Council of Elders and Youth

Record of Discussion # 22

APM-REP-00676-0215 **October 2018**

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- *Inclusion of a revision summary necessary if a revision is being made, along with the R000 notation with Report number*

Record of Discussion # 22
NWMO Council of Elders and Youth
Sheraton Centre Toronto, Toronto, ON
October 17-19, 2018

Attendees:
NWMO Council of Elders and Youth
Chair: Donna Augustine and Rebekah Wilson
Members: Angus Gardiner, Diane Longboat, Grace Manitowabi, Dorothy Parenteau, Billie Schibler, Roland St. Germain, Debbie Plain, Theresa Hall, Verna Porter-Brunelle, Norman Stagg
Advisors: Joanne Barnaby, Fred Kelly, Melanie Hadley
NWMO: Ben Belfadhel, Donna Chief, Charlene Easton, Jack Falkins, Joe Gaboury, Joe Heil, Joanne Jacyk, John Kielty, Jamie Matear, Melissa Mayhew, Arthur Moore, Jessica Perritt, Greg Plain, Laurie Swami, Christina Vechsler, Bob Watts
Guests: Ron Jamieson, Starlene MacDonald, Ken Ross, Bob Goulais

Wednesday October 17, 2018

Indigenous Relations Report

Bob Watts and Jessica Perritt reported back to the Council on the release of the Reconciliation Statement and what was achieved in 2018 to contribute to the reconciliation strategy. The Council was impressed by all of the work done over the year and also expressed feelings of pride and gratitude. The Council emphasized the importance of action and to build on the momentum from the release of the reconciliation statement and strategy.
The Council met in camera for the remainder of the day.

Thursday October 18, 2018

Opening Ceremony and Welcoming Remarks

Elder Fred Kelly conducted a ceremony to begin the meeting which included a Pipe ceremony and a female Elder to speak to the water. The ceremony also included a drum song done by one of the female Elders and also spoke of two flags being presented to NWMO. Elder Fred Kelly asked everyone to keep Elder Josephine Mandamin in their prayers as she is going through a difficult medical condition. Josephine has dedicated her life to maintaining the purity and sanctity of water.
Chair Donna Augustine and co-chair Rebekah Wilson proceeded with the day's meeting. The Chair called on NWMO President & CEO Laurie Swami to make remarks and she started by recognizing the traditional lands of the Indigenous peoples who had occupied this area in which the meeting was taking place. Laurie thanked the Elders who had opened the meeting and presented the flags and then spoke of the webcast of the reconciliation ceremony that had been viewed by NWMO staff and how well received it had been. She spoke of her visit to the Metis Nation of Ontario AGA on August 16, 2018 that attracted 400 participants, her "canoe" entry to the event and her talk to the delegates were she was able to advise them of the new two year agreement between the MNO & NWMO. Laurie presented pictures of the "Orange Shirt" day at Head Office on September 25, 2018 in honour of residential school survivors. She reported on her attendance at the Women in Nuclear Conference on September 27, 2018 in Saskatchewan, where she was the keynote speaker. The conference participants share technical information, provide mentoring for younger participants, ensure women are out talking about the benefits of working in the industry and discussing engagement and technical aspects of their work.

NWMO's Jessica Perritt also was on a panel regarding Indigenous involvement in the industry. Laurie spoke of her trip to Switzerland in October 2018 and NWMO's joint work with Switzerland on their project which is similar to ours. Laurie also spoke of her meeting with the International Atomic Energy Association-International Association for Environmentally Safe Disposal of Radioactive Material (IAEA-EDRAM) where she stressed the concept of building social licence.

Bob Watts started his remarks by recognizing the traditional lands of the Indigenous peoples who had occupied this area in which the meeting was taking place and thanked the elders who had opened the meeting. He spoke of his team's ongoing work on reconciliation, the question of consent, on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (**UNDRIP**), Indigenous Knowledge workshop and work NWMO has done to better communicate on water. He spoke of the work that the United States is doing in this area and he expressed appreciation for the guidance that the Council of Elders & Youth provide NWMO since it benefits the work they do and also provides personal benefits.

The Chair expressed the sentiment that she was proud of the work Laurie & Bob are doing.

Indigenous Engagement Team Update

The Indigenous Engagement team shared an overview of the work they have been doing in the field with First Nation and Metis communities involved in the site selection process.

The Council welcomed a surprise visit from AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde together with the Press Secretary and the Director of Communications. Chief Bellegarde spoke of the 3 P's (Profit, Planet, People) that needs to guide development and the work that he sees needs to be done over the coming months between his organization and the government of Canada. All of the work outlined will benefit the Indigenous peoples of Canada.

