

Minutes of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN)  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Held 21 January 2006

Marguerite Knapp Community Centre  
257 Queen Street  
Lennoxville, Quebec

**Directors Present:** Roderick MacLeod, Patrick Donovan, Richard Smith, Michael Cooper, Heather Darch, Richard Evans, William Campbell

**Staff:** Dwane Wilkin, Kathy Teasdale, Charles Bury

Regrets: Georges Howson, Monique Nadeau, Philip McMaster, Sandra Stock

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

Rod opened the meeting by briefly discussing the proposal that Sandra Stock of the Morin Heights Historical Association be invited to join the QAHN board of directors. There being no bylaw provision explicitly preventing directors from adding another board member prior to QAHN's annual general meeting, it was the general consensus that the current directors should feel free to invite Sandra to join immediately.

In light of an email that Phil McMaster sent to the QAHN office from his new home in Hong Kong, China on the eve of the January board meeting, Rod expressed the majority opinion that Phil could no longer serve as a director.

### **2. Approval of the agenda**

Heather Darch moved to approve the agenda, which was seconded by Michael Cooper

**MOTION PASSED**

### **3. Acceptance of the October 22 minutes**

Patrick Donovan moved to adopt the minutes of the QAHN board meeting held 22 October 2005 in Montreal West. Seconded by Heather Darch.

**MOTION PASSED**

#### **4. Project Updates**

Dwane Wilkin brought the directors up to date on QAHN's current financial status, reviewing cash-flow predictions and current accounts for general operations and special projects. Dwane reported that, as of mid-January 2006, the organization appeared to be in sound financial health heading into the final quarter of the current fiscal year.

Dwane also noted that expenditures for the Prospecting for Heritage project, which is being funded in part by the Museums Assistance Program (MAP), must include a 50 per cent contribution from QAHN itself. A discussion ensued about how the office and the board can best ensure that QAHN is able to show it made a \$10,000 contribution to the project, when it is completed.

Heather said that the Missisquoi County Historical and Museum Society keeps track of all volunteer time spent on MAP projects. Dick Evans added that QAHN board members need to come to some agreement as to the cash value of directors' in-kind contributions.

##### *Prospecting for Heritage*

Since the La Mauricie region is one of the regions targetted by the current Prospecting for Heritage project, Dick suggested the idea of creating an ad-hoc historical society for the La Mauricie region. Dwane said that any time spent setting up or exploring the feasibility of establishing such an ad hoc historical society could be considered a legitimate Prospecting for Heritage expense.

##### *Outaouais Heritage Webmagazine*

Dwane gave a brief progress report on the work carried out since last fall by QAHN's heritage webmagazine editor Matthew Farfan, to develop a third internet forum specializing in regional Quebec history. Michael Cooper, who has been working closely with Matthew on this project, strongly urged the executive director and board to consider postponing the official website launch until late spring, when better weather conditions would help ensure the launch's success. It was previously assumed that the official launch would have to take place before March 31.

There was general consensus that a later date would be preferable, and Michael volunteered to coordinate the search for a suitable venue.

Charlie Bury mentioned that the new city of Gatineau in West Quebec contains the fastest growing population of English-speaking Quebecers.

##### *HASTI Workshop Series*

Dwane gave an overview of the HASTI workshop series proposal and reported that his project application recently received the approval of the Department of Canadian Heritage for funding of \$27,450. He also noted that the official project completion deadline is March 31, 2006, and that adapting the project delivery model to this timeline presents a significant challenge for QAHN. The original proposal had called for a single project developer who would lead all 12 workshops in four target regions.

Rick Smith asked Dwane if he thought QAHN was up to such a challenge, to which Dwane responded in the affirmative.

Michael Cooper observed that the HASTI project should be viewed as a “seed” project. Once QAHN has developed the workshop presentation materials, he said, it can offer the workshops to any municipality or MRC that shows an interest.

A discussion of different possible project-development and workshop delivery models followed, with consensus around the need to hire more than one person to achieve the desired results in the limited time remaining in the current fiscal year.

Michael suggested that the project leader should ask local historical societies for suggestions about how and where to hold the workshops. As QAHN’s performance with the HASTI workshops will be gauged largely on the number of people who show up, a vital task of the HASTI project leader and local workshop coordinators will be to “drive” turnout.

Dick suggested that the workshop presentation materials should drive home the following messages:

1. Protecting local heritage doesn’t have to cost municipalities any money;
2. Promoting local heritage can attract tourist dollars.

“The more I think about this the more I think we have to get the MRCs involved,” Dick said.

## **6. Montreal Heritage Outreach Project - Proposal**

Dwane explained his latest project application, now awaiting appraisal by a selection committee attached to the Department of Canadian Heritage’s Community Development Fund. The Montreal Heritage Outreach project was conceived to help QAHN raise its profile among the various English-speaking cultural communities of Montreal. The project envisions an initial research phase, comparable to the current Prospecting for Heritage project, followed by a major cultural event that Dwane has described as an “Heritage Fair.”

