

Minutes of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN)  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Held 22 October, 2005

John Simms Community Centre  
8 Westminster Avenue S.,  
Montreal West, Quebec

**Directors Present:** Rod MacLeod, Heather Darch, Dick Evans, Michael Cooper, Philip McMaster, Doreen Lindsay, Patrick Donovan, Rick Smith, Bill Campbell.

**Staff:** Dwane Wilkin

### **1. Call to Order**

QAHN president Rod MacLeod in his role as chairman convened the meeting at 10:15 a.m., inviting the directors present to introduce themselves and adding an item about business matters arising from QAHN's membership in the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) to the proposed agenda.

At Dick Evans' suggestion, Rod further amended the agenda by slotting in time for Rick Smith to bring his fellow directors up-to-date on the business of the Federation des Sociétés d'histoires, on whose board Rick also serves.

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

Philip McMaster moved to approve the agenda; the motion was seconded by Doreen Lindsay. All present voted in favour.

**MOTION PASSED**

### **3. Acceptance of the April 30 Minutes**

A copy of the minutes recorded during the board of directors' last conference call, which took place April 30, 2005, was circulated and reviewed by all QAHN board members in attendance. Michael Cooper, QAHN vice-president, moved to adopt the minutes as presented; Rick Smith seconded the motion.

**MOTION PASSED**

#### 4. Status Update

Dwane Wilkin briefly reviewed QAHN's affairs as they stand at the mid-point of the current fiscal year, 2005-06, mentioning various projects currently underway and the general prospects for QAHN in the third and fourth quarters. Fresh from a finance committee meeting held the previous afternoon, QAHN treasurer Dick Evans proceeded to describe QAHN's financial status. Dick confirmed that revenues and expenses related to QAHN's office operations appear to be in step with the budget, which was presented to and formally approved by the finance committee on August 17, 2005.

QAHN's recurring challenge of squaring cash-flow requirements with available funding was revisited momentarily. Rod recalled that QAHN has, essentially, just three revenue sources: federal government program spending originating within the Department of Canadian Heritage; provincial government program spending originating within the Minister of Culture and Communications; and self-generated income, derived from sales of memberships and advertising. Dwane noted that, for all intents and purposes, QAHN is only able to directly influence the level of its self-generated income, and therefore any increase in its operations budget could only be achieved by expanding the organization's member base and raising advertising sales revenue through Quebec Heritage News magazine.

The board was reminded that, because 80 per cent of QAHN's funding comes from Canadian Heritage and because it is the policy of most federal departments to withhold 10 per cent of their financial contribution pending a final year-end audit, non-profit groups such as QAHN are effectively compelled to spend money before they actually receive it, presenting a cash-flow dilemma that typically arises toward the end of the last quarter of each fiscal year. As a preventive measure, Dick recommended that future budgeting take this holdback into account, and he sketched for the board his concept of creating a cash "reserve" for just such a purpose. **It was pointed out that, since self-generated monies are exempt from the accounting constraints attached to the government's contribution funding, such a cash reserve must come either from membership revenues or sales of other yet-to-be determined QAHN products and services.**

Dick touched on the idea of marketing Quebec Heritage News magazine to potential advertisers, including heritage groups belonging to or affiliated with QAHN and other organizations and companies who might like to attract the attention of or do business with the magazine's subscribers.

Philip McMaster, director-at-large, said he considered it very positive to think about ways to expand that portion of QAHN's revenue which is self-generated, and there was some musing about potential for boosting membership and advertising sales.

Heather Darch, QAHN secretary, inquired as to whether QAHN's membership-fee schedule was up for review this year and if any increases were contemplated, the response being no in both instances (membership rates were raised in August 2004). Dwane restated his view that QAHN must raise the *number* of memberships, not the price.

This prompted a general discussion around the subject of recruiting new members, with several directors offering ideas for going about it. "We need to have people on lists," Phil said. "It's important to build that database of potential members."

