

## Aboriginal Engagement Committee Meeting

1:00 p.m. in Dr. Roger Epp Conference Room 2-004

**PRESENT:** Jérôme Melançon (Chair)      Allen Berger      Glynnis Hood  
                 Petra Cegiely                      Trina Harrison  
                 Mike Clermont                      Michelle Pratt (Recorder)

**REGRETS:**      Brittany Johnson, Katherine Swampy

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 1:07 p.m.

2. **Agenda**

The agenda was accepted as presented with a change to the order of discussion: 5b will be discussed first and then 5a.

**MOTION: BERGER/CEGIELNY**

**CARRIED**

3. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

The minutes of 22 October were approved.

**MOTION: HOOD/HARRISON**

**CARRIED**

4. **Remarks from Committee Members**

The Chair advised that Katherine was writing an exam and was not able to attend the meeting. He will meet with her later to obtain her feedback.

5. **Business**

a. **Steering Committee Meetings** – Petra reviewed the meetings that have been held since the September 11<sup>th</sup> Aboriginal Engagement Committee (AEC) meeting:

September 26<sup>th</sup> - Consultation Meeting with Elders where anyone interested in providing input into the cultural design component was asked to join the Steering Committee.

October 31<sup>st</sup> - Steering Committee met with additional Elders and others interested in providing input.

November 21<sup>st</sup> - Steering Committee met again with the expanded membership.

It was suggested that the Steering Committee and the AEC meet together with the additional participants from the first Consultation Meeting in a Pre-Bid Construction meeting to review the design. This meeting will finalize the basic design elements of the project that will drive the cost of construction so the tender documents can be prepared in January. The Steering Committee will continue to talk about the cultural and aesthetic elements that are not linked to the structural design over next term.

*ACTION: Michelle to contact Ben and Craig to ask for timelines with respect to scheduling the expanded Consultation Meeting in January. Early January was suggested.*

*ACTION: Petra to forward questions from students to Michelle.*

*ACTION: Petra to phone Elders with the meeting date once determined.*

b. **Update on Naming** – While everyone has agreed on Wahkotowin as the Cree name, the second part of the name, “crossings” was not well received by one of the Elders and an Augustana Aboriginal staff member at the last Consultation meeting. The Elders present suggested the word “lodge” which means a place of learning in the Indigenous culture. Within the culture there are many different kinds of lodges, and the campus itself could be seen as a lodge.

It was recognized that a common ground between Elders, students and staff/faculty on campus needs to be found. The Chair asked the committee to consider the word “lodge” and suggested he would meet with Aboriginal students to discuss the name as well. He will then report back to the next AEC meeting for the Committee to discuss and make a final decision. Glynnis reminded the members that the word “crossings” came from Aboriginal students initially.

*ACTION: Alyssa, Jérôme and Petra to organize a meeting with Aboriginal students January 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015.*

- c. **Communication Strategy** – to date there is information on Augustana’s home page and the FAQ document is also on line. The next communications piece would include a display for the lower level with the basic elements of the design and brochures. It was agreed that the display and brochures would wait until the design is going out for bid and the name has been settled. The need to agree on an image that will represent the project was identified and it was suggested that Ben and Craig be consulted on what image would be most appropriate. Some of the questions from students could be added to the FAQ’s document once answered by Craig.

*ACTION: Alyssa to share information through social media and check into getting the information in the ASA’s newsletter.*

*ACTION: Jérôme to ensure the AEC web page is updated.*

- d. **Smudging Policy** – A task force to develop the policy has been organized that includes Katherine Swampy, Louise Omeasoo, Alan Heyhurst, Chris Blades, Mark Chytrcek, Petra Cegielnny, and Jérôme Melançon. They have outlined what would make sense to include in a policy. Once they have the policy written, it will be sent to an Elder for review. The policy is meant to be both a teaching tool and a policy. It is the desire of the Committee to have an event in the winter term that would officially open the space.
- e. **Tipi on Campus** – Glynnis has been working on the proposal. She has been consulting with two Elders, Garry Waskahat and Don Johnson. Both are prepared to assist with the project and provide the training that would be necessary to erect and take the tipi down on a regular basis. The following locations were suggested:

- between Founders’ Hall and First Year Residences
- south of Library on the brick (anchoring into the ground not allowed)
- in front of Faith & Life

*ACTION: Jérôme to speak with David Goa about possible funding.*

*ACTION: Glynnis to meet with UAPS to discuss any security concerns. She is also to consult with Elders as to which direction the door should face.*

## 6. **New Projects**

- a. **Development and Fundraising** – It was agreed that the Aboriginal Student Space project presents an opportunity to ask for donations in support of the project and/or programming for the space. It was also agreed that there would not be any naming opportunities for any of the areas, though donations could include a plaque mounted in the space identifying a generous gift.

It was suggested that the Development Office would be able to do some preliminary research on possible donors if they were provided with a 1-3 page document outlining the project, the goals and how it will be helpful to students. The programming that requires funding would need to be identified such as Elder Services for example, or orientation programs, transition year program, round dances, etc. Companies like Syncrude, Shell and Cenovus were mentioned as to being supportive of Aboriginal initiatives. It was also suggested that the list include the required funding for providing the program once, twice and a permanent endowment. The funds required to maintain the tipi should be included as one of the line items.

*ACTION: Glynnis to forward the documents to Jérôme that the Development Office used to solicit funding for the Miquelon Lake Research Station.*

*ACTION: Petra to make a list of things that are needed along with costs. She will also check with the student researcher who surveyed what students wanted and see if she would be willing to share her findings with the Committee.*

*ACTION: Jérôme will draft the document.*

- b. **Transition Year Program (TYP)** – Aboriginal students who want to come to Augustana but require a transition year have to go through a TYP on North Campus. Concern was expressed that students would then be encouraged to remain on North Campus and not transfer to Augustana.

The Chair suggested that the Committee lobby for Aboriginal student recruitment to be a priority for Augustana and that the possibility of a TYP at Augustana be explored. Additional questions/comments were:

- Will Augustana maintain the same number of Aboriginal students even though they can handpick students based on Grade 11 marks?
- Does early acceptance for top students mean less room for Aboriginal students?
- Does the campus want to make accessibility for Aboriginal students a priority?
- Can't afford new procedures to disproportionately impact commitments to Aboriginal and rural students; part of Augustana's mission is to develop future leaders for Aboriginal and rural communities.
- Recruitment of Aboriginal students is a topic for the Enrolment Management Committee.

Allen mentioned negotiations to have a Bridging program here at Augustana are underway. The current program offered through North Campus is not adequate for our students and it is being supplemented in a variety of ways with Augustana resources. If negotiations are successful, what is the role of a TYP program and what would an Augustana program look like?

*ACTION: Members to consider the Chair's suggestion to lobby for a TYP and for the inclusion of Aboriginal students in the enrolment management strategy, and be prepared to discuss this topic at the next meeting.*

c. **Other**

7. **New Admissions Policy** – With the new policy in place, not every qualified student who applies will gain admission. Comments included:

- how to shape the incoming class to ensure the right balance between first year students and senior students
- admissions will be affected by whether enrolment growth funding comes through from the Alberta Government
- if no funding comes through, then Augustana will face the need to shrink the student body as it cannot serve 1069 students effectively with the current level of funding (funded for 1000 or fewer students)

It was suggested that the Committee request an update from the Enrolment Management Committee for the next meeting.

8. **Next Meeting Date – January or early February.**

9. The meeting adjourned at 2:34 p.m.