



MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION

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David Chartrand, LL.D. (hon), O.M.
President

February 22, 2022

Dear MMF Region and Local Executive:

**Re: Manitoba Métis Federation Constitutional Amendment Resolutions and
Upcoming Special Regional Meetings**

I am writing to you as the Manitoba Métis Federation's ("MMF") Minister responsible for the Constitution regarding a series of Constitutional amendment resolutions (the "**Resolutions**") which will be brought forward at the upcoming Annual General Assembly ("**AGA**") on March 25-27, 2022 in Winnipeg.

As you already know, in advance of the AGA, each Region will have a one-day Special Regional Meeting to discuss these Resolutions where MMF legal counsel will be in attendance to guide you through the Resolutions, highlight proposed changes, and answer any questions you may have. I encourage each of you to attend.

The Constitutional amendments are being proposed for several reasons. In light of the historic signing of the *Manitoba Métis Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Agreement* ("**MMSGRIA**") on July 6, 2021, and in anticipation of the Manitoba Métis Treaty currently being negotiated with Canada, now is the time for the MMF to start the move away from the corporate language in our Constitution, where possible, and including language that reflects the MMF's status as the Manitoba Métis Government.

Changes such as changing "Board of Directors" to "MMF Cabinet", and "member" to "Citizen", as appropriate, are a few of the changes in language that you can expect to see throughout the MMF Constitution and By-Laws.

Further, many of the changes have been made to the MMF Constitution and By-Laws to be consistent with directions provided by the MMF AGA. In 2019 the Assembly endorsed the proposition that it is in the best interests of the Manitoba Métis Community that those individuals who wish to participate in the self-government of the Manitoba Métis Community, whether as candidates and/or electors, be verified Citizens of the Manitoba Métis Community. This necessarily requires individuals to complete a Citizenship application with a genealogy and supporting evidentiary documents to objectively verify the applicant's Historic Métis Nation Ancestry, and to then obtain a valid Citizenship card.

As well, a number of changes to the Election By-Law have been proposed after consultation with the MMF Chief Electoral Officer.

I would like to draw your attention to a few of the highlights from the proposed Constitutional amendments for you to look for as you review the Resolutions in advance of your regional meeting:

1. PREAMBLE AND ARTICLE I OBJECTIVES

References to the Manitoba Métis being also known as the Red River Métis have been added to honour our historic name. The Manitoba Métis was historically known as the Red River Métis – which established its own identity, language, culture, institutions, Government, and way of life centered in the Red River Valley.

2. ARTICLE II INTERPRETATION

A new Article II has been added to the MMF Constitution as an interpretation tool. It provides a brief history of why the MMF was previously required to incorporate in order to carry out its activities and outlines why some of the language is changing. It also explains that the MMF has been formally recognized as the government of the Manitoba Métis in the MMSGRIA.

3. ARTICLE IV CITIZENSHIP

In Article IV 4.(a) and a new 4.(b) there has been a distinction drawn between *Citizens* and *Members*, which outlines what their respective rights are. This resolution puts the AGA's direction from 2019 directly into the MMF Constitution.

4. ARTICLE V TERMINATION OF CITIZENSHIP OR MEMBERSHIP

With respect to the termination of Citizenship/Membership, reference to termination if an individual participates in a modern treaty to which the MMF is not a party has been added, as well as individuals who are on an Indigenous registry outside of Canada.

5. ARTICLE XVII MÉTIS HARVESTING INITIATIVE

Article XVII 3. now states that Citizens and Children Citizens are entitled to register as a Métis Harvester and receive a Métis Harvester Identification Card.

6. MMF ELECTION BY-LAW

Article XVII titled Advance Polls is being revised to allow the Chief Electoral Officer more flexibility in the upcoming election, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, to allow for more advance polling station options.

Article XXII titled Voting by Mail is being revised to allow those Citizens residing outside of the province of Manitoba to be able to vote by mail-in ballot.

All the changes noted above and others throughout the Resolutions provide clarity to current Manitoba Métis processes and formally include past direction provided by the MMF AGA. I look forward to seeing you at the Special Regional Meetings and seeing you all in person at the upcoming 2022 MMF AGA.

Sincerely,



Minister Judy Mayer
Minister Constitution, Métis Rights, Métis Nation Agenda & Governance