"Every Women's Institute branch is a potential member, every church presbytery is a potential member," added Dick, who also brought up the idea of offering existing QAHN members a direct financial sales incentive. "It's conceivable," Dick remarked, "that we could say to each Core member, 'We'll give you five dollars for each new QAHN member you sign up.'" Doreen responded with some skepticism. "As an umbrella organization, I don't see too many people being attracted to us," she said.

Doreen then recommended a technique used by the Westmount Historical Association to renew its subscriptions: each member is issued a card that clearly states the time period for which his or her membership is valid.

#### *QAHN Recruitment Kit*

It was acknowledged that QAHN directors share the responsibility for developing the network by recruiting members in their respective jurisdictions. Both Michael and Rick suggested that a comprehensive information package should be created and distributed to all QAHN directors so that they can promote the organization more effectively.

Dwane agreed to begin this task by providing each director with an updated list of the names and contact information for existing QAHN members, organized by geographic territory, by sector and by membership type, so that each board member is acquainted with his or her constituency.

Dick volunteered to work with QAHN secretary Kathy Teasdale to draft the text of a promotional kit, which will presumably describe in clear terms the benefits of joining the network. “It’s not belonging to QAHN that people care about,” Phil commented. “It’s what they get out of it.”

### *QAHN Promotion*

It was further agreed that the following ideas for advertising QAHN should be implemented as soon as possible:

1. Arrange to place advertisements in the newsletters of QAHN’s core members;
2. Place a tear-out subscription form in subsequent issues of Quebec Heritage News;
3. Create a prominent point-and-click link to the electronic registration form on QAHN’s main website

Rick closed this part of the discussion by asking that the subject of membership development be retained as a permanent agenda item in all subsequent board meetings.

## **5. QAHN Housekeeping**

### 5.1 Signing Authority

Philip moved give to give the following corporate officers formal signing authority for all financial business of the network: Rod MacLeod, president; Michael Cooper, vice-president; Heather Darch, secretary; Richard Evans, treasurer; Marion Greenlay, assistant treasurer. The motion was seconded by Heather Darch, following a brief discussion as to the propriety of granting signing privileges to board members other than the treasurer.

**MOTION PASSED**

## 5.2 Charitable Status

Dick reported that he has not yet met with *Quebec Heritage News* editor Charlie Bury to explore the oft-mentioned proposal to establish a separate charitable foundation, but he did review some of the general limitations attached to obtaining and maintaining charitable status, as he understands it:

- Such a foundation would have to have its own, separate board of directors
- Such a foundation would have to give the money it raises to non-profit groups
- Such a foundation would have to spend its money within the territory of Quebec
- Such a foundation could not hoard donations from one year to the next

Patrick wished to know what percentage of money raised through a future charitable foundation could be used to support QAHN's own activities, but no one around the table had the answer.

Phil mentioned that he serves as director of an existing non-profit charitable organization called Cool-to-be Canadian, currently moribund, which he speculated might entertain the idea of collaborating with QAHN.

## 5.3 Board Succession

Rod explained that QAHN's directors were bound, by the terms of its operations grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage this year, to undertake and complete a Strategic Planning exercise to address the following realms of activity:

- Membership development
- Board renewal and succession

Rod, who advised his fellow directors that he would like step down as president following the 2006 Annual General Meeting, said that he hoped QAHN would not have to scramble once again to find new board members. "If you have to keep twisting people's arms it doesn't look good," he said. **It was agreed that a block of time should be set aside at the next meeting, in January, to determine precisely how to proceed with the development of this Board Succession Plan, which must be completed by March 31, 2006.**

The other board exercise that QAHN is required to conduct this year is an Operational Review. The existing Needs Assessment study produced in 2004 contains terms of reference that can be used for this review and Dwane agreed to forward copies of the document to board members so that they can familiarize themselves with it before the next board meeting, in January.

#### 5.4 QCGN Meeting and Strategic Plan

Rod gave an overview of the Quebec Community Groups Network's (QCGN) role and QAHN's participation at the network's fall meeting, scheduled for Nov.4 and Nov.5, 2005 in Montreal. It was moved by Dick Evans to give Rod MacLeod, president, voting status as QAHN's delegate at the QCGN meeting, with Dwane Wilkin, executive director, as an alternate. This motion was seconded by Michael Cooper. All voted in favour.