One of the Youth members spoke on Reconciliation and reiterated Bob Watts's statement that "reconciliation is not an Indigenous problem but a Canadian opportunity." While there were many thoughts expressed on the subject the previous day some of the ones that the Youth member spoke of included encouraging NWMO staff to meet with the Elders and Youth, and join in ceremony, that this is a forever process and the need for education and justice within the system.

Draft NWMO Environmental Statement

Greg Plain, Charlene Easton & Melissa Mayhew attended and spoke of the draft NWMO Environmental Responsibility Statement. Charlene Easton explained that the purpose of the dialogue arose from early reflections on Indigenous and community values and thoughts in the process of preparing an update on NWMO's environmental responsibility statement. As background the NWMO prepares a triennial report and in 2016 they recommended that NWMO develop a Statement of Corporate Environmental responsibility to demonstrate and showcase leadership in the areas of environmental responsibility and sustainability. There are a number of NWMO related statements and policies that include indigenous Knowledge policy, Reconciliation Policy, Environmental Policy and Community Well-Being Framework. Melissa spoke of the values that had been expressed through dialogue. Safety of the people and the environment is an all-encompassing value for the project and the community; the environment is precious and must be protected (water, land, air) and environmental stewardship is a must. The project

should contribute positively to environmental quality of the area and there is interconnectedness between people and Mother Earth. The statement recognizes that:

- The desire to protect the land, waters, plants, and animals is a way to bring communities together with a common purpose;
- There are inseparable linkages between the environment and both current and future generations, which are essential to fostering many dimensions of well-being;
- Interconnections within the natural world, including with humanity, are complex and dynamic in time and space, and the decisions we make should account for uncertainty; and
- We all have a role to play in protecting the environment.

The statement goes on to further. "We commit to the following principles in the regions we are working:

- Learning and obtaining guidance about ecosystems through western science, Indigenous knowledge and local land users and knowledge holders;
- Seeking traditional and innovative methods that strive to achieve no overall negative impact on biodiversity;
- Cultivating environmental responsibility by encouraging actions that reduce the ecological footprint of our day-to-day workplace activities;
- Offering opportunities to partner with others on actions that promote sustainability.

The presenters asked the Council to consider the following:

- Are we on the right track?
- Is there anything else we should be thinking of that is not captured in these four principles?
- Are there any suggested changes to the list of principles that would clarify any of the statements?
- What are some opportunities for the application of these from an Indigenous perspective?

Questions and Comments:

- One Elder suggested the removal of a double negative in one of the statements.
- It was suggested that the Council members should review the Statement and talk about it at the next meeting once they have had an opportunity to review it.
- One Elder suggested that people need to build a personal relationship with the natural environment to properly understand it.
- Suggestions to add "fire" to the elements to be protected.

Reconciliation Visioning Exercise

Bob Watts introduced a visioning exercise that would consider what reconciliation would look like in 5 years at NWMO from the viewpoint of "Law-Canadian & indigenous Law" (Facilitated by Christina Veschler); "Indigenous Knowledge Contribution" (Facilitated by Jessica Perritt); "Human Resources, Capacity Building & Youth Engagement" (Facilitated by John Kielty) and "Environmental Sustainability"

(Facilitated by Joanne Jacek). The attendees broke into 4 groups that interchanged facilitators once during the session and subsequently the facilitators presented key themes in their sessions.

Indigenous Knowledge (IK) Contributions:

- Emphasis on the importance the cultural awareness training continues and evolves. Topic that may be considered within the training could be:
    - Understanding privilege
    - Understanding unconscious bias
    - Understanding equity vs. equality
    - Understanding Indigenous Knowledge beyond knowledge of the land – governance, decision making processes etc.
    - Look into providing cultural company training to teachers within in the communities we are working with
- Opportunity to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into STEM programs
- Look into how Indigenous language can be incorporated/embedded into NWMO's day to day work
- Opportunity to learn from Indigenous Knowledge on how to retain knowledge effectively and pass through generations through oral teaching
    - Could bring this to IAEA that currently meets on a Knowledge Retention Program
    - Could learn from North West Territories on how they have pass down knowledge on contamination issues and locations
- We get to a point where we are not measuring how Indigenous Knowledge is incorporated into our work it just become how we work. It is not a district element it is just who we are as an organization
- NWMO's HR, recruitment and hiring processed need to be revised to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge
    - NWMO needs to be upfront with new potential employees about who NWMO is as an organization with regards to the commitment of interweaving IK, building partnerships with Indigenous communities and commitment to contributing to Reconciliation
    - Governance structure is not hierarchal based on position but rather a Council like structure based on skills.
- Recognition that Indigenous Knowledge is an evolving Knowledge and NWMO and the Council of Elders have utilized new technologies to share and inform others of how we are interweaving IK into our work though the photos, internet, social media, live stream, video and photos. Council feels we need to continue to move in this direction.

