



Policy Advisory Committee

19 April 2018 9:15 EST

Draft Minutes

Board of Directors attendance:

Harley D'Entremont- Acting Chair
Emilio Rigato-Treasurer
George Macey (via Teleconference)
Hal McGonigal
Gerry Munt
Pierre Bélanger
Alex Freedman
Louise Paquette
Terry Bursey (Teleconference)
Jean Pierre Chabot (Teleconference)
Dawn Madahbee Leach (Teleconference)
Charles Cirtwill- President

Board of Directors regrets:

Brian Tucker-Secretary
Diana Fuller Henninger

Members, staff and guests in attendance

Alex Ross- Data Analyst
Dharmjot Grewal- Data Analyst
Hayley Blake- Marketing and Publishing Coordinator
Katie Elliott- Communications Manager
Katrina Hunt- Operations Coordinator
Rachel Beals- Research Coordinator

1. Call to Order

Harley called the meeting to order at 9:15am EST and declared that quorum existed.

2. Approval of agenda

Charles asked to add item **6b: Review of lessons from the community visit** to the agenda. The item was added.

PAC2018-01 The Board of Directors hereby approve the agenda.

Moved by: Pierre Bélanger
Seconded by: Gerry Munt
Carried



3. Declaration of any conflicts of interest

None.

4. Update on Items discussed at last PAC meeting

a. Unorganized Territories

- Charles: At the last PAC meeting, we discussed the concerns raised by Schreiber, Terrace Bay, and Rossport about unorganized areas. As a result of this, NPI put together an NOHFC proposal together for an intern, which is now filled. Curtis McKnight was originally working on this project, but was replaced by Anthony when Curtis left. The research is ongoing and the first draft should be done by the end of July.

- Louise: Will infrastructure issues be included?
- Charles: Yes, along with other items.

b. Understanding our First Nation communities

i. Do we have data and do we understand demographic/etc trends on First Nations?

1. Charles was approached by the Chiefs of Ontario – The Northern Journal (public basis, non-political). Will help track changes over time. Hoping to get tribal councils to do it so less political.
2. Charles: project is protractive. There is not full commitment by people so far.

ii. Community Accounts – launches next Thursday

1. Charles: working with Nookwin Tribal Council around skills summary for data. Working with them to avoid any privacy issues.
2. Pierre: is this a partnership or contract work?
 - a. Charles: partnership. We assist in collecting and analyzing data – in exchange we get to publish. The other 2/3rds they would have access to this data.
 - b. Their principle interest – socioeconomic, health outcomes, crime, income, employment, family issues.
3. Louise: touch base with Ontario Native Secretariat.
 - a. Charles – we are talking to INAC.
4. Louise: LHIN is also working on this kind of work.
5. Hal: to get ahead of exit interview process, as Chair, Martin Bayer certainly emphasized this subject considerably.

c. ** Send Louise notes from last meeting

5. Exploration of a selected Area of NPI Research – Transportation ([attachment 2](#))

a. Summary of NPI Work to date

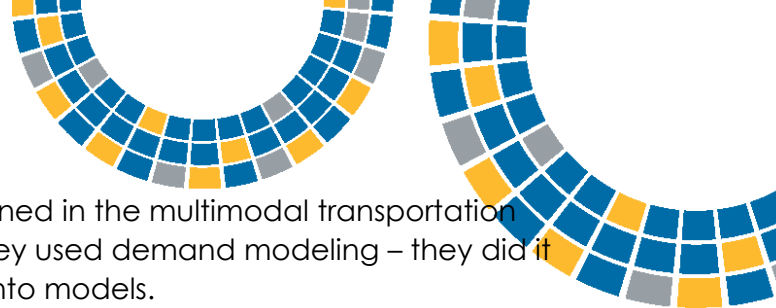
- i. Charles: We are close to SSM where a group is pushing for the introduction of a Northeastern Ontario rail network.
- ii. The work to date:



