



**Northern College**  
**Indigenous Council on Education**  
**Minutes of Meeting held January 10, 2017**

**Present:** Dorothy Larkman, Chair, Indigenous Council  
 Fred Gibbons, Northern College President, Indigenous Council Member  
 Micheal Miller, Open Seat, Indigenous Council Member  
 Melody Chislett-Morris, Métis Nation of Ontario, Indigenous Council Member  
 Ken Neegan, Open Seat, Indigenous Council Member

**Resources:** David Faries, Elder on Campus  
 Audrey Penner, Vice-President, Academic and Student Success  
 Lynn Berthiaume, Executive Director, Student Services, Institutional Research and Registrar  
 Jennifer Nadeau, Indigenous Student Advisor  
 Joseph Nakogee, Indigenous Student Advisor  
 Kathy Gagain, Recording Secretary

**Regrets:** Irene Tomatuk, Mushkegowuk, Indigenous Council Member  
 Kathy Cheechoo, Open Seat, Indigenous Council Member  
 Veronica Nicholson, Open Seat, Indigenous Council Member  
 Lillian Trapper, Open Seat, Indigenous Council Member

Agenda Item	Action
<p><b>1. Opening</b></p> <p><b>(a) Acknowledgement of Territory</b></p> <p>President Gibbons opened the meeting with the acknowledgement of territory and paid respect to the Elders present and to the drum and the sacred items.</p> <p><b>(b) Opening Prayer</b></p> <p>Elder David Faries said the opening prayer.</p> <p><b>(c) Introductions</b></p> <p>Dorothy welcomed new member Melody Chislett-Morris, appointed by the Métis Nation of Ontario and everyone introduced themselves.</p> <p>Welcome and Update – Fred Gibbons, President          Fred provided a brief update on Northern College, noting that there have been major policy decisions made by the provincial government, with the most profound being a new funding model. The challenge is fiscal stability for the long term and the new</p>	

formula responds to that. It is called a Corridor Model. There is also a new tuition policy, which will allow the College to increase tuition in most programs.

The Strategic Mandate Agreement is up for renewal and the College is awaiting the new terms of reference. Once they are received, stakeholder consultations will begin. Fred noted that he will be looking to bring this to the Council for their input.

Fred advised of the reasons that enrolment was down this year and then explained the reasons why enrolment is expected to be better next year.

A balanced budget was presented to the Board in the Spring and Fred predicted that we are on track to realize this, with perhaps even a small surplus. Work is beginning to arrive at a balanced budget again for 2017/2018.

Fred shared the news that, after years of negotiating, the College has received \$11 million dollars to construct a new emergency services building.

Dorothy thanked Fred for the information.

A discussion arose with regard to learning from a distance. It was agreed to invite the CEO for Contact North join us to have a discussion as to how to push this forward. It was thought that there may be an opportunity to discuss this at some point during the Great Moon Gathering.

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## **2. AGENDA / MINUTES/BUSINESS ARISING**

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### **(a) Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was reviewed and approved as presented.

Moved by: M. Miller

Seconded by: F. Gibbons

THAT the agenda of the Northern College Indigenous Council on Education dated January 10, 2017 be adopted as presented.

Carried

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### **(b) Approval of Minutes Meeting held April 22, 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held April 22, 2016 were reviewed.

Moved by: K. Neegan

Seconded by: M. Miller

THAT the minutes of the Northern College Indigenous Council on Education meeting of April 22, 2016 be approved as presented.

Carried

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**(c) Business Arising**

Elders Conference  
Deferred.

**3. RESOURCE REPORTS**Diane Ryder, Moosonee Campus Manager

Participating in the meeting by video, Diane noted that while the College has been working with the communities in the James Bay area we have heard that they need adult programming to be able to upgrade in literacy and academic skills within the communities. At the request of the communities, this is where our focus has been.