**MOTION PASSED**

It was further moved by Michael Cooper that QAHN formally endorse the orientation of the QCGN's Strategic Plan, as adopted at the QCGN meeting held in Quebec City on May 12, 2005. Rick Smith seconded the motion. All voted in favour.

**MOTION PASSED**

### **6. Projects and Initiatives**

#### 5.1 Quebec Heritage News

Dwane distributed copies of the latest issue of Quebec Heritage News and reported that QAHN is on track to produce the full six issues of the magazine in fiscal 2005-06, as planned. He also reiterated his intention to draft a business plan for the magazine, a prerequisite for applying for grants through the Canada Magazine Fund's small magazine-publishers assistance program. It was agreed that Dwane should circulate copies of his business plan among board members prior to writing the grant application.

There was consensus that Natural Heritage be adopted as the theme of the December-January issue and directors were encouraged to forward submissions and ideas for articles to the editor, Charles Bury.

Rick wondered if QAHN directors should establish an editorial board for the magazine, but this idea was not pursued any further. Dwane said that the job of selecting and editing material contributed on a volunteer basis to such a small publication as Quebec Heritage News is best handled by a single person.

## 5.2 Heritage Contests

Dwane reported that the QAHN office launched the second edition of its Heritage Minute Video contest in September at the beginning of the school year, and that he anticipated a better response to this initiative than was the case last spring. The first edition of the contest was launched in January 2005, and only a dozen or so entries were received by the May 30 deadline. The deadline for entries this time around is April 30, 2006. Dwane also reported that the QAHN office plans to launch a heritage-essay contest in Quebec elementary schools, in January.

## 5.3 Prospecting for Heritage

Dwane reported that Dr. Lorraine O'Donnell is overseeing QAHN's Prospecting for Heritage project, funded by the federal Museums Assistance Program, and he recapitulated the project's goals.

## 5.4 Outaouais Heritage Webmagazine

Michael reported that he had worked with Matthew Farfan during Mathew's research trip to West Quebec the previous week, and that the project appears to be progressing smoothly. The new webmagazine has received some in-kind support from the Regional Association of West Quebecers, and those individuals and heritage groups from west Quebec who were able to meet with Matthew during his visit to the region were impressed by the project.

## 5.5 Heritage at Risk

Dwane described this project proposal, now before a selection committee of the Department of Canadian Heritage. Rick wanted to know if this project, which is designed to create and promote heritage-training and awareness workshops in local municipalities, is any different from what the FSHQ already does.

Rick added that he felt QAHN should work in concert with existing resources. Dick explained that QAHN hopes merely to complement what's already being done. Rick pointed out that the FSHQ's heritage committee has been successful defending heritage sites in the past. "Be aware that the more we work together the more effective we will be," Rick said.

## **6. Outreach**

### **6.1 Montreal Recruitment Strategy**

Rod reviewed the few ideas he has received from board members for developing QAHN's membership in Montreal, such as fundraising events and holding joint meetings with Montreal-area community groups. As of the day of the board meeting, QAHN had yet to develop and implement an outreach strategy that targets Montreal's English-speaking communities.

Patrick mentioned that Susan Bronson who teaches a course on heritage organization at the University of Montreal, would be a good contact for QAHN and he raised the idea of working with Bronson's students on projects of joint interest.

Dick raised the question of QAHN's apparent lack of appeal among larger community and special-interest groups, by way of underlining the dilemma QAHN faces trying to attract new members from the Montreal area. "Why should they join?" he asked. "They don't feel they need to be associated with us."

Phil reported that he had made a few phone calls to the Canadian Club of Montreal but was unable to persuade the organization to collaborate with QAHN on some sort of fundraising event to mark the Club's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Bill Campbell offered to promote QAHN among individual members of the St. Andrews Society and the Fraser Highlanders organization. Members of these groups, Bill said, are very interested in heritage and would probably like to receive Quebec Heritage News magazine. Bill said he would write an article about QAHN for the St-Andrews Society and also offered to send information about QAHN to various Irish Societies in the Montreal region.

