

**January 31, 2022**

## **STATEMENT: BC MÉTIS FEDERATION PRESIDENT RELEASES STATEMENT REGARDING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST FORMER MNC AND MMF LEADERSHIP**

President of BC Métis Federation Keith Henry has released a statement regarding the recent allegations made against former Métis National Council (MNC) Vice President and current Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) President David Chartrand, former MNC President Clément Chartier, former MNC Executive Director Wenda Watteyne, consultant Marc LeClair, and well as several former MNC contractors. MNC legal counsel has filed a claim in the Ontario Supreme Court on January 27th against these individuals and contractors to recoup an estimated sixteen million in funding. The allegations include the following:

- *\$9 million in the transfer of Métis Veterans Recognition Payment Contribution Agreement between MNC and Her Majesty in Right of Canada dated June 13, 2019*
- *The purported amendment and extension of MNC's lease (the "Amended Ottawa Lease") of Unit 2, Level 1 – 340 MacLaren Street, Ottawa (the "Ottawa Premises") with 6106111 Manitoba Ltd. (the "Manitoba Landlord"), the landlord of the Ottawa Premises (the "Purported Ottawa Lease Extension"), including in relation to the negotiation of excessive rents payable by MNC to the Manitoba Landlord in connection therewith;*
- *The negotiation and execution of service agreements and the termination provisions therein, including facilitating the payment by MNC of approximately \$1,150,000 of lump sum termination payments to each of the defendants, LeClair Infocom Inc. ("LeClair Infocom"), Celeste McKay Consulting Inc. ("McKay Consulting"), Public Policy Nexus Group Inc. ("PPNG"), Infinity Research Development and Design Inc. ("Infinity") and Systemway Consulting, Inc. ("Systemway"), and to their respective principals Electronically issued / Délivré par voie électronique : 27-Jan-2022 Court File No./N° du dossier du greffe: CV-22-00675899-0000 LEGAL \*54987956.2 -6- and alter egos, to purportedly terminate their respective service agreements (the "Purported Termination Payments");*
- *The excessive or inappropriate spending of MNC funds for benefits and gifts to themselves, to non-arm's length third parties, and to associates and colleagues of Chartier, Chartrand, MMF and Watteyne, including: (i) excessive or inappropriate remuneration and other amounts paid to Chartrand's wife, Glorian Chartrand and/or "Ryley James"; and (ii) a gold watch that cost approximately \$4,000, which was approved by both Chartrand and Watteyne and then provided to Chartier as a "retirement gift" at a private "retirement dinner" in or about August of 2021 (the "Non-Arm's Length Payments and Excessive Gifts"), none of which was disclosed to or approved by the governing members of MNC (other than MMF);*
- *The statement of claim also alleges "excessive, inappropriate or unnecessary termination provisions and severances" were set up. In the case of former president Chartier, the severance was \$244,710.*
- *The MNC's executive director severance package would total \$374,000. The statement of claim says the individuals "intended to resign or retire from MNC" in September and MNC had no legal obligation to pay them any severance.*

Plus, several other claims outlined in the statement of claim filed in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice.

***Li taan paasii. Li taan ki vyayn.***

*From our past. For our future.*

“I wish that I were more shocked than I am by the allegations. These are serious accusations, and if they are found to be true, I’m disgusted.” President Henry commented. “I have been calling for Métis governance reform in this country for a long time, and this is exactly why. To find out that public funds could have been mismanaged in this way, while our people are struggling to make ends meet through a historic pandemic...it’s unforgivable.”

I have seen firsthand how our Métis members have been impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic here in B.C. at the local level. There are elevated levels of unemployment and families are struggling to put food on the table and in their cupboards. We have received a small amount of relief funds from the federal government, and while that has been helpful, I cannot help but consider how much good millions in Métis public investments could have done for the hundreds or thousands of Métis people that are hurting right now.

Métis politics have always been challenging, as the systems that are in place are set up to keep us fighting with each other over seemingly smaller pieces of a larger pie that we do not control. But these organizations that claim to serve their people have forgotten their integrity. It is things like this that led us to first form the BC Métis Federation back in 2011. Mismanagement of funds, political and personal attacks against Métis officials on their character and their ancestry, it is ugly. And I worry that situations like this give the public and the government more reasons to doubt our ability to govern for our Métis people and to be effective.”

President Henry concluded, “We are overdue for some substantial changes for Métis governance and representation across Canada. I am grateful that despite these dysfunctional Métis organizations the BC Métis Federation has been able to make strides here in British Columbia and Federally. I am proud of the team that we have here. The BC Métis Federation will continue to do excellent work and we should not allow these negative MNC/MMF stories distract from the fact that there are strong, accountable, and committed Métis people making a difference. We need to find a way to come together and serve the larger good. Let us hope the Government of Canada also supports the need to ensure true accountability and these individuals are all held accountable and return the Métis public funds owed to Métis people throughout this country.”

Keith Henry  
President, BC Métis Federation

Encl. MNC Secretariat Inc. Ontario Superior Statement of Claim, January 27th, 2022

*Li taan paasii. Li taan ki vyayn.*

*From our past. For our future.*