

Minutes of QAHN conference call

April 30, 2005

Directors who participated: William Campbell, Rod Macleod, Richard Smith, Philip McMaster, Michael Cooper, Monique Nadeau

Regrets: Ralph Farley, Richard Evans, Heather Darch, Doreen Lindsay, Georges Howson

Staff present: Dwane Wilkin

### **1. Meeting convened**

QAHN president Rod MacLeod called the meeting to order at approximately 3:10 p.m., requesting to add to the prepared agenda the matter of QAHN's new funding partner, Quebec's Culture and Communications Ministry (MCCQ).

### **2. Approval of the Agenda**

After commenting enthusiastically on a recent *Le Soleil* newspaper article devoted to Quebec's covered bridges, Monique Nadeau moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Michael Cooper. All present voted in favour.

### **3. Approval of the Minutes of the January 22 board meeting**

Michael Cooper moved to accept the minutes of the previous board meeting, held January 22 in Lennoxville. Philip McMaster seconded the motion. All voted in favour.

### **4. Updates**

#### Finances

Dwane Wilkin reported briefly on the financial state of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network, as of March 31, 2005. Since the board last met in January, QAHN has received:

- \$7,602 as a final payment against the federal Department of Economic Development's (DEC) contribution to the last phase of QAHN's Heritage Portal webmagazine project in 2004-2005;
- \$15,000 in operating funds from the provincial Ministry of Culture and Communications (MCCQ), money which was accounted for in QAHN's financial reporting for 2004-2005;
- \$15,000 in operating funds from the federal Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) as an advance toward QAHN's program grant for 2005-2006. The total amount of the PCH grant in 2005-2006 has not yet been revealed.

Although there was approximately \$15,000 in QAHN's bank account as of April 30, Dwane predicted that QAHN's cash-flow situation would deteriorate steadily over the next four months.

On a more positive note, Dwane said QAHN could expect within the next few weeks to receive an additional \$6,000 in program funding from PCH, now that he has sent the Department QAHN's final report on activities for 2004-2005. This money represents 10 per cent of the program funding QAHN was eligible to receive from PCH in 2004-2005; the Department is required to withhold this money pending an assessment of QAHN's final report and financial statements for the fiscal year ending March 30.

Dwane also reported that QAHN is likely to qualify again in 2005-2006 for a \$15,000 provincial contribution under the MCCQ's *Programme soutien aux associations, organismes et regroupements nationaux*. If so, based on discussions Dwane had in February with an agent of the MCCQ, QAHN could reasonably expect to receive this money as early as mid- summer 2005.

### Quebec Heritage News

There was considerable praise for the appearance of Quebec Heritage News's new front page, unveiled with the publication's March-April 2005 edition. Monique Nadeau said she likes it a lot; Philip McMaster commented that it looks "very clean."

Rod McLeod summed up his support for the magazine redesign initiative: "I think the *News* really has the potential to put our name on the map."

Philip McMaster voiced the opinion that Quebec Heritage *News* seems well on its way toward becoming Quebec Heritage *Magazine*, given the shift away from content that is time-sensitive to stories with a longer shelf life. “We’re in a transitional period,” Philip commented, adding that QAHN still faces the challenge of “professionalizing” the magazine’s production. “We’ve made the first step toward improving it,” Philip said. “What we need to do now is put out six issues a year.”

### Webmagazine

Rod MacLeod reported to the board that the federal Department of Economic Development (DEC) has declined to participate in further development of QAHN’s regional webmagazine project. The news comes as a disappointment, since DEC initially appeared so keen on this heritage-tourism project and sounded proud to be associated with it. Rod suggested that QAHN might protest DEC’s refusal of further support in the form of a letter to appropriate Department heads.

“Are we at the stage where we should embarrass people into doing what they said they’d do?” Philip McMaster asked. It was suggested that any letter to DEC in reference to the Department’s recent withdrawal of support contrast remarks heard during last summer’s National Policy Coordinating Committee meetings in Ottawa during which bureaucrats openly praised the Heritage Portal Project.