### *Montreal Colloquium*

Discussion ensued about the possibility of holding a day-long colloquium or symposium to raise QAHN's profile in Montreal. Consensus developed around the idea of inviting traditional English-speaking ethnic groups to participate in panel discussions, workshops and/or lectures devoted to the "endangered heritage" of Montreal's various cultural communities. It was agreed that, to be effective and credible, QAHN would have to ensure that such a conference attract a wide spectrum of speakers and participants.

A tentative date for the conference was discussed briefly, with Dick proposing late April or early May of 2006. Rick felt that next spring might be too early, and proposed instead that QAHN consider holding the colloquium in September 2006, which would presumably coincide with several *Journées de la Culture* events, which are scheduled to take place across Quebec at that time. Rick mused that such an event would be of great interest to Quebec's Culture and Communications Ministry (MCCQ).

### *Language of presentation*

Should the proposed QAHN 2006 Colloquium in Montreal be held exclusively in English or in French and English? The board debated this question, with Dick suggesting that French events (workshops, seminars etc.) simply do not attract English-speaking people. "Don't forget that most of the people in QAHN who work to protect English-speaking heritage, do it in English," Dick said.

Rick countered by making the point that QAHN needs to think about its future, and that means appealing to a younger, bilingual generation.

Doreen commented that elements of the colloquium could be presented in either French or English, with simultaneous translation. The question was left unresolved.

### *Next Steps – Montreal Heritage Colloquium*

Doreen felt that QAHN board members should begin preliminary discussions with target groups in Montreal area with a view towards gauging support for the colloquium and soliciting presentation proposals.

Rod said that it would be helpful to have a comprehensive list of potential member groups from the Montreal area.

Rick recommended that QAHN's Montreal-based directors speak again about their Montreal Recruitment Strategy and the proposed Heritage Colloquium by way of an evening conference call during the first week of December. Those directors asked to participate are:

- Rick Smith
- Phil McMaster
- Doreen Lindsay
- Rod Macleod

In the meantime, Dwane agreed to prepare the following documents:

- A QAHN information kit for each board member
- A leads list for the board's Montreal Recruitment Drive and proposed 2006 Heritage Colloquium.

## 6.2 Public Hearings on Religious Heritage

Patrick Donovan, who helped Dwane prepare QAHN's brief on the future of religious heritage to the Quebec government's Standing Committee on Culture reiterated the main points expressed in this brief. Patrick outlined the shortcomings in the methodology currently used by the Quebec government to evaluate religious heritage.

Dick said that he believes the current hearings are a prelude to a new round of funding that the provincial government intends to set aside for the restoration and preservation of select heritage church buildings. During the last round of funding, Dick said, the Quebec treasury board guidelines for eligible projects effectively prevented many congregations from participating. "Somehow," Dick said, "we have to find a way to get them to stop overburdening us with expensive paperwork so that a \$10,000 job doesn't turn into a \$50,000 job."

### 6.3 FSHQ Fall Colloquium

Rick Smith briefly described the theme of this November's fall colloquium on Quebec heritage, being sponsored by the FSHQ in Quebec City. The theme of this year's day-long colloquium is built heritage, with presentations on all aspects of heritage preservation, from architecture and culture to the question of who should be responsible for safeguarding the province's treasury of historic buildings.

### **7. Staff Review**

Dwane recused himself while the board discussed his performance as interim executive director. In light of Valérie Bridger's recent departure, an important question to be addressed was how to go about replacing her. When Dwane returned to the meeting it was announced that he was to be offered the position of executive director and that the change of title would take effect as soon as the board received Valérie's letter of resignation.

### **8. Varia**

Doreen announced to the board that she intends to nominate the late Aline Gubbay as the 2006 recipient of QAHN's Marion Phelps Award for distinguished public service in the field of heritage. Doreen remarked on Ms Gubbay's great contribution as an author of Westmount's history and noted that her contribution was not yet acknowledged. Doreen reported that Aline Gubbay had died just two days before. Dick suggested that QAHN come up with a new, posthumous award.

Patrick moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 4:45 p.m. The motion was accepted by Rod.

**MEETING ADJOURNED**