Law-Canadian & Indigenous Law:

- There is a more fundamental question which is how to reconcile traditional/Indigenous laws with Euro-Canadian law. The Supreme law cannot "fit into" or be "reconciled with" Euro-Canadian law as they are too different. For example, the first order of law is sacred law and it cannot be written. It must come out in ceremony. The wisdom of the Creator leads to traditional law which begets customary law. [This is a different process and view of law compared to the Euro-Canadian approach.] Another significant difference is that under

traditional law, you cannot sell land. This distinction in the concept of real property is significant. Indigenous law cannot be subsumed into Euro-Canadian law.

- Important to communicate with trust and respect.
- There was discussion on further reconciliation required with land and ancestors. It was noted that there is no law in Canada to protect ancestors and burial grounds. It is important to acknowledge ancestors within the law.
- Agreements are required to respect the sovereignty and freedom of Indigenous people. It is important to respect Indigenous laws without anyone's permission. Respect is not recognition. Inherent rights are not as a result of s.35 of the Constitution; inherent rights arise from traditional law. It is important to continue to refer to treaties.
- The Crown does not have inherent rights. This is the imbalance. The nature of this imbalance is for reconciliation to deal with.
- Indigenous communities not recognized by the Crown should not matter as a band is a construct of Euro-Canadian law. It is the people that constitute the nation. Further, traditional law does not respect provincial boundaries. e.g. Hornepayne First Nation is a community and is a people and that should be sufficient
- Change within this area needs to be bigger than NWMO and it will take time.
- One opportunity is for more teachings on traditional laws – sharing among Indigenous civilizations and between Indigenous civilizations and non-Indigenous peoples
- Further emphasis and education on the role and importance of ceremony could help different groups work though differences
- Discussion on current political climate. Although the current government is making some advances, every time there is an election, it is scary because you do not know the next approach.
- NWMO is setting the stage on how to work together and to work towards something
- Discussion on racism within the workplace and suggestion for training on understanding individual bias
- Create more opportunities to increase opportunities for Indigenous employment at NWMO and provide further exposure to Indigenous civilization for NWMO staff.

Human Resources, Capacity Building & Youth Engagement

Human Resources:

- Self-reflection – NWMO to have training to support this.
- How do we know if the training NWMO is providing is actually changing behavior? Need to have the right tools to measure and understand qualitative change as well as quantitative.
    - Behavior change is more than cultural awareness.
- Staff need to better understand Indigenous knowledge particularly ceremony and the aspect of spirit.
- Instead of using "Indigenous culture" maybe change language to "Indigenous civilizations".
- NWMO needs to revisit its values to align with Indigenous teachings
- Hiring process may need to be revised to ensure NWMO is recruiting is aligned with NWMO's commitment to reconciliation
    - Answering questions online provides a different way to hear the answers

    - How to identify people are open to Indigenous worldview when hiring
    - Interview question could be "What does reconciliation mean to you?"
    - What or if they have participated in previous cultural awareness training and how that training impacted their perceptions
    - Emotional IQ testing
- Employee evaluations that are values based and not performance (may look to Maple Leaf Foods as an example).
- Continue to evolve current cultural awareness training program
- Incorporate personal bias training
- Provide more hands on experience in the Indigenous communities for staff
- Create more opportunities to increase opportunities for Indigenous employment at NWMO
    - Set targets and measure annually

Capacity Building

- Experiential learning – New NWMO staff to learn from the community
- Capacity building as a term implies lesser than. Change language to honoring your gifts.
- To reach Reconciliation, non-Indigenous people will need to open up beyond their professional selves and also bring their personal attributes
- Community driven identification of what the community needs. Governance, youth issues etc.
- Capacity building needs to be open to include healing activities.
- We're the spark plug for the engine, meaning we can support through financing local led initiatives
- How can NWMO support communities to balance competing issues? E.g. Wellness to the community vs. economic development opportunities
- Patience required to ensure relationships and trust are built
- Give community the time they need to make importance decisions.

Education

- NWMO needs to start working with Boards of schools
- Non-Indigenous youth to have access to information about Reconciliation and Canada's history.
- Support teacher training to address bias, cultural understanding, empowerment of students, self-reflection.
- Encourage NWMO to support events and activities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities/organizations.
- Develop a training program on how to be allies. How can non-Indigenous communities and Indigenous communities support each other?
- Is there opportunity to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into STEM programs?

