MEETING TITLE: GOVERNING CIRCLE MEETING
Location: In Person, Holiday Inn South, 1330 Pembina Hwy.
Date: June 18, 2026
Time: 9:00 am – 1:30 pm (CST)

Attendees: Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux (Chair, virtual) Andrew Carrier, Angie Bruce, Elder Harry Bone, Keith Cheifmoon (virtual), Mario Pinto (virtual), Stephanie Scott, David Elias, Nancy Ross
Regrets: Leavina Brown,

Items	Discussion	Action Items Due Date
Opening Prayer by Elder Harry Bone		
Call to order	The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux chaired the meeting and provided opening remarks. David Elias was introduced to the Governing Circle as Indigenous Governance Lead. Members reviewed and approved the minutes from March 19, 2026.	
UN Special Rapporteur visit to Canada	The Governing Circle emphasized the opportunity to combat denialism, as well as the importance of treaties and Canadian legislation. Previous engagement with international delegations was referenced as impactful, and members expressed support for extending an invitation to meet during the Special Rapporteur's visit to Canada in fall 2026.	Decision: Approve drafting invitation letter. **Action:** Governance Team to draft invitation letter for UN Special Rapporteur - Rights of Indigenous Peoples
Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages	Concerns were raised regarding the audit of the Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages (OCIL), including uncertainty related to leadership, credibility and implications for the continuity of its work. It was noted that these challenges arise during a critical period for Indigenous language revitalization, with ongoing loss of Knowledge Keepers. Members emphasized the importance of communicating support for the Commission's mandate and reinforcing the need to protect language as a core element of Indigenous culture and identity.	**Action:** Governance Team – to prepare OCIL letter of support

Tawaw Architecture Update	An update was provided on the NCTR building design process with the aim to develop a space grounded in healing. Members emphasized the need for the design to reflect Indigenous cultural protocols and the significance of the site. Strong emphasis was placed on early and ongoing engagement with Elders from local (Winnipeg area) Anishinaabe First Nations and Métis communities. Discussion also included building size, archive capacity, and long-term operational cost considerations. Tawaw seeks to bring in a group of young Indigenous designers for a charrette. **Two Elders/Survivors** are being sought for this upcoming engagement.	**Action:** Elder Harry Bone – convene Elders Council to provide input on building concepts **Action:** Andrew Carrier to solicit opportunity for input from Métis Elders **Action:** Governance Team to seek involvement of two Survivors / Elders for proposed Tawaw youth charrette
In-Camera	In-camera discussions were held.	
Update from Executive Director	Stephanie Scott provided an update on the development of a long-term sustainable funding strategy, including a funding proposal addressing operational, staffing and capital needs. Members discussed the importance of long-term federal support and coordinated advocacy. Updates were also provided on organizational priorities, international engagements, staff development initiatives, and planning for upcoming events including NDTR and the fall retreat.	**Action:** Governance Team – to develop template letters to be sent from NCTR advocates

Meeting adjourned at 12:18 p.m

Next meetings:

- September 26-30th (date TBC)
- October 13-16th (in-person retreat)
- December 17/18, 2026 (in person gathering with SC)