

For immediate release

Embracing Change and New Leadership, QCGN wraps up 25th Annual General Meeting

Montreal, November 5, 2020 – The Quebec Community Groups Network marked its 25th year this evening during a virtual Annual General Meeting where members explored new ways of collaborating with member and stakeholder groups to ensure English-speaking Quebecers speak with one strong voice.

Prior to the pandemic, the QCGN was close to completing an inclusive process to guide the development of a strategic community development plan for a stronger and more resilient English-speaking community. Enlightened by this feedback, the QCGN established a Renewal Committee mandated to propose a renewed vision, mission, and structure for the organization.

This conversation with the community and Network members will be led by new President Marlene Jennings who will be pursuing this work along with the Renewal Committee and its chair, Matt Harrington, who was elected to join the Board of Directors this evening.

“I am truly humbled by all the support I received and as QCGN’s President I vow to work hard for the Network and our wonderful English-speaking communities across Quebec,” said newly elected President Marlene Jennings: “I want to work for you, not have you work for me.”

During the Annual General Meeting, some QCGN stalwarts and some fresh faces were also elected and re-elected to serve on the Board of Directors. Running unopposed and therefore acclaimed by the members is past Secretary Eva Ludvig, who becomes Treasurer. Kevin Shaar, a lawyer from West Quebec who is a co-chair of APPELE-Québec (the Alliance for the Promotion of Public English-language Education in Québec), was acclaimed Vice-President. Montreal lawyer Matt Aronson, a member of QCGN’s Renewal Committee, becomes Secretary.

Also elected to sit as Directors were Alix Adrien, Olivier Dickson, Anna Farrow, Joan Fraser, Matthew Harrington, Maureen Kiely, Brian Rock, and Sandra K. de la Ronde. Two directors, Clarence Bayne and Eric Maldoff, were not up for re-election.

During the meeting, QCGN Director General Sylvia Martin-Laforge reported a sharp increase in QCGN activity and an almost twofold increase in revenues and resources during our 25th anniversary year.

“With some \$900,000 in new funding for projects and programs, we have been taking on exciting new mandates in the fields of Education, Health and Social Services, and Justice,” she said. In doing so, she noted, the QCGN continues to defend our community’s Constitutional right to control and manage our school boards; our right to health and social services in our own language; and engaging with the justice system to improve access to justice in English in targeted areas.

“Throughout the year, we have been reflecting on the opportunities, trends, and threats having an impact on the future of the organization, our Network, and our community,” Martin-Laforge said. “It has been a time of transition and the QCGN is taking advantage of this shift to take stock – and to re-focus our mandate.”

“Meanwhile we are accompanying our community sector as it reassesses its priorities and determines a clear path to build a new community development plan and a forward vision for 2020-2025,” she concluded.

The Quebec Community Groups Network is a not-for-profit organization bringing together English-language community organizations across Quebec. As a centre of evidence-based expertise and collective action it identifies, explores and addresses strategic issues affecting the development and vitality of the English-speaking community of Quebec and encourages dialogue and collaboration among its member organizations, individuals, community groups, institutions and leaders.

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