

**Executive Secretary Report to
Toronto Conference Executive
January 31, 2011**

This report covers the period from November 1, 2010 to January 31, 2011, and includes up-dates on items mentioned in previous reports to the Executive.

General preamble: From p. 1-6 of the Toronto Conference Executive policy *Handbook*:

The Executive monitors the Executive Secretary regularly and rigorously but only against established policies.

- Are the Ends being met?
- Are the Executive Secretary Limitations being followed?

This report describes how the executive secretary is ensuring that the Ends policies are being met and how the Executive Secretary Limitations policies are being followed.

The Executive is responsible for monitoring how it is adhering to all other policies, i.e. Executive/Staff Relations and Executive Governance policies.

Executive members will need to follow the *Handbook* policy by policy to understand the comments which follow, since the comments relate directly to whether the executive secretary is in compliance with the direction given by the Executive through its policies. The executive secretary will indicate whether he is in compliance with the policies, what actions have taken place, and what actions need to be taken. The Executive will assess whether items have been missed, or whether actions taken have been acceptable.

Items marked with an asterisk (*) contain a request for discussion and/or action.

Business from the minutes

*2012 annual meeting venue: See Executive minutes p. 10/11-4. I have made an enquiry about the venue for the 2012 meeting but have not yet had a written response.

Mission/Ends policies

p. 2-3 – mission of Toronto Conference – generally in compliance

- Strengthening... to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ – in compliance;
 - a) annual meeting planning – The planning is going well; all speakers and leaders are confirmed and Presbyteries are working on finding up to 15 young people to attend as voting members fully integrated into the meeting. Material on the meeting is found on the Conference's website. The information will be updated continuously as we move toward the meeting date.

- Best use of human and financial resources – generally in compliance;
 - a) Toronto Southeast Presbytery: In September I had reported on conversations regarding the area ministries and a social justice position. Anne Shirley Sutherland is taking the lead in terms of supervision of these contract staff people, and is working with the relevant Presbytery bodies responsible for this work. b) Meetings of the staff have identified the need/desire for consultations on a number of topics. On January 28 a consultation was held involving Presbytery people working on property policies, along with representatives of the Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation. On March 4 Presbytery people involved in social justice work are scheduled to gather to share their plans for the up-coming year, as a way of avoiding overlap and offering invitations to others to participate in particular topics.
 - *c) sabbaticals: See p. 10/11-43 and the accompanying proposal on this, p. 10/11-112.

- Oversight and compliance – generally in compliance
 - a) sexual abuse policy: i) Two more sexual abuse policy workshops for Ministry Personnel will take place in March. Attendance looks very good at both events with 79 registered as of January 31. ii) The personnel ministers have noted that we need to have more people trained as sexual abuse policy consultants; the personnel ministers will work with their Presbyteries to identify two women and one man who will be trained in the spring. References will be required for all potential consultants.
 - b) racial justice training: The four racial justice training workshops took place, but not nearly all of the Ministry Personnel took the course. In conversation with the personnel ministers, we are waiting for further direction from the General Council on the implications of non-attendance, as well as General Council plans for how to offer the training to those who need to be trained.

- Providing resources – generally in compliance
 - a) staff news: i) Susie Henderson, program minister in South West Presbytery, is recovering from mid-January surgery and expects to be back to work by March 2. ii) Performance reviews for all staff will be conducted in the winter and spring of 2011 in compliance with General Council and Conference policies. iii) Defibrillators have been installed in all offices.
 - b) meetings with Presbytery chairs and secretaries: The president, past president and I will meet with Presbytery chairs and secretaries on April 7. Presbytery oversight chairs will be invited to participate in this meeting.

c) extra funds for northern Presbyteries: In 2010 an extra \$15,000 was provided to each of the northern Presbyteries to deal with anticipated high travel costs. Living Waters has indicated that it does not need the funding in 2011. The year-end figures show that Northern Waters was quite close to the line financially; I will be in touch with Northern Waters and will have a report on those discussions in April.

p. 2-4 – compliance

- Compliance with General Council and other policies – generally in compliance;

*a) workplace violence and harassment legislation, Bill 168: See separate proposal for discussion, p. 10/11 - 108, based on my report to the November, 2010 meeting of the Executive.

b) accessibility: Kerrie Perry has completed training sessions with volunteers from all Presbyteries and some of the Conference staff. They will be starting their work with the congregations. Both Conference and Presbyteries are required to develop accessibility policies. I am proposing that the Executive designate three or four people to work on these policies with a report to be received in June or the fall. The deadline for compliance is January 1, 2012. This will be discussed further in the meeting under “Development of Policies”.

c) camp accreditation visits: All four camps were visited last summer by the General Council accreditors; all camps received good to excellent marks; there was some concern raised about the restructuring and its negative impact on the camps.