- Encourage Indigenous/non-Indigenous youth activities, co-activities through land based learning – plant recognition, traditional medicine, i.e. Moose fair which is a festival and trade crafts as well
- NWMO needs to develop age appropriate learning material
- Age appropriate learning material
- Ensure that communities are part of the process.

Environmental Sustainability

- What does sustainability mean?
    - Responsibility
    - Do work without negative impact
    - Connections
    - Plans and animals
    - What is out there
    - Resources
- Our work has no impact – or no negative impact
- Ensure water is protected
- Respect and honoring everything Mother Earth created
- Respect and honoring what Mother Earth needs to be healthy
- Take only what is needed
- Being intuitively connected to the land
- Stop existing degradation
- Global connection
- Prevent extinction
- Importance and role of ceremony
- Water levels dropping
- Pass a test that show it passes Indigenous rules on environmental safety not just governmental rules
- Having willing host community as ultimate voice
- No successful end point (sic you can't measure success because sustainability goes on indefinitely)
- A continuation of the normalcy of nature
- Successful project closes the loop
- Refrain from adding to greenhouse gases
- Protect from negative that may come back
- 5 years from now, different elders and different ideas
- Elders/Youth council continues to provide guidance
- Continue 'translating' what communities are saying
- Stored within Knowledge and memory when nature ruled all life.

- "We are the land" frontline (sic NWMO) workers are the voice of the people
- Sustainability of knowledge

Recommendations:

- Discussion should continue in a sharing circle to reach consensus
- Need more time to answer the question
- We should recognize the front line staff are the go between of sustainability.

Friday October 19, 2018

OPG's Indigenous Relations Program

Kenn Ross and Starlene MacDonald from Ontario Power Generation spoke on OPG's Indigenous Employment and Procurement Initiatives.

The goal of the Indigenous Opportunities in Nuclear program (ION) is to increase the number of Indigenous people working in the energy generation and transmission industry, utilize the Darlington Refurbishment Project as a catalyst and assist with apprenticeship participation goals. ION is a two-year program (January 2018/December 2019), renewable, based on outcomes. ION will seek out, assess and develop 100 clients during the program's time frame and place 10 per year. The Ministry of Indigenous Affairs recently approved $247,000 in program funding for ION to be administered by Kagita Mikam.
The 5 key elements of ION:

- Community Relations and Outreach - Build key relationship with Indigenous communities;
- Capacity Building - Invest in Indigenous strategic partners, e.g., Kagita Mikam Aboriginal Employment and Training as a source of potential skill trades workers;
- Employment and Training - Build relationships with proximate Indigenous communities and their employment/training and education organizations as well as linkages to vendors and trade union organizations, e.g., career fairs, open houses, site tours);
- Business Contracting - Promote Indigenous outreach regarding potential Indigenous suppliers and possible JV partners to energy industry projects, e.g., October 30, 2018 event with the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB)
- Employee Indigenous Relations Training - Key employee contacts to receive Indigenous cultural competence training by IRD staff.

Comments and Questions:

- The Council recommended that OPG to look at receiving advice from Elders similar to the Council of Elders and Youth.
- The Council expressed pride in the work NWMO has accomplished in which they see some of which can be attributed to the role and advice from the Council of Elders and Youth.
- The Council commended the work OPG had started but suggested that short Cultural awareness programs were just the start of the process and much more would be needed.

Closing Remarks

Bob Watts spoke of the breakout sessions the day before and that they had provided a wealth of information that would help the Indigenous Relations team as they move forward on the issue of reconciliation. He indicated that much of what came out of those sessions help to shape NWMO's Reconciliation Strategy moving forward and the Council's deliberations in the coming year. Jessica Perritt advised that the staff facilitators enjoyed the sessions a lot as it improved their facilitation skills but also gave them an opportunity to work with the Council members.

Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be in 2019. Jessica Perritt will reach out to all member to set the meeting dates for 2019 which will be held in the months of April, July and October.
- Jessica Perritt will also work to book the venue for the 2019 meeting
- One elder suggested members should update their own biographies and forward any changes to Jessica Perritt.

Closing Ceremony

Fred Kelly conducted the closing Ceremony which welcomed and recognized the special efforts of the NWMO Communications team especially on the Reconciliation Statement. The team members in attendance gathered in the centre of the room and were given a plague that had the signed statement surrounded by pictures of the signing ceremony, together with a sweetgrass braid. As Elder Kelly sang the Council of Elders and Youth danced around them and congratulated them on their work.

Date notes taken: October 17-19, 2018

This note was prepared by staff and has not been approved and/or reviewed for accuracy by other meeting participants.