

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
TORONTO CONFERENCE**

**Minutes of the meeting of
the Executive of Toronto Conference
Wednesday November 11, 2009**

The Executive of Toronto Conference met at the Northern Waters Presbytery office on Wednesday, November 11, 2009. The meeting began at 4:08 p.m. A quorum was present.

Members present

Carol Gierak (president), David Allen (executive secretary), Marg Walker (president elect), Paget Blazet (Toronto Southeast), Ron Coughlin (South West), Linda Parsons (Living Waters), Tom Clarke (Toronto Southeast), Brian Goodings (Northern Waters), Kevin Logie (Living Waters), Karen Williams (South West)

Regrets

Ralph Schmidt (Northern Waters), Linda Thompson (Northern Waters), Carol McKinley (Living Waters)

To be appointed

one from South West; one from Toronto Southeast

Worship, community building, listening to God

Constituting the meeting

The president constituted the meeting in the name of Jesus Christ who brings salvation to the world to conduct such business as should properly be brought before it.

Worship and theological reflection

The president led worship featuring a reading from Parker Palmer on “motives”. We should ask ourselves, “Why am I doing this?” The group discussed motivation and, “Why do so many people resist questioning their motives?” The reading was based on Romans 12. She read a prayer by Parker Palmer and the group sang “I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me”.

Introductions and agenda

The president asked everyone to introduce themselves. She asked whether there were additions to the agenda; there were none.

Business matters to be considered by the Executive**Minutes**

MOTION by David Allen/Brian Goodings that the minutes of the Executive meeting of September 9, 2009 be approved as circulated.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Kevin Logie said that he expects to be serving for a two-year term. Linda Parsons informed the Executive that Tim Dayfoot is moving to an appointment in Oshawa Presbytery so will be resigning as Presbytery secretary.

Regrets

Regrets were noted.

Evaluation of September Executive meeting

MOTION by David Allen/Ron Coughlin that the evaluations of the September Executive meeting be received for information (Appendix A) with a correction that the Executive is not “goof”.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Ina Grafton Gage Home

See p. 09/10-6. Murray Cutler had sent an update on construction of the new facility and the financial situation at Ina Grafton Gage Home; the Home is not requesting extra appeal status from the Conference. Murray issued an invitation to the Executive to meet at the new facility when it is completed.

The Executive AGREED to say thank you for the invitation, and that we'll look at the schedule for the future. The president will write a note to Ina Grafton Gage Homes.

Correspondence

a) Conference-wide communication request: The executive secretary brought forward a letter from Brian McIntosh requesting that the central Conference office facilitate Conference-wide communication, usually by e-mail, from three bodies now lodged in the Presbyteries – the Pinawa Circle, the Peace and Justice Working Group, and the Holy Land Awareness and Action Task Group. The Executive discussed whether communication would be facilitated through the central office or through the Presbyteries following consultation with the appropriate Presbytery bodies.

MOTION by Tom Clarke/Linda Parsons that the Conference adopt a policy in regard to inter-Presbytery groups communicating beyond their Presbyteries that the requests be referred directly to the Presbyteries for a decision whether to circulate the material.

MOTION

CARRIED.

b) Five Oaks: Michael Kooiman wrote on behalf of the board of directors of the Five Oaks Centre requesting that the Conference consider Five Oaks as a potential donee using funds received from the sale of church property. The executive secretary recommended that this correspondence be considered at the time the Executive discusses the property policy.

Conference annual meeting

The president, president-elect and executive secretary spoke to a number of documents related to the 2010 annual meeting of Conference.

a) values statement: The Executive received the final version of the “values to be upheld in planning the 2010 annual meeting” (Appendix B).

b) budget and venue change request: The Executive discussed the budget for the 2010 annual meeting and a request to change the venue from the Toronto Congress Centre to St. Paul’s United Church in Orillia (Appendix C).

MOTION by Paget Blazet/Kevin Logie that the venue for the 86th annual meeting of Toronto Conference (2010) be changed from the Toronto Congress Centre to St. Paul’s United Church, Orillia.