In the current climate of political uncertainty, with a minority government in Ottawa facing an imminent election, Philip suggested that QAHN is in an excellent position to extract political favours by applying appropriate pressure: “You say, ‘You guys said you would help.’ It’s an opportunity for them to look good. Give them the chance to look good and maybe we’ll get what we want.”

### Heritage at Risk

Documents prepared by QAHN staff this winter for developing policy and procedures to deal with issues of endangered heritage were the starting point for a frank discussion of QAHN’s role and responsibilities, and the methods the organization can apply to achieve and maintain public credibility.

Speaking of complaints and concerns regarding heritage, Richard Smith said it’s very important that the Network be able to respond promptly to these issues as they arise.

Richard pointed out that the FSHQ has a heritage committee that meets every two months to review such issues on a case by case basis. Richard noted also that the FSHQ works very closely with Heritage Montreal, and suggested that QAHN collaborate with other heritage groups, as well. "I think it's important that we work together with these other groups," Richard said.

Philip agreed with Richard and added further that QAHN must be prepared and willing to publicly air its own opinions on issues of heritage at risk.

Getting involved as an advocate for heritage preservation will entail a lot of work, Richard commented. "It seems to me," Rod replied, "that this is something we have to do."

Philip suggested that QAHN use *Quebec Heritage News* magazine to publish all of QAHN's official positions with respect to heritage at risk. "The comments we make in the media become not only the content for our magazine, but also part of a communications strategy for the organization," he said.

At the very least, Monique Nadeau said, letters of acknowledgement should be sent to persons or organizations who contact the QAHN office for help.

Michael Cooper asked Dwane Wilkin to finalize a policy document on heritage at risk that could be presented for adoption at the Annual General Meeting, June 4. Dwane asked the Board if this document should contain recommendations for a standing committee or some other sort of administrative mechanism for reviewing cases of heritage at risk. Philip said he was confident that QAHN staff could carry out the initial "triage" of cases that come into the office in much the same manner that letters-to-the editor are handled.

Rod said he thought it a bit premature at this stage to be discussing the details of how QAHN will proceed with case reviews.

Richard Smith concluded this discussion by saying that it's important for the Board to be able to review cases and decisions pertaining to endangered heritage, and suggested QAHN establish of a sub-committee or at least designate someone who can fulfil this role.

## Heritage Contest

Dwane reported that the QAHN office has received no submissions for the 2005 Heritage Contest. Contest guidelines were sent to English-language Quebec high schools in February and a write-up appeared in the March-April issue of *Quebec Heritage News* and the newsletter of the Quebec Community Groups Network.

“It was a good idea, but it wasn’t marketed properly,” Rod MacLeod said.

Philip suggested that the contest simply be re-launched next fall, at the beginning of the school year.

Michael Cooper shared these views: “A general mailing to schools is probably not the way to market something like this,” Michael said. He added that QAHN should promote such a contest to “keen teachers” at the beginning of the fall school term so that they can incorporate it into their planning for the year.

Phil mentioned that he has a contact with CFCF Television in Montreal who is involved with youth and who may be able to help QAHN make some future edition of the Heritage Video Contest a success.

## Ministre de la Culture et Communications du Québec (MCCQ)

Rod MacLeod talked briefly about the \$15,000 in funding support that QAHN received during the 2004-2005 fiscal year, and proposed that the Board discuss at a future date how to spend the MCCQ’s expected 2005-2006 contribution.

## **5. Partnerships**

### FSHQ

On the subject of QAHN’s relationship with the Fédération des Sociétés d’Histoire du Québec (FSHQ), Rod MacLeod acknowledged that QAHN could have better communicated its plans for this year’s Annual General Meeting, and perhaps avoided irritating members of the FSHQ board of directors.

According to Richard Smith, who also holds a seat on the FSHQ Board, QAHN's francophone counterpart worked hard to "overcome resistance" among members in order to incorporate English content into the FSHQ's Gatineau history colloquium; Richard said the FSHQ board viewed QAHN's decision not to hold its own AGM in Gatineau at the same time as a lack of respect.

Philip McMaster said QAHN owes the FSHQ an apology, and suggested that QAHN president Rod MacLeod make amends by speaking directly with FSHQ president Marc Beaudoin by telephone.

