process continues and as NPI commissions and publishes more work, the match between our publications and stakeholder priorities should align more closely.

JP asked how the board contributes to determining the priority issues. Charles explained that the board in their role as “Directors” provide strategic direction for the Institute but they do not guide the research effort itself. The policy advisory committee exists to allow Directors to contribute their ideas as one of the filtering groups guiding our research direction.

7. Open floor

JP spoke about the strong role First Nations legally have in setting the future direction of this region. He mentioned the public needs to be re-educated on what opportunities and challenges First Nations and Aboriginal peoples face. Each issue presented in the top ten list needs to be examined through an Aboriginal lens.

Brian mentioned that around 30% of Aboriginal people in Northern Ontario are Metis. Metis don't necessarily live in their own separate communities; they are spread around the various communities. There are still concerns that Metis have that are similar to First Nations, however there are also some very different concerns. A lot of the ten issues would resonate with the individuals in Metis communities.

Dawn spoke about Northern Ontario being far behind when working with Aboriginal peoples. Many communities outside Ontario are utilizing practices that we can learn from. She mentioned how NPI can be a driver in educating people about Aboriginal issues and social issues, specifically. The contribution they make and what we can learn from other areas. She also spoke about how urban reserves have shown to be very successful and have contributed positively to local economies.

Pierre raised the topic of mechanical and financial issues in regional development and the difficulty to quantify human variables/indicators. He also spoke about the significant prejudice against Aboriginals. Pierre suggested the following topics for research: measuring attitudes of those Aboriginals looking out, and how non Aboriginals view Aboriginals; using crown land as a development tool, releasing crown land for farming and agriculture; quality of life measurements; and out-migration, who is doing it and why is it happening?

Ron spoke about the relationship between the cost of money and the cost of development. If Northern Ontario wants development to happen, the region needs investors and they need to see a return. As an investor they need to consider risk, longevity of an investment and how successful something will be. Ron mentioned that the

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Government sometimes stops growth. Instead of them facilitating growth they intervene with needless or overlapping rules and regulations that slow or stop growth.

Ray wondered if there was a way to make a transition for fly-in communities to have or to access urban amenities. He raised the issue that communities like Fort Severn may never be sustainable in their present form.

Michael raised the issue of research landing on “deaf ears”. He mentioned that NPI needs to connect to the nature of leadership and help Northern Ontario hatch leaders. NPI needs to be deliberate about taking the research to people who can act on it.

George raised the need for a Northern Ontario database and proposed that NPI research move away from comparing Northern Ontario to Southern Ontario.

Barb spoke about the Province of Ontario proposal for capacity expansion, expanding campuses and spaces for students. She explained how the policy is tailored to southern Ontario and that Northern Ontario campuses don't have enough bodies to fill their seats, therefore expanding universities in the south may have a negative impact on the North.

Harley explained the role of post-secondary education. How it is both a source of intellectual capital for communities and a driver for economic growth and initiative. He used the example of the Moncton area. PSE there focused on skills development, creating a workforce to help fill the positions that resulted from economic growth that was driven by intellectual innovation and creative thinking.

8. Adjourn meeting

Motion 4 to adjourn the meeting. Moved by Hal, seconded George. CARRIED unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 2:58 pm Central time.