MOTION

CARRIED.

c) youth programming: Program staff had initiated a conference call with representatives from the four Presbyteries to see whether there was interest in developing youth programming at the annual meeting and/or events that might be open for young people across the Conference. The result of the conference call was that there will be a sabbatical for youth programming in the coming year.

Toronto Southeast Presbytery has included money in their 2010 budget for youth programming. South West Presbytery also included funds for youth events. Living Waters Presbytery is having discussion about youth work, but it’s not clear yet whether there will be a budget request. Northern Waters is meeting this coming Saturday.

Communication strategy

The executive secretary introduced a document (Appendix D) outlining what has been happening with the recommendations which had been assigned to him by the April 4,

2009 Executive meeting. He also had prepared a summary of the survey regarding *INSIGHT*, the Conference's insert in *The United Church Observer* (Appendix E).

Marg Walker will work with sub-groups to draft policies for consideration by the Executive. Presbytery reps will share their communication strategies with each other and the Conference.

Omnibus motion

Kevin Logie and Karen Williams requested that the mission support item be removed from the omnibus motion.

MOTION by Ron Coughlin/Tom Clarke that the Toronto Conference Executive take the following actions:

a) correspondence

...receive the list of correspondence for information (Appendix F);

b) sacraments privileges

...in accordance with Section 353 of *The Manual* (2007) and at the request of Living Waters Presbytery, grant sacramental privileges to Svinda Heinrichs, Intern Supply, during her time of appointment at the Lefroy United Church;

c) Northern Waters Commission minutes

...receive the June 30, 2009 minutes of the Northern Waters Commission and include them as an appendix to these minutes (Appendix G);

d) Ossington property mortgage amendment

...authorize and direct the Trustees of the property of the former St. Paul-Pietro Valdo Italian Congregation of The United Church of Canada to enter into an agreement amending the Charge on 1116/1120 Ossington Avenue, Toronto granted to them by St. Clair West Affordable Housing (Ossington) Group Incorporated and registered on title as Instrument Number AT1581348 to:

i) change the "Maturity Date" as set out in paragraph 1 of Schedule "A" of the Charge to "the earlier of (i) December 31, 2010, and (ii) the date which is the 30th day or the next following business day if such day is not a business day after certification of substantial completion of the construction of the approximately 20 units of mixed affordable housing at the project"; and

ii) change the due date for the repayment of the principal amount of \$275,000 from 30 days after the issuance of the building permit for the housing project (as

set out in paragraph 2 of Schedule "A" of the Charge) to "on or before December 31, 2009"; and

...the executive secretary of Toronto Conference is authorized to approve the final form of the agreement amending the Charge.

e) Locks United Church property

...take the following action regarding the Locks United Church property:

1. The Trustees of the property of the former Locks United Church congregation, which is legally described as Part Lot 14, Concession 13, Brunel, Huntsville (PIN 48099-0752) (the "Property"), be directed to proceed with the listing and sale of the Property;
2. The Trustees are further directed to ensure that any agreement of purchase and sale entered into for the sale of the Property is made conditional on final approval of the terms of sale by Toronto Conference and the Executive Secretary is authorized to give that approval and any other approvals required in connection with the completion of the sale on behalf of Toronto Conference; and
3. The net proceeds of the sale of the Property, after payment of all expenses incurred in completing the sale, shall be transferred to Toronto Conference.

f) Church Development Committee and Camping Opportunities Fund

...that Toronto Conference relinquish its involvement in the church development committee of Toronto United Church Council, removing any restrictions previously established by Toronto Conference, and wishing TUCC and the Presbyteries well as they consider church development issues;

and that Toronto Conference relinquish its involvement in the Camping Opportunities Fund, requesting Toronto United Church Council to formally take over the management of the fund with the proviso that the Fund be distributed by TUCC using a formula developed in partnership with the five camps within the jurisdiction of Toronto Conference.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Mission Support

Karen Williams and Kevin Logie declared a conflict of interest because of being involved in organizations receiving mission support funding.

MOTION by Tom Clarke/Ron Coughlin that the Executive approve the mission support grants for 2010 as recommended by the mission support consultation of Toronto Conference (Appendix H).