Patrick suggested that a good place to begin developing partnerships for such a project would be the universities. Dick added that, getting universities involved as partners might help QAHN attract younger people into the heritage-preservation movement.

Rod mentioned that some initial contacts with Montreal-based community groups had already been made, notably the Quebec Literacy Council and the Black Community Resource Centre. Rod also noted that, although QAHN’s Montreal sub-committee had yet to meet, the Montreal Heritage Outreach proposal could serve as a starting point for discussions. In other words, “We should not wait until we get funding to work on this,” Rod said.

Rick Smith wanted to know if the Outreach proposal would include efforts to appeal to those “anglo-Montrealers” who aren’t usually considered as belonging to Quebec’s ethno-cultural communities, to which Dick replied that, “a lot of people interested in heritage tend to pursue it within their ethnic sub-division.”

Rod proposed that the standing sub-committee meet soon to discuss the proposed Montreal Outreach strategy. Dick suggested that the sub-committee should meet once to discuss ideas, then meet again with potential partners.

Patrick suggested another possible partner: Parks Canada, which has been working with the Société du développement économique du Boulevard St-Laurent to promote the history and heritage of The Main.

Dick suggested that the sub-committee discuss the Outreach strategy with the Royal Commonwealth Society.

Rod said that he preferred to convene the first QAHN Montreal sub-committee meeting toward the end of February.

## **7. Recruitment Strategy**

Dwane distributed a QAHN information kit to each board member. The kits are intended to help directors introduce the Network to potential new members. Each kit contains lists of people and organizations whose names are currently on the QAHN mailing list, arranged by membership category and status.

William Campbell also recommended that a brief summary outlining what QAHN is be sent out to the various newsletters of QAHN-member groups.

Michael said this was a good idea, and suggested that any such text should sport the header, “QAHN Recruitment Drive” so that it’s clear to all that we are looking for new members.

Dwane stated his view that the directors must take responsibility for recruiting new members if QAHN is ever going to be able to claim that it has legitimate support from a substantial constituency. He reported that out of the approximately 450 names on the current mailing list for Quebec Heritage News magazine, only about 130 were paid-up members.

Rod recalled that board members’ responsibility for developing the heritage network really has two main thrusts: to look after current member needs and to recruit new members.

“For all intents and purposes,” Rod said, “we shouldn’t be sending Quebec Heritage News to people and organizations who don’t pay for it.”

Dick expressed his view that QAHN must become more skilled at explaining to the greater heritage community, the benefits of joining. “It’s really about creating more effective networking,” Dick said. “That’s the benefit that they get out of this.”

“I don’t think it’s the role of the board members to call up inactive members and hassle them into paying up,” Patrick Donovan commented.

After looking through his copy of the information kit, Rick Smith said that he found the member lists confusing. Some names contained little or no contact information; some were listed as unpaid or lapsed members, in conflict with QAHN's stated membership policy; some appeared in the wrong category and/or constituency. Rick said he wasn't prepared to work with his list in its current state.

Dwane said that he and Kathy would go back over the lists and fill in as many gaps as possible, but reiterated his view that, except for issuing annual renewal notices and processing such membership applications that came into the office, it was not the job of the QAHN staff to recruit new members.

In the meantime, Dick urged each of his fellow board members to consider asking some of the people on their lists to at least provide QAHN with feedback.

"That was the concept of what a board member should do," Dick said. "Each sector is different. The office and board can give guidelines, but you have to be able to tailor information to each region or constituency."

Rick then pointed out that a large number of QAHN members currently listed as Affiliate Members have never paid any fee at all. This triggered a review of the origins of QAHN's membership categories. Dick Evans, a founding member of QAHN, explained that Affiliate memberships were initially extended to other Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) members free-of-charge, to avoid an otherwise pointless exchange of small amounts of money among a handful of non-profit community groups.

*In light of the confusion, it was recommended that the information kits be modified slightly to make explicit the practice of waiving QAHN's \$30 annual membership fee for Affiliate members who also belong to the QCGN.*

#### Student constituency for QAHN

Rick Sith moved to add a special category for a student representative on the QAHN board of directors. Patrick seconded the motion.

#### **MOTION PASSED**

When the meeting resumed after lunch, Rick proposed that QAHN and the FSHQ consider using the Douglas Hall at the Douglas Hospital in Verdun to hold a joint executive-committee meeting in the fall of 2006.

Rick, who works at the hospital, said that the regular cost of renting the hall runs between \$300 and \$500, but that the hospital administration would probably let QAHN have it for free.

## **8. Operations Discussion**

### *Operations Review*

Rod discussed the framework for assessing QAHN's performance that Dwane had earlier circulated to board members. The framework is in the form of questionnaire divided into categories of priority identified in QAHN's five-year strategic plan. Dwane invited directors to answer the questions on their own and send them to the office, where he will turn them into a report.

There was agreement that the directors should go through this exercise and forward their responses to Dwane for compilation. Rick said that the board would also need to discuss the content of the report and its conclusions, and he wondered if some QAHN board member shouldn't take overall responsibility for the Operations Review.

