

Aboriginal Engagement Committee Meeting

29 January 2014

1:00 p.m. in Conference Room 2-084

PRESENT: Jerome Melancon (Chair) Allen Berger Glynnis Hood
Mike Clermont (1:10) Petra Cegielly Trina Harrison
Mark Chytrcek Michelle Pratt (Recorder)

REGRETS: Brittany Lehman, Delwilia Morin, Ari Evans

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m.

2. **Agenda**

The agenda was accepted as presented.

MOTION: HOOD/BERGER

CARRIED

3. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

The minutes of 22 October 2013 and the minutes of the 26 November 2013 meetings were approved as presented.

MOTION: CEGIELNY/HARRISON

CARRIED

4. **Remarks from Committee Members**

- a. Jerome welcomed Trina back remarking on her past contributions to the committee.
- b. Land on Which We Stand – Jerome thanked Petra and Trina for organizing the event. He also thanked Petra for contacting the Elders and going above and beyond to ensure the success of the event. Four Elders presented at the event, two spoke from personal experience about the Residential Schools while another referenced the experiences of others. There were many stories about Maskwacis and Camrose giving participants a good sense of the territory. Petra to get Jerome the Cree name for Stoney Creek (note: Asiniskaw Sipisis). There was a sense from the Elders that they appreciated the event as it was the first time they had been asked to simply speak rather than be studied. It was a very successful event with about 50 attendees - lots of community, faculty, staff and students. Elder Melvin Potts has asked to meet with Petra soon concerning the need to have an Elder (or two) associated with Augustana Campus. The challenges on the day of the event included the sound system (microphone/speakers) and perhaps that there were too many people for the space because of the type of furniture. Petra thanked Mike for his assistance during the event with the smoke alarms. Photos taken will be provided to Petra. Trina will ask Christopher about writing an article on the event.

ACTION: Petra to send Jerome the Cree name. Trina to send photos to Petra.

Things to be considered once the renovation to the space is underway: furniture in the space needs to be comfortable for everyday but easily exchanged for appropriate furniture for an event; have a sound system wired in to prevent the issues that were experienced with the portable system used for this event. The question was asked if the space will be available to other user groups. This is a discussion for the future.

- c. Brittany is giving a presentation on Saturday on Aboriginal Women's Literature at MacEwan University. All are welcome to attend. Jerome to follow up with Brittany and Ari about attendance at meetings. Committee members to begin thinking about possible student members for next year.

ACTION: Jerome to contact student members.

Petra mentioned that International Week was last week. Rebecca Fleury performed the round

dance in the Forum. She also mentioned that Theresa Wynn wrote a story about an international student meeting one of Augustana's students at a round dance. And she mentioned that there were 15 students from Ermineskin School who attended Augustana last Friday. She thanked the Prospective Students' Office for lunch and Coach Leanne Shenton for the free tickets to the basketball games. The students will be invited back to practice with the Vikings basketball teams in the future.

5. **Business**

- a. Dr. Cheryl Bartlett, Augustana's Distinguished Alumna will be visiting Augustana February 25/26. Trina mentioned some of her achievements including being appointed a Member of the Order of Canada. She will be presenting for the ASCRC Speaker Series as well as a workshop on integrating Western views of science and health with Indigenous views. She will also have coffee with a third-year history class, talk with science students about parasites and visit a physiotherapy class to talk about health care. She will present a workshop on indigenizing the university – cultural practices that would help the university become a more welcoming place for aboriginal students without imposing on anyone. The workshop will begin the conversation with students, faculty and staff on how we do things at Augustana that may be irrelevant, damaging, distracting or disrespecting to Aboriginal cultures.

ACTION: Trina to send around invitation so members can help promote the event and encourage employees to attend.