1. Responses to the Draft 2041 Strategy
 - a. Basic message is the same: for a supposedly visionary strategy, it is basically a list of community wants and then a list of actions the government is prepared to make. Lack of visionary thinking.
 - b. In terms of visionary thinking, there is a competition for Canada 2.0 – the CanInfra Challenge. Three of those ideas involve NPI authors. In the short list, two of our three authors are there.
 - i. Two ideas on the short list: alternative air transportation into the far north (airships), and the boreal corridor.
 2. NPI Infrastructure Map
- b. Summary of upcoming NPI material
 - c. Reference to other related materials
 - d. General discussion
 - i. Common Voice Northwest response is in there – the intercommunity bus service piece is in the Board packages
 1. Is it a qualitative public good?
 - ii. Harley: this is a major policy area, in terms of the bus system...on a personal note, when family visits, the service has dramatically changed over the years.
 - iii. Charles: Common Voice just cite the top line budget expenditures...
 - iv. Charles: we could look at the per capita issue of the bus service – the fiscal flows intern could look into this.
 - v. Harley: do we need a higher subsidy for the bus service?
 - vi. George: Newcomers paper?
 1. Charles: it is progressing...government's "Opportunities for Growth" – it's a vague commitment. Navdeep Bains discussed the Atlantic Immigration Pilot.
 - vii. Louise: NE LHIN did a transportation study. It involved patient transportation from one hospital to another. Working with DSSABs as well.
 1. NW LHIN also did some work in this area.
 - viii. Emilio: intermodal – Northern Ontario harvests about 11 million meters of fibre...US has been shipping pellets here...
 1. The operator has an opportunity...
 2. No capacity in Northern Ontario to transport pellets...there is also no interest.
 3. We have people that want our material but we have no way of getting it there.
 4. There's an idle pellet plant in Wawa.



5. Charles: if we look at this...analysis on capacity, what are the traffic flows to trigger investments...
6. Emilio: if you look at all the businesses in Thunder Bay complain about freight...
 - a. Thunder Bay is now at a disadvantage.
- ix. Gerry: inter-community transportation
 1. It did exist at one point...
 2. I can see a problem that someone should look at this
 3. Charles: from our point of view, the aging population is an issue. If we want these people to stay in these communities, transportation for visitation and health purposes are important. Then the question comes: how do you respond?
- x. Alex F: approached by two student groups and an Indigenous group about whether the university would take a transportation stance?
 1. He's encouraged them to communicate the conversation. From this perspective, can students get to classes? How do we get them to class?
 - a. How do we deal with this? We are facing a situation of the rail lines being ripped up.
 - b. One of our students is doing research in this – Mia Boorquel.
 - i. Alex gave Rachel the student's name.
- xi. Hal: intra-city transportation
 1. The community can't service...they can't afford that kind of service. But for seniors or students... (SSM context)
- xii. Charles: SOTN will look at tax strategies for growth
 1. One of the pieces we want someone to author is an analysis on the benefits of the gas transfer. Change in GST to allow province to transfer cash to communities.
 2. If we can model this...
 3. Challenge is many municipalities are behind the 8 ball in tax competitiveness.
- xiii. Hal: RENTEC – I thought there had been some practical attempts.
 1. Emilio: they approached the two railroads, and the port...it died...they looked at shipping it to Montreal...
- xiv. Louise: ONTC – to help equalize...
 1. Where were the budgets before it was cut? ...the aging population needs the transportation.
 2. Charles: ONTC expansion – you get into the demand question. Two years ago we met with the mayors around Wawa and they agreed to stay with us if we could find the funding about a demand assessment – what would it take for people to use the train over other services?