### QCGN Community Development Plan

Dwane Wilkin briefly summarized some elements of the latest draft of the Quebec Community Group Network's *Community Development Plan*, which was released at a special meeting in Quebec City on April 15.

Rod Macleod reported that the newest member of the QCGN family, the English Language Arts Network (ELAN), has asked QAHN to consider becoming an ELAN member. Rod recommended that QAHN do so because the groups share similar interests.

Philip McMaster urged QAHN to pursue "strategic alliances" with elite historic anglophone institutions in Quebec such as the Canadian Club, of which his grandfather was a founding member. The Canadian Club, he mentioned, marks its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in November 2005.

Phil suggested that QAHN should promote institutions such as the Canadian Club and the Beaver Club in the pages of Quebec Heritage News and "let them, in turn, endorse us."

"In a marketplace like Montreal," Philip said, "the challenge is a marketing challenge. We have to provide credibility to our organization by being affiliated with or being endorsed by these (elite) organizations.

Monique Nadeau said that QAHN should ally itself with the Canadian Institute of Architecture.

## Community Table

Rod MacLeod reported that Karl Mackay of the Community Association of the Magdalen Islands (CAMI) has been chosen to represent the QCGN at the board of directors of the National Community Table.

## **6. Upcoming events**

### QCGN annual general meeting

Rod MacLeod reported that Dwane Wilkin will be attending the annual general meeting of the Quebec Community Groups Network in Quebec City, May 12-14.

### ACFAS Patrimoine Scolaire Workshop

Rod is scheduled to give a paper on the history of Protestant education in Quebec at a scholarly conference being held in Chicoutimi, May 12-13, and he requested that QAHN cover a portion of his travel expenses. He said he will use the opportunity to promote QAHN in the Saguenay region and produce an article for *Quebec Heritage News*.

### National Coordination Committee Meeting

Michael Cooper volunteered to attend a meeting of the federal government's National Coordination Committee in Ottawa, May 27. Rod suggested that Michael take the opportunity to express QAHN's disappointment at Ottawa's lack of support for our webmagazine project.

### FSHQ Congrès – Gatineau (June 3, 4.)

After determining that Richard Smith could not participate in FSHQ business on QAHN's behalf at the FSHQ's Annual General Meeting, it was decided to give QAHN's voting privilege to Charles Bury, who is planning to attend the FSHQ Gatineau Colloquium in his capacity as *Quebec Heritage News* editor. Philip McMaster moved to give Charlie voting privileges and the motion was seconded by Michael Cooper.

## **7. QAHN AGM**

### Election of board members

Rod MacLeod reported that Sharon Little, the director in Seat 5 (Central and Eastern Quebec), has given formal notice that she will not be seeking re-election at QAHN's Annual General Meeting, June 4. Michael Cooper said he would run again for Seat 1 (Western Quebec). Rod said he would also run again for Seat 7 (Education).

### Marion Phelps Award

The board discussed the selection of a candidate to receive this year's Marion Phelps Award for outstanding service to the heritage community. Since QAHN office has received no nominations for the 2005 recipient, which normally is awarded at our Annual General Meeting, Rod MacLeod suggested that candidates be selected from among last year's nominees.

Philip McMaster indicated that he would like to re-nominate *Quebec Heritage News* contributor and previous nominee, Joseph Graham, from the Laurentians. Michael Cooper said he would like to nominate Norma Geggie, historian of long standing from Wakefield in West Quebec.

Richard Smith excused himself at approximately 4:45 p.m. with a final comment on the weakness of QAHN's visibility and membership in Montreal. He noted that Montreal's English speakers don't necessarily identify themselves as "anglophone Quebecers." "It's a fundamental weakness of our organization," Richard said. He suggested that the QAHN board of directors hold a special meeting to discuss this issue.

## **8. Next Board Meeting**

Rod MacLeod proposed that the board meet on **June 3** in Montreal prior to the AGM. The board of directors agreed to work out the details of this pre-AGM meeting by phone or email, amongst themselves.

### Adjournment

Monique Nadeau motioned to adjourn the telephone conference at 4:55 p.m. Michael seconded the motion.