MOTION

CARRIED.

Listening to a variety of voices/connecting with the ownership

Marg Walker spoke about two items that needed further discussion; these topics will be on the April Executive agenda in more detail.

listening to a variety of voices: See p. 09/10-3 and 4. The Presbyteries are asked to think about diversity when making future appointments.

connecting to the ownership: The Executive had received some comments written by Doug Goodwin, executive secretary of British Columbia Conference regarding connecting with the ownership. More work needs to be done on this, and we'll come back to this topic in April.

Dinner

The Executive broke for dinner at 6:03 p.m.; the Executive sang "For All Your Goodness, God" and resumed meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Development of policies

a) property policy up-date: The executive secretary gave an up-date on a variety of issues which will affect the development of property policies (Appendix I). The Executive considered a number of questions or topics raised in the report.

The outcome of the discussion was that Tom Clarke and Ron Coughlin will work with the executive secretary to prepare a comprehensive set of motions based on the discussion at this meeting.

b) un-spent 2009 money: A couple of Presbyteries have discussed what will happen with unspent money from the \$20,000 block grant from the Conference. In the past, unspent money was not available for future years, but no Decision has been made on this in the new structure.

The Presbyteries described their financial situations. Living Waters is having difficulty because of travel costs. Toronto Southeast may not spend all of the \$20,000; the budget requests that came in for 2010 were \$45,000. South West set a budget, but they have a Formal Hearing which may be expensive; they have \$55,000 of requests for a budget of \$30,000. In the past, Presbyteries were able to build up bank balances; they would like the funds to be available to the Presbyteries. Northern Waters is meeting this coming Saturday and budget will be on the agenda.

MOTION by Ron Coughlin/Karen Williams that the Conference adopt a policy that unspent Presbytery grants in any year be retained for future Presbytery use, and that general underspending in the 2009 budget be used to move toward compliance with the policy on cash management after allowing for a suitable cash flow reserve.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Monitoring and compliance with policies

Monitoring policies

Marg Walker led the Executive through the review of policies.

a) policy review schedule: The Executive AGREED to the following review timeline for 2009/2010:

- February meeting - Executive Secretary Limitations: General constraints p. 29 (Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice for Ministry Personnel attached)
- February meeting – Executive Governance: Public statements; p. 65
- April meeting – Executive Governance: Listening to the ownership; p. 70
- April meeting – Mission/Ends Policies: Oversight – Presbyteries; p. 21
- June meeting – Executive/Staff Relations: Staff relationship; p. 43

b) appointments to other bodies: The Executive reviewed the policy on appointments to other bodies and reviewed a report on the bodies to whom the Conference is making appointments (Appendix J).

Following discussion, the Executive AGREED that the president, president-elect and executive secretary will come back to the February meeting with a plan for proceeding on these appointments.

c) conflict of interest: The Executive reviewed the current policy and discussed how the policy will be used in the future.

Compliance with policies

The executive secretary delivered his report (Appendix K) and answered questions from the Executive. The Executive would like to see future reports in this format. One additional piece of information would be helpful – if the Executive or the executive secretary deems that there is non-compliance with any policy, it would be good to identify a timeline for getting into compliance.

Evaluation and closing

The meeting turned to an evaluation of how things had gone at this meeting.

What did we do well?

- followed the agenda well
- found it helpful to get material in advance in the mail
- people were prepared
- liked getting the material all together
- liked meeting as one group
- we're starting to share experiences in the Presbyteries; this is starting to inform decisions
- food was great

What did we accomplish?

- we're starting to do some of the work, some of which is fairly detailed
- getting to see ourselves as setting policy rather than doing things

What could we have done better?

- number the pages in the advance material to make for easier referencing
- feel some anxiety of adding more work on some members, but wonder how much more I'm willing to do as a member of the Executive
- will we find that we are too small to do some of the work we need to do?
- we could use task groups
- how does this work relate to the Presbyteries? we need time to report to the whole Presbytery
- David will continue to write highlights

Adjournment

The business of the meeting completed, the president declared the meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Carol Gierak
President

David Allen
Executive Secretary