



Voices of New Brunswick Women Consensus - Building Forum
Forum de concertation Les voix des femmes du Nouveau-Brunswick

**Regular In-Person Meeting, Fredericton Inn, Fredericton, New Brunswick
April 18-19, 2015**

Members present: Rina Arseneault, Stephanie Beaulieu, Joanne Britton, Jody Dallaire, Line Doiron, Jewell Mitchell, Sylvie Morin, Kim Nash-McKinley (Co-Chair), Jennifer Richard, Noëlla Richard, Wendy Robbins, Paulette Sonier-Rioux, Phylomène Zangio (Co-Chair) **Members absent:** Sue Pitman

Ex-Officio Members present: Norma Dubé, Jocelyne Mills

Staff: Valerie Kervin (recording secretary), Beth Lyons

Next meeting: Poll to be sent out with possible dates for September or early October

AGENDA

- A. Welcome**
- B. Housekeeping – Governance Committee**
- C. Strategic Planning**
- D. Meeting with Minister responsible for Women’s Equality**
- E. Strategic Planning**
- F. Additions to and Approval of Agenda**
- G. Finance Committee**
 - Mandate
 - Budget
- H. Issue updates**
 - Abortion Access – W. Robbins
 - Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and girls – N. Dubé
- I. Committee Updates**
- J. Selection of Co-Chairs**

MEETING

- A. Welcome – Co-Chairs**
 - New members and new Executive Director introduced.
 - Consensus reached on questions to ask Minister responsible for Women’s Equality.
- B. Housekeeping – Governance Committee**
 - Reminder of the consensus process.
- C. Strategic Planning Session – S. Leblanc**
 - Explanation of process and group work begun.



D. Meeting with the Minister responsible for Women's Equality (Offsite: Premier's Office)

- Minister shared his rationale for holding Women's Equality portfolio:
 - Practical, as few women were elected in the 2014 provincial election (50 per cent of women elected are in cabinet—but that is only two) and he wants their perspective on other portfolios.
 - Advancing status of women is among main goals.
 - He welcomes feedback on whether cabinet shuffle should place a woman with more time to dedicate to issues as Minister.
 - Invites forum to identify women for appointment to agencies, boards, and commissions (ABCs).
- **Question to Minister:** We are pleased with the movement made on women's issues, in particular our increased budget. We would now want to hear your thoughts on how you see the Forum operating in the future, and if there operations will be protected by enabling legislation or other regulatory mechanisms. **Response:**
 - Not "biggest fan" of trying to tie up future governments, as a general position, but is open to discussing a regulatory framework and asked what would be in the legislation, what would independence look like in legislation? Noted that legislating funding would not be allowed.
 - Will support and participate in Forum, but values its independence—questions if Minister should be a member and notes we should set our own research agenda.
 - Advises Forum takes time before "setting anything in stone" (regarding its internal framework).
 - Invites Forum to help government informally (e.g. names for ABCs) as well as in formal role.
- **Question to Minister:** The province is currently in a crucial Strategic Program Review that will certainly have significant impact on women and equality. The public has been consulted; the departments have received targets in terms of reducing expenditure, though at this time they are at the proposal stage. However, gender does not seem to have been a consideration in this process. Does the government intend to take gender into consideration in this exercise, whether by directions to this effect to department during their review or in the final choices that will be made by government on recommendations? **Response:**
 - Strategic Program Review will use gender-based analysis—and also consider seniors, youth, regions, etc. to ensure no one community or group is affected more (i.e. faces many more cuts) than others.

E. Strategic Planning Session – S. Leblanc

- Group work and presentations.
- Strategic plan will continue to be worked by committee and a report will be sent to members taking all their suggestions and comments into consideration.

End of Day One of Meeting



Beginning of Day Two of Meeting

F. Additions to and Approval of Agenda

- 1- Finance Committee: mandate and budget
 - 2- Issue updates
 - Abortion access and April 24th World March of Women in Fredericton – W. Robbins
 - Roundtable on violence against Indigenous women – N. Dubée
 - 4- Committee Updates: Communications
 - 5- Co-Chair selection
- J. Mitchell asked that at 11:30am we move to item 5, regardless of where we are in agenda.

G. Finance Committee

- Presented draft mandate and clarified that Finance Committee members are J. Dallaire, J. Mitchell, Executive Director, Co-Chairs. Changes to language were implemented. N. Dubé clarified that we can be audited at any time.
- Members adopted by consensus.
- Presented a core budget and suggested a late June call to adopt a comprehensive budget.
Discussion:
 - W. Robbins requested we consider paying Co-Chairs. Finance Committee suggested this is a significant process and that this item would be discussed at the next in-person meeting and a recommendation would be made for the next fiscal year. N. Dubé noted that Board of Management approval is required to spend funds in this manner.
 - Does Forum require funds for insurance, affiliation to other groups? It was noted that legislation may address the former.
 - Translation for committees (i.e. committee documents) would be in non-core budget; funding for committee meetings exists in travel, per diem, meals, and accommodations budgeted for each member in addition to in-person meetings.
 - Use the language of “investing” rather than “spending” funds.
 - 25% of S. LeBlanc’s fee needs to be included in this budget.
 - Inclusion of research in budget—added \$9 000 to core budget and more will be in comprehensive budget presented in June.
 - Finance Committee recommended extending the administrative position until the end of July when a new contract based on strategic plan will be required. **ACTION:** Extension request to go to J. Mills.
 - Discussion of hiring S. LeBlanc for research support. N. Dubé clarified that it must be under \$10 000 to avoid RFP process and that it must be a substantially different contract than the strategic planning works she has been contracted for;.
 - Hiring should be done with attention to language (to complement B. Lyon’s English skills).
- Adopted by consensus.



H. Issue Updates

- **Abortion** – W. Robbins
 - Abortion only paid for if performed in hospital. Many women prefer clinics.
 - Abortion continues to be unavailable via Horizon Health (Moncton was to be ready on April 1st but designated space is being renovated).
 - Procedure is covered in other provinces if it would be covered in NB (i.e. is performed in hospital).
- **World March of Women** – W. Robbins
 - April 24th at 12pm in front of the Legislative Assembly.
- **Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women** – N. Dubé
 - A national round table was held in August 2015 in Ottawa; second will be held in 2016.
 - N.B. Advisory Committee on Violence against Aboriginal Women was formed in 2006. The committee consists of Representatives from various First Nations communities and Aboriginal organizations in New Brunswick.

I. Committee updates

- **Communications Committee**
 - Worked on several documents including Annual Report, brochure, internal and external communications policies and others.
 - Website in transition, will soon be managed by Executive Director.
 - “Teamwork” project management web platform will be tested by committee.
 - Will continue to work on files with Committee advising and guiding and B. Lyons performing tasks.

J. Selection of Co-Chairs – Governance Committee

- Thank you to our current co-chairs for all the work they have done, all acknowledge the tremendous amount of effort required.
- Nominations process reviewed:
 - nomination request and form were sent to members via e-mail;
 - two names were submitted: J. Dallaire and J. Richard;
 - both are bilingual and live in different regions;
 - J Dallaire would like to increase the visibility and credibility of the Forum;
 - J. Richard would like to focus on internal operations of the Forum.
- J. Dallaire and J Richard left the room and consensus was reached that both be selected as co-chairs. J. Dallaire accepted a three year term and J. Richard accepted a two year term.

End of Meeting

Circulated to Members for revision: April 29th, 2015

Adopted by members: June 28th, 2015