COPLAC will be holding its annual conference at Fort Lewis College, Durango, Colorado. Fort Lewis has a Native American student population of about 35% while Augustana is around 7% sitting in fourth place among COPLAC schools. R. Harde has been contributing to the conversation on Native American study programs and building hospitable campuses and will have the opportunity to ask what a contingency from Augustana could look like for attendance at the conference being held the latter part of June.

b. **Territorial Acknowledgement Statement**

After discussion about process, it was determined that the statements Petra has collected will be sent to members for review and a conversation with the Elders of the local communities will be arranged. Once that conversation has occurred, the writing responsibility would be assigned. Jerome is willing to write it. The draft would then be shared with the committee, Aboriginal students, Elders and Faculty Council. It was also suggested that the Provost should receive the draft and that the Aboriginal Focus Group and the Aboriginal Student Services Centre on North Campus should be consulted. The draft could also be shared with the Non-Academic Staff for information. The document would need to be adopted by Faculty Council as the statement represents all of Augustana as a community. One question to be answered is what the expectations are from the University as an entity, in terms of the governance and acceptance/recognition of the legitimacy of Augustana having its own statement.

ACTION: Petra to send the statements; Jerome to send a copy of his article to committee members. Petra to send the Cree name to Jerome. Agenda item for next meeting with members having read the supporting documentation.

c. **Upcoming Projects**

1. Trina advised that she and Allen will be going to Yellowknife at the end of February. – William Leask who received an eagle feather at Augustana's Centenary has been invited to attend the reception. Dr. Kyla Wright who graduated from Augustana in 2007 will be attending the reception as well. Trina asked if she has received an eagle feather. Petra will check. Also a Metis student is considering attending Augustana. It was suggested the prospective student could be invited to the reception as well.

ACTION: Petra to check to see if Dr. Wright received an eagle feather and give Trina the

name of the prospective student.

2. Samantha Matters is working with Glynnis on an aboriginal history of the Beaver Hills. She will be involved in interviews, archival work and public presentations. The project will help Beaver Hills in their biosphere initiative. Samantha will also present the project at the Student Academic Conference.
3. Glynnis advised that she is traveling to Wood Buffalo National Park – Fort Chipewyan on February 17th. She offered to take information packages up with her. Petra will connect with Tyson in Prospective Students' Office and gather packages for Glynnis.

ACTION: Petra to gather information packages for Glynnis.

d. **Aboriginal Student Space**

Allen advised of the Provost's commitment of \$1,000,000 to build an aboriginal space on campus. Augustana will receive \$500,000 this fiscal year and \$500,000 2014/15. The money is to be used for renovations and possibly furnishings. Any leftover dollars may be used for programming. The Provost has also committed to \$50,000 each year for 5 years to bring Petra's position to full time. The \$50,000 for this year has been received and \$45,000 was transferred to Student Services with \$5,000 left within the Dean's budget for programming. The Dean's Office will be working with Lynda Matear and Alan Heyhurst to setup a separate account to ensure that any unspent monies will roll over for future use. As the Provost makes future \$50,000 contributions, the account will become a place to gather the funds and allocate the dollars accordingly for programming and infrastructure.

A Scope of Work document was received by Allen just prior to Christmas, from Lorrina Belland of the Office of the University Architect. Alan, Petra and Jerome submitted comments. Allen and Alan had a Skype call with Lorrina and Kelly on Monday and shared the collective input on the document. They were very responsive to the comments and just yesterday sent out the revisions. Members were asked to review the revisions and advise Allen of any additional changes right away. Details like carpet or flooring don't need to be considered at this time. The next step is a cost document and the sooner we get the signatures, the quicker the cost estimate will be completed. The plans will be attached to the Scope of Work document as appendices.

This project is restricted to what is described as Phase I and Phase II. The smudging space in the prayer room has been moved up to Phase I. Mike is investigating the cost of modifications to allow for a future smudging space in the lower level of the Forum. His first response is that it is most likely prohibitive and would not be able to be accomplished within the \$1,000,000 commitment. Once we have a cost estimate, a meaningful conversation can be had with the Building Committee, students, etc. The goal is to have Phase I ready for September 2014.

ACTION: Members to review the scope of work and get comments back to Allen in the next day or two.

6. **Next Meeting Date**

Michelle to put out a Doodle Poll for the next meeting

7. The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

MOTION: HOOD/CLERMONT

CARRIED