p. 2-5 – oversight: Presbyteries

- Reports from Presbyteries – in compliance; requests for the 2011 reports have been sent out
- Oversight visits – in compliance; the oversight visits took place and are being discussed at this meeting
- Review of records – in compliance; Mary Gooley has reviewed the 2009-2010 minutes of the Presbyteries; her report is that the minutes were generally in good shape; she made suggestions that have been passed on to the administrative staff who will talk with the minute-takers in each Presbytery
- Communication – in compliance
- Finances – in compliance

p. 2-6 – extra appeals

- In compliance; no requests for extra appeals have come forth since the last Executive meeting

p. 2-7 – interview committee

- generally in compliance; Presbyteries have named 38 of the 40 positions requested of them
- the committee conducted 10 interviews on January 26; all were very positive; required recommendations are included in the omnibus motion of this meeting

p. 2-8 – settlement and pastoral relations committee

- generally in compliance; the vice-chair and the secretary positions are both vacant; the nominations group of the Executive will address this matter
- all candidates had a deadline of February 1 to decide whether to go through the transfer/settlement process or seek a call or appointment; information on this process was shared with the Presbyteries at the Interview Committee meeting; by February 1, all candidates but one had chosen to seek their own call or appointment

p. 2-9 – learning funds

- in compliance; the fund is advertised on the website; although there is compliance with the policy, the overall response is somewhat disappointing; to date three learning fund applications have been received and approved, and two revenue generation grant has been approved. The funds will be advertised every two months.

Executive Secretary Limitations Policies

p. 3-3 – general constraints

- in compliance

*p. 3-4 – budgeting

- in compliance; a triennial budget will be presented at the April Executive meeting
- *financial statement: a preliminary year-end financial statement is included with this report; see p. 10/11-110. There are no particular concerns to raise. 2010 was the first full year of the new structure; under-spending is significant because we purposely budgeted high, not knowing the exact costs of the new system. It is likely that 2011 will have lower costs, leading to another surplus this year. As noted in my report on sabbaticals, I am proposing that the Conference use the under-spending as a way to prepare for the costs of sabbaticals. The Conference needs a clearer policy on under spending.
- staff salaries in 2011: See p. 10/11-69. I requested Rose Cambourne to confer with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) on the best way to provide the salary freeze shortfall to staff. She has learned that the Conference is registered with

CRA; source deductions can be remitted by the Conference. She will proceed on this basis.

p. 3-5 – overall financial policy

- in compliance

p. 3-6 – protection of assets

- in compliance; the executive secretary meets with the finance and property administrator on a regular basis; the Conference's auditor has been informed that this policy exists

p. 3-7 – cash management

- cash available – in compliance
- four months of expenses – in compliance

p. 3-8 – signing officers

- in compliance

p. 3-9 – investment policy

- not in compliance; at the moment the Conference's investments are found at Toronto United Church Council (Cedar Glen Fund), GICs and cash; a task group will present a simplified investment policy at this meeting

p. 3-10 – vendor relations

- in compliance

p. 3-11 – revenues/assessments

- in compliance; Rose Cambourne has informed the Presbyteries regarding congregations which are in arrears; Presbyteries have been following up on those concerns; revised wording for this policy is being presented at this meeting
- the following is an up-date on the outstanding amounts related to the 2009 assessments:
 - Living Waters - \$237.15
 - South West - \$6651.50

- 2010 assessments outstanding...
 - Living Waters - \$12,290.04
 - Northern Waters - \$17,989.50
 - South West - \$24,439.51
 - Toronto Southeast - \$10,982.50

p. 3-12 – Presbytery finances

- generally in compliance; a few cheques have been written for under \$25

p. 3-14 – disposition of property

- in compliance; there have been no property transactions

p. 3-15 – Conference Fund

- in compliance; at this meeting a task group will present a proposal for changes to this policy

p. 3-16 – communication

- generally in compliance
- Website: I continue to be frustrated that the website changes that I have announced to you twice are still not online as of the writing of this report, though I am assured that by the time the Executive meets, changes will be seen.
- Social media: See my previous comments re the website. The Conference's Facebook and Twitter accounts initially will be tied to changes on the website. In later February I will be taking a reading week to study and discuss social media.
- *Insight*: A new design was published with the January issue.
- Technology fund: The technology fund has been advertised since the end of June. To date 10 applications have been received and approved. This program will be re-advertised every two months until the end of the program. I have been surprised by the lack of response. When I asked the program staff about this, they reported hearing from some people that a grant for the initial costs was fine, but the congregations were concerned about the long-term costs involved.

*p. 3-17 – Incorporated Ministries

- generally in compliance; I will report verbally on a couple of Incorporated Ministry matters. Attached is a spreadsheet; see p. 10/11-111 that tracks many of the requirements we follow as the supervising Court.