An Access Centre has been established in Attawapiskat allowing adults with low literacy rates to use the Centre to gain independence or to obtain high school credits (in partnership with the high school). Adults in the community can come into the Centre to get help to get ready for Apprenticeships, equivalency to grade 12 or to prepare for college or university. Employment preparation is also available. A classroom and an office space has been found and there are two staff members; a core instructor and an office administrator. The pilot funding that was originally received has been changed to core funding – the funding is there as long as there is a need in the community.

Diane noted that funding has been received for pilot projects in Kashechewan and this will be up and running on February 1<sup>st</sup>.

Diane advised that there is a challenge in Fort Albany to find space and that the College is currently working with the Ministry to see if we can get some renovation funding to turn a home into a classroom and office space.

In each community, the College has been working to establish an education and training committee, they advise, identify needs and let us know where we need to focus to serve the needs of the communities.

It has been found that the Contact North Centre in Attawapiskat has gained the interest of the students who are going through the Centre. There are no Contact North sites in Fort Albany or Kashechewan.

Employment needs identified:

Kashechewan – an office skills program is running (ends at the end of January). Some of the students in there are opting to stay and join in the adult literacy program to better their literacy skills.

Moose Factory – 22 week Multi-Skills Mechanical (welding, small engines, auto mechanics), along with a core of trade readiness, followed by a placement.

Diane sits on a committee with other colleges in the province – Indigenous Student Retention Program. Eight colleges are involved to determine how we can build articulation agreements with other colleges and universities. What would the institution be providing to the Indigenous students? She looks forward to sharing further information as it evolves.

As soon as Diane receives the final Best Practices Project Report, she will share with Council.

In response to a question, Diane confirmed that yes, students that come from a high school in a First Nation community struggle when they go to continue their education in the south.

Diane confirmed that ACE is more popular than GED. Lynn noted that the ACE program is funded, where GED is not.

#### Joseph Nakogee, Indigenous Student Advisor

Joseph noted that he has been at Northern College for five years now and that he was looking forward to this semester and the rest of the year. The year started with Lightning Trail, which he found well organized and included help from the community. He has been doing more networking with the communities. This school year started with 102 students who self-identified; 73 full-time, with the remainder being upgrading and apprenticeship. When Joseph talks to guidance counsellors from the north, he encourages them to guide their grade twelve graduates to take the preparatory programs first (pre-health, pre-tech). Joseph felt that this provided a better chance of success, noting the recent graduation of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing student, who started with Pre-Health and is now going back home to Peawanuk to work as a Registered Nurse in the community.

Indigenous Cultural Awareness week was held in September and this event has grown to be a big event with elementary and secondary students participating, as well as Northern's Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

David noted that the dates of cultural awareness conflicts with his fall ceremonies.

Various workshops have been held for the students throughout the year, such as Cree language and making bannock.

Mushkegowuk held another leadership weekend at Northern College, which provided the chance for Joseph and David to meet guidance counsellors and teachers, many of whom will be coming back for Great Moon Gathering.

This year's Pow Wow is being held April 22 and 23, 2017.

Moosonee and Moose Factory students toured all campuses of Northern College, getting to know the staff and what Northern can offer them. Joseph found it very effective for the high school students to hear current Northern College students. Joseph thought that an Indigenous recruiter would be of assistance. David agreed that an Indigenous person recruiting in Indigenous communities would be more effective. Joseph has been thinking about the need for a one-year certificate program that would help students regain their culture – painting, etc.

#### David Faries, Elder on Campus

Students are aware that they can come and see David at any time and David is available to go to speak to classes on various topics.