Patrick recommended that the following question be added to the existing Operations Review framework questionnaire:

"Is there any area of the Strategic Plan that you as a QAHN board member, would like to take responsibility for?"

### *Board Succession Plan*

Rod MacLeod expressed the view that QAHN's board succession plan should contain two basic goals:

1. Clarify the way in which board members assume executive offices;
2. Generate sufficient turnover at the management level to ensure the organization remains healthy.

Rod suggested that the first part succession plan should take inspiration from the late Ed Labaree, who said: "You recruit vice-presidents, you don't recruit presidents."

On a personal note, Rod explained that he would very much prefer not to remain as president of QAHN after the next annual general meeting.

Michael Cooper, current vice-president, announced at this point that he will not consider assuming the office of the president and indeed would not be staying on in his capacity as a director of QAHN after the next annual general meeting.

It was pointed out that Sandra Stock has expressed interest in participating on the QAHN board. Dick expressed hope that the Hudson Historical Society would accept to become part of the Montérégie constituency, thereby clearing the way to propose a board member to succeed Georges Howson at the next annual general meeting, in June.

### New board member proposed

Dick moved to invite Sandra Stock to join the QAHN board as an at-large member. Michael seconded the motion.

### **MOTION PASSED**

Rod wondered aloud if anybody might be willing to join the board as a vice-president, and the name Kevin O'Donnell, current president of the Hudson Historical Society, came up.

Bill Campbell said that, in his opinion, it seemed like a very big step to recruit someone now who, in fact, would have to take charge of QAHN in only a few months' time.

### **9. Quebec Heritage News**

Dwane reported that he has not yet formulated a business plan for *Quebec Heritage News* magazine, but that he still intends to do so. In the meantime, he said, efforts continue to be made to improve the overall quality of the magazine. Patrick Donovan said that QAHN may be eligible for funding through Human Resources Development Canada, the Young Canada Works program or provincial government agencies to hire someone trained in graphics and layout design.

### **10. 2006 Annual General Meeting**

Rod suggested holding the AGM after the FSHQ's meeting on June 3-4; either on the last weekend in May or on June 10.

Bill Campbell said he'd talk to Bruce Bolton about using the Stuart Museum on June 10. A possible back-up venue was proposed: Victoria hall in Westmount.

### Marion Phelps Award

Rod mentioned Doreen Lindsay's nomination of the late Aline Gubbay and reviewed the general procedure for nominating candidates.

Rod suggested that if Ms. Gubbay is to be the recipient, then she should be selected this year, rather than later.

Dick said the idea of posthumous awards opens up a whole separate category for recognition, because there are so many worthy dead candidates.

Rick suggested that QAHN consider awarding somebody who is widely known in the heritage/history field who will bring QAHN some attention, to which Dick responded that national organizations such as the Canadian History Society already give this type of award.

Patrick concurred with Rick that someone with name recognition could increase QAHN's visibility. Patrick suggested that QAHN invite Pierre Anctil, a writer and historian who has written extensively about Jewish history in Quebec, to attend a QAHN function as guest speaker.

## **11. Varia**

### Charitable Status

Charlie reported his findings regarding the possibility of setting up a separate Quebec heritage foundation with official charitable status:

1. The charity will have to be operated at arm's length from from QAHN;
2. Three people, called "requerants" under Quebec law, have to agree to become founding members of the charity;
3. The charity may be incorporated federally or provincially.

Charlie said that annual reporting requirements appear less complicated if the charity is incorporated as a provincial non-profit organization

Patrick wished to know what percentage of the proposed charity's funds could be donated to QAHN. The answer, it seems, is "very little."

Charlie suggested that the bylaws of the new foundation should simply mirror those of the Townships Research and Cultural Foundation, except that the scope of the charity would be provincial, rather than confined to one region.

### Charitable foundation idea approved

Dick Evans moved that the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network board of directors authorize spending of up to \$200 to assist Charlie Bury and two other individuals (the "requerants") to launch the process of establishing a separate charitable foundation. The motion was seconded by Heather Darch.

### **MOTION PASSED**

The board discussed the aims and purposes that the new foundation might be established to pursue. Charlie suggested the following name: The "Quebec Community Heritage Corporation" but it was left up to the founding officers of the new organization to settle on an official name.

### Valérie Bridger's service to QAHN recognized

Dick expressed his hope that the board of directors would consider drafting some sort of formal expression of gratitude to QAHN's former executive director Valérie Bridger, for her years' of faithful service.

Rick Smith moved that the board of directors express their thanks to Valérie and that this recognition be formally expressed at the next annual general meeting. Dick Evans seconded the motion.

### **MOTION PASSED**

Next Board meeting

At Michael Cooper's suggestion, it was agreed that the board would try to hold its spring meeting on April 29 in Wakefield and that this meeting be arranged to coincide with the official launch of QAHN's new Outaouais Heritage Webmagazine.

Bill Campbell move to adjourn the meeting at approximately 4:30 p.m., and the motion was accepted by Rod.

**MEETING ADJOURNED**