- a. What happened in the multimodal transportation strategy is they used demand modeling – they did it against Toronto models.
 - b. It would be interesting to build a Northern Ontario demand model.
- xv. Jean Pierre: when it comes to the Ontario Northland, increasing transportation and bus service...there is interest from Ontario Northland...
 - 1. Dawn: they opened a bus route on Manitoulin Island.
- xvi. Harley: Ring of Fire...another transportation network...assuming the ROF goes ahead, has anybody analyzed the marginal costs of going forward to establish a network?
 - 1. Charles: accessing ROF and servicing the remote communities are the two questions that are being explored right now in relation to the ROF.
 - a. The principle investment would be in enhancing the vertical lines.
- xvii. Emilio: Northern Ontario has been constructing forestry roads for a long time. Those standards of road building are more expensive than what is being proposed right now (Rachel: I believe this is what Emilio said).
 - 1. Two huge benefits for forestry roads: Indigenous participation is easier, and two, it is faster and cheaper.
 - 2. ROF road is being developed by Toronto standards.
 - 3. Hal: all of the forestry roads are used or planned for the next three years in the forest management process...they are accessible (the plans).
- xviii. Terry: we only have a taxi service in Red Lake. It's a huge issue for them, especially for transportation to larger hospitals. The hospital there lacks some big services. They have to use a taxi service to get to major centers.
 - 1. Jean Pierre discussed the healthcare side of it.
 - 2. Terry: you have to have someone come and pick you up. Huge issue (transportation) for the services in that community.
 - a. Affordability issues.

6. a. “Open Mic” for Committee Members

- a. 5 minutes per member to raise issues of urgent importance in your community, industry, area of expertise, personal experience
- b. Gerry: in Terrace Bay, there is an Indigenous group talking at the time...getting houses, starting small businesses – no way to convert personal property into capital. There has been research recently...micro-lending is being done. It's an important issue because it's systemic.



- i. Dawn: there is a network of Indigenous financial institutions that seem to help overcome the issue of lending in First Nations communities. Properties are held communally...they don't have access to that kind of capital. There is programming by the feds and provincial government...providing capital....It's still an issue...People don't have equity and they can't use their homes as equity...We try to compensate by having programs available that mitigate the amount of loan dollars that need to be put in. Looking at the stats, we have lower employment levels and incomes...it's hard to start commercial enterprises...There is work being done to see if something can be done by the federal government.
- ii. Terry: in my experience, it's been a similar issue. One of the things they've done to help community members from bands is mines help fund a percentage of the equity either as a grant or an interest-free loan to help start businesses. That way they can access funding.
- c. Emilio: his topic was covered earlier.
- d. Alex F: micro-financing operations...lack of institutional support, small amount of dollars in the community, but there is a will to change. It is empowering for a community...
 - i. Also, his observations based on these various community visits, he sees territorialism. Fiefdom thinking. Lack of unified work among the community. I think that strength in numbers is critical...One of the biggest hurdles for community... he talked to the folks last night at the reception...work together to get a critical mass. We have to figure out ways to do this ourselves.
 - 1. Harley: this idea that you don't have an identity if you don't exist as a separate municipal unit...very few people will say they come from that municipal unit. This idea that if we lose municipal status, they are wiped off the map (he says he doesn't understand why this is a thing). To him, this idea of municipal status even in Sudbury, people still identify based on city.
 - 2. Charles: the idea of regional cooperation, formal or otherwise, has weaved its way through several streams of NPI research.
 - a. Governance
 - b. Economic Development – push to look at cluster models for a regional perspective. The next step is to look at that geographic cooperation from an industry point of view.
 - c. FedNor tried the carrot approach to encourage municipalities...it worked...we haven't done an assessment though.