#### Christine Heavens (for Amy Danchuk, Indigenous Liaison Officer)

Christine highlighted the following activities:

- Urban Action plan – working with Timmins Native Friendship Centre
- Mining Essentials – 12 women were successful; in partnership with Gold Corp and Lakeshore Gold
- Underground Hardrock Miner Common Core – 2 programs were held at Primero in partnership with Wagoshig, with two more offerings. There have been 20 Indigenous students graduate over the last two years. Continuous support with child care and travel is important. Funding will then end for this project – Ministry has seen this as a success story so that as of April, we will be eligible to reapply for funding.
- Glencore underground offering  
Ridgemont mine in Duberville – Underground Hardrock Miner program – funding a full Indigenous intake – after that, will fund a number of seats for Indigenous students. Twenty-nine people went to the information session yesterday. Mine has committed to run three intakes per year.
- Mushkegowuk – Environmental skills program

#### Jennifer Nadeau, Indigenous Student Advisor – Kirkland Lake & Haileybury

Jennifer highlighted activities at Kirkland Lake and Haileybury – 15 students at each campus. Jennifer has found it beneficial to make connections either by email or phone call as soon as the students are registered. She is working with education authorities, Mushkegowuk and Timiskaming First Nation. Jennifer encourages students to participate in community events as this helps to make connections.

Jennifer receives calls from Industry looking for graduates. This year, there is a First Nation representative on Student Council. Jennifer also noted that Elders Jeanette and Marilyn are being utilized more. In Haileybury, a grass roots drum group has evolved and they are looking to drum at the upcoming graduation.

Jennifer noted that due to the low participation rate in the last Indigenous Student Survey, Focus Groups are being held with three very specific questions so that we can get the responses required. The report should be completed by the end of January.

The Council agreed to recess the meeting to meet with the Northern College Board of Governors.

#### Meeting with the Board of Governors

Fred provided the Traditional Territory Acknowledgement and introduced George Kemp, Chair of the Board of Governors. Introductions were made.

Dorothy shared with the Board that having participated on the Council for four years, Council's role is to provide input into what the College can provide to First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, meet the needs of industry and how our ; Peoples can become part of the economic engine.

She further noted that the Council is helping to determine the best resources for Indigenous students – how to become the College of Choice for Indigenous Peoples of the area. Young people need an education in order to move ahead in society today. Council provides direct input to the Board by having the Chair participate on the Board of Governors. Council also ensures that data is being collected so that it is an evidence based process used to ensure that the College is meeting the Indigenous needs.

George, the Board Chair, thanked Council for their work in helping the College to be the choice of the Indigenous learning population. While the Board realizes there is an attraction for students to study in North Bay and Sudbury and other points south, the Board would like to do whatever it can so that the students will make Northern College their College. George noted that the Board is driven to fulfill this goal and is open to any suggestions to determine how we can meet these goals to become that provider.

Fred noted that the College uses the signed Indigenous Education Protocol as we develop our annual work plan under the Strategic Plan. The College also draws from the Truth and Reconciliation Report and local circumstances.

Fred stated that we need to understand why students are not going to Northern; we need to know why.

Audrey provided information with regard to recent research undertaken. She first thanked Dorothy for her input. The methodology first being considered was a western way of doing things. Dorothy urged the College to use a method that would share conversations. Audrey noted that hat we heard fell into four major themes:

Access

Culture

Postsecondary needs

Racism

Looking at these themes – access –

- Financial
- Geographical access

#### Culture

- Family and Community (connection)
- Nucleus of support within the institution – sense of belonging

#### Postsecondary Needs

Facilitator of Choice

Recruitment and Retention

Programs – What is Offered

Housing

#### Racism

- Specific to Timmins community
- Not so much racism within the College, but in the community surrounding

#### Barriers

- Culture Shock
- Support for Family
- Lack of Face to Face Instruction
- Awareness of Northern College

Educational agencies in the region don't know what Northern College has to offer.

Quality of Instructional Staff

Community Outreach – Northern Training

Short Term Programming

Stacking the Learning – help build a pathway from the start.

A full report will be developed and the recommendations will be refined.

The Board thanked the Council for meeting with them and proceeded to the Board of Governors meeting. The Council meeting adjourned with the outstanding business to be addressed at the next meeting.