

Aboriginal Engagement Committee Meeting

25 June 2014

10:00 a.m. in Conference Room 2-084

PRESENT: Jérôme Melancon (Chair) Allen Berger
 Petra Cegielly Trina Harrison
 Mike Clermont Michelle Pratt (Recorder)

REGRETS: Glynnis Hood, Mike Clermont

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:07 a.m.

2. **Agenda**

The agenda was accepted as presented.

MOTION: CEGIELNY /BERGER

CARRIED

3. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

The minutes of 28 May 2014 were approved as presented.

MOTION: HARRISON/ CEGIELNY

CARRIED

4. **Remarks from Committee Members**

Jérôme thanked everyone for meeting during a busy time of the year. He reported that the UofA Library Assessment in Action Program is moving forward. Nancy Goebel is the lead for all UofA Libraries. This program is for first-year Aboriginal students only and both Petra & Jérôme are members of the committee. The program should be ready for September and will see Aboriginal students receiving emails over the semester giving them hints and tips while encouraging them to meet with Librarians.

Petra took the opportunity to visit Bow Valley College's new Inikokaan Aboriginal Centre located in downtown Calgary. She was impressed with the layout and design of the space, along with the way the cultural symbols have been incorporated. She has a brochure and a link to a video that she will share.

Allen reported on his trip to Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado to attend the annual general meeting for COPLAC. He mentioned a project funded by the Teagle Foundation that involves five institutions participating in sharing curricular resources for courses in Native American studies and creating on-line learning communities. This project will enable Augustana to expand opportunities for students. The tuition paid by students remains with their home school. There is also an interest in including field-based courses during the summer term with the project. The first one is planned for the summer of 2015 and is an archeological field course in Connecticut. In summer 2016, the topic is on the residential schools and the University of Minnesota Morris is interested in collaborating with Augustana with respect to the Truth and Reconciliation work that's been done in Alberta. Roxanne, Jérôme and Janet have volunteered to be involved. Grant funding supports sending them to the University of Illinois at Springfield, a leader in technology and on-line learning curricular development, in the fall and next spring.

5. **Business**

a. **Hand Off for Steering Committee:**

- i. **Responsibilities of the Steering Committee and of AEC** – Besides the Aboriginal students, one Elder, and a Students' Association representative, the composition of the Committee includes: Petra and Mike representing AEC; Alan Heyhurst, Assistant Dean – Finance & Administration; Allen, Chris and Mark as ex-officio members who will attend the first meeting and then only attend on an as-needed basis; Hans Asfeldt, President of the Students' Association. Alan Heyhurst will chair the committee as he has current experience of

facilitating detailed work on space planning through committees of stakeholders with the Founders' Hall renovation. The key stakeholders in this case are Petra and the Aboriginal students. Mike Clermont was chosen because of his membership with AEC, his personal interest as well as his expertise from Facilities & Operations. The group will meet two to three times over the summer. It will need to be determined if there is an on-going role after that time.

The Committee will move forward using a deeply consultative approach to reach consensus among the stakeholders as to the best way to proceed. The focus will be on what can be accomplished for September 2014 and what needs to be postponed until Sept 2015 given the impossibility of turning the lower level of the Forum into a construction zone in the middle of an academic term.

The role of the Committee: 1) drawing on previous consultations, advise architects initially on design concepts and subsequently on more detailed elements of planning and design; 2) communicate with and receive feedback from relevant administrative groups, including the Aboriginal Engagement Committee, the Building Committee, and the Executive Council; 3) manage ongoing consultation with key stakeholders, including Aboriginal students and Elders.

Communication with stakeholders includes a broader range of Elders and students than those on the steering committee as Elders involved in first meeting were advised of the possibility of a second meeting. Ben Louie asked for a small group he could begin to work with and not worry too much on the logistics of scheduling to get the needed meetings in over the summer. The steering committee needs to be embedded in a broader group for consultation. AEC will respond to requests from the Steering Committee

- ii. **Communication About the Space** – It was agreed that a comprehensive communication strategy needs to be developed. It is critical to communicate with a number of constituencies on campus i.e. Faculty Council, Executive Council, Aboriginal students, the larger student body. It was suggested that: the chair of AEC communicate with Faculty Council; Petra take the lead role with Aboriginal students drawing in Allen and Jerome as needed; Hans Asfeldt be consulted about the best way to communicate with the larger student body so students see that their own leadership is involved with the project (Hans partnering with Aboriginal students could send a very powerful message to the student body at large.) The broader community will require a larger, broader communication plan and AEC will work with Christopher Thrall. The logical people to be interviewed would be Petra, Allen, Jerome, Aboriginal students and Elders. Other groups to be considered are: North Campus, Alumni, Maskwacis and Maskwacis Cultural College.

A critical aspect of the communication is the name of the space and the general consensus was the name needs to be decided as early as possible to avoid nicknames being used. At the consultation meeting May 28th, most people leaned toward the Cree name "Wahkotowin" representing "kinship". Naming of the space needs to go through the North Campus process and if possible be in place for an introductory event September 2014. It was agreed that a Cree name would be encouraged if it's pronounceable, without having an English name attached to it.

ACTION: Speak with Elder Bruce Cutknife about the name and with Ben Louie about the Facilities & Operations process for naming, timing etc., at the Steering Committee meeting. Consult with the Committee by email with respect to the outcome of the proposed name. Send to Dorothy Thunder for confirmation of definition, pronunciation, etc.

b. **CSL Placements:**

- i. **With the Steering Committee** – The Chair mentioned the possibility of having an Environmental Psychology student work on the planning for the Aboriginal student space for the fall term. He suggested the steering committee would be the better employer, though it was determined that the project would be beyond surveying by the time students are on campus.

- ii. **Communications and Anti-Racism Work** – It was agreed to invite Christopher Thrall to the next meeting and ask him to come with a strategy based on communication with the identified groups. There is the possibility of involvement by a CSL student with the development of the communication strategy.

ACTION: Petra to tell Stacy a decision will be made at the July meeting. Michelle to arrange a meeting for July 23rd in the morning if possible. Jerome/Trina to speak with Christopher.

- c. **Territorial Acknowledgement Statement** – deferred to next meeting.
- d. **Smudging in Small Prayer Room** - General consensus was to focus on having the Territorial Acknowledgement Statement and a smudging room confirmed for start of classes September 2014. Petra reported that it is Augustana's responsibility to ensure the proper traditional medicines are available in the room. Conversations are needed with Elder John Crier and Craig Wentland about smudging in the Prayer Room. Mike and Craig may need to discuss how smudging without ventilation could affect the rest of the Chapel. Fine Arts would also need to be consulted with respect to the effects of smoke on the grand piano. The Committee was reminded that the rough estimate of the cost to ventilate the area was under \$10,000. Allen and Petra will speak with Chris about ventilating the space.
- ACTION: Petra to speak with Elder John Crier about supplies and the Statement. Allen and Petra to speak with Chris about making the ventilation of the Prayer Room a priority project for the summer.*
- e. **Projects for the coming year** – deferred to next meeting.
6. **Next Meeting Date – July 23rd – morning – Michelle to confirm**
7. The meeting adjourned at 11:09 a.m.

MOTION: CEGIELNY/BERGER

CARRIED