- ii. Terry: one of the models...having your own indigenous consultant to review technical documents...A First Nation community will hire a third party, but there isn't any trust.
- iii. Jean Pierre: there are First Nations that would also claim that the duty to consult...there is a different positioning there that there are First Nations that would prefer to be consulted by government first, then the company.
- iv. Terry: another thing she wanted to mention was – hydro connection to a community north of Red Lake. Huge project to connect First Nation communities to this power source. Could also bring economic benefits to the Red Lake community.
- g. Jean Pierre: unorganized areas are an issue on the table already. He sits on a services board here...jurisdictional areas get complicated. Can be difficult to coordinate services like water.
 - i. Also, he is interested in regional governance structures. Northern Quebec-Cree...the kind of structures they have in place there...we might like to see something like this in Northern Ontario. Better coordination and reap economic development benefits.
 - ii. Another is community resilience. Some of the communities there, there are a number of social challenges. Being resilient in the face of health or other social issues. Ability of a community to be resilient.
- h. George: will the various demographic trends, immigration, etc be covered in the next SOTN?
 - i. Charles: not explicitly, but yes. The ongoing relationship with Common Voice northwest...it's troublesome. As a result of a few "refusals", they asked us to do research with a pre-determined conclusion. We do continue to work with them where it fits, but it's not as easy a road as it was. For the immigration exercise for example, they put in an NOHFC proposal for something we did a year ago.
- i. Pierre: Beef North program. Attempt to settle in that area of Northern Ontario...set up 2000 acre farms out of crown and private lands...do we have a contact? Are we following this experiment they are doing?
 - i. Charles: we are monitoring it, but not following it from a creating metrics perspective. We do have OMAFRA contacts. We added Kim Jo Bliss to advisory council, who is working closely with others on this project.
 - ii. Pierre: Could we commission an informed opinion piece on this?
 - 1. Charles: we did do that.
 - iii. Pierre: we should monitor it...
 - iv. Emilio: our behavior right now is that if you have vacant farmland, it is advantageous to get MNR to plant trees.
- j. Hal: the idea of decentralized government used to be high on the agenda of communities and regions in the past... we could recognize the



disadvantage of the competitive attitudes (Rachel: not sure I followed correctly). The concept of decentralization would be worth some updating...

- i. Another thing: I'd like to see some projections on several major trends like technological or environmental change.
- ii. Charles: that might not be a bad theme for the SOTN conference.
- k. Louise: what do we want Northern Ontario to look like? What is possible? We have a lot of information. So many of our sectors are interrelated.
 - i. In health we use referral patterns to create regions. My vision of health care in the Northern Ontario...you do have several hubs and all the small hospitals need to be linked together. It's time to reinvent. What are we doing to help the people? People focus...
 - ii. When you look at northerners overall, how do they access items like healthcare, capital, etc?
 - iii. Jean Pierre: there's processes there for scenario planning... what are the evidence based things...narrow down to the things that are truly uncertain. NPI can facilitate that. The other thing is in terms of access, all those things are true, but sometimes we don't see...the wilderness and remoteness that people face when accessing health, education, etc. Indigenous peoples want access to the wilderness.
 - iv. Harley: I do agree with Louise and Jean Pierre, I think we are now well placed to do projections.
- l. Question from Dawn
 - i. Dawn: during the last federal election, we put together some of the issues for Northern Ontario for all the parties to see...are we doing that again?
 - ii. Charles: we started down this road, but we got a bit overwhelmed. Our thinking is that we pull recommendations from various pieces we've done.

b. Review of lessons from the community visit

- o Alex F: I was remarkably impressed by the community hub. It was a great example of a solution.
- o Hal: why were there not more municipal people? Did we reach out?
 - Charles: We did.
- o Louise: Would have liked to have known who was coming to the community meeting. Also, maybe less long. Also, did it have to be three days long?
- o Alex F: rotate on what we hear in each community meeting. Also, we need to know what they are going to talk about in their presentations.
- o ****DJ will send out the PAC minutes**



7. Discussion of Topics to focus on at next PAC session

- a. Harley: What about doing a one-page thing for the next teleconference meeting on the work NPI has done?
- b. Directors to send Rachel topic suggestions to cover in the next PAC meeting.

8. Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15am EST