

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
TORONTO CONFERENCE**

**Minutes of the meeting of
the Executive of Toronto Conference
Wednesday, February 10, 2010**

The Executive of Toronto Conference met at the Toronto Southeast Presbytery office on Wednesday, February 10, 2010. The meeting began at 3:56 p.m. A quorum was present.

Members present

Carol Gierak (president), David Allen (executive secretary), Marg Walker (president elect), Paget Blazet (Toronto Southeast), Linda Parsons (Living Waters), Tom Clarke (Toronto Southeast), Brian Goodings (Northern Waters), Carol McKinley (Living Waters), Don Laing (South West)

Regrets

Ralph Schmidt (Northern Waters), Kevin Logie (Living Waters), Karen Williams (South West), Ron Coughlin (South West), Linda Thompson (Northern Waters)

To be appointed

one from Toronto Southeast

Worship, community building, listening to God

Welcome, constituting the meeting, regrets and introductions

The president welcomed everyone to the meeting, and asked people to introduce themselves. She 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. She noted the regrets received for this meeting

Worship and theological reflection

The president led worship focusing on the place of God within our midst. She referenced Isaiah's call and the call of Simon Peter, two different ways of meeting God. She asked, "Why is the Gospel not reaching people the way it reached people 2,000 years ago?" In triads, the group discussed the ways in which God is working in our lives and pondered the question, "How is God working within the group sitting around this table?"

The president shared a prayer of transfiguration from *Celebrate God's Presence* and the group sang #196 from *More Voices*, "We Will Take What You Offer".

Business matters to be considered by the Executive

Agenda

The group AGREED to follow the agenda with the addition of a request for funding of an event on living into right relations.

Minutes

MOTION by David Allen/Brian Goodings that the minutes of the Executive meetings of November 11 and December 4, 2009 and the meeting of January 8, 2010 be approved as circulated.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Correspondence

A number of correspondence items were included for action in the omnibus motion. The executive secretary highlighted two items, and offered recommendations for action.

Mono Mills United Church: Rev. Alf Dumont, chair of the Personnel and Congregational Support Commission of Northern Waters Presbytery, had written to the Conference Executive and the General Council Executive raising concerns about information not being passed on to the Mono Mills Pastoral Charge regarding Rev. Bill Major, who was eventually conducted of sexual misconduct. The letter raised questions about compensation, support for Pastoral Charges and support for Ministry Personnel.

The General Council has already responded through a letter from Rev. Alan Hall, Executive Officer of the Human Resources Unit.

The executive secretary provided a recommendation and, following discussion, the following motion was made:

MOTION by Tom Clarke/Linda Parsons that, in response to the letter from Rev. Alf Dumont regarding the situation at Mono Mills United Church, the Executive take the following actions:

1. affirm the contents of the letter from Alan Hall which addressed many of the concerns raised by the congregation;
2. request the president to write a pastoral letter to Mono Mills United Church, and
3. request the executive secretary to write to the General Council's task group on oversight and discipline asking it to consider actions which might be taken to assist Pastoral Charges in the wake of church and/or civil court disciplinary hearings.

MOTION

CARRIED.

These actions will be shared with the personnel ministers to encourage that Presbyteries be aware of the need to assist Pastoral Charges, and to ensure that supports for Pastoral Charges are in place.

WoodGreen Red Door Family Shelter: The Executive has received a request from WoodGreen Red Door Family Shelter for permission to enter discussion with the City of Toronto regarding the potential purchase of the property at 875 Queen Street, East, Toronto. Previous discussions with Red Door had indicated that they were unable to secure financing for the purchase.

The executive secretary recommended that permission be given to Red Door to begin conversation, but with restrictions: 1) the permission does not constitute a binding offer of purchase and sale; 2) the Conference must receive by December 31, 2010 a clear and irrevocable indication that the purchase is being pursued for market value to be determined by June 30, 2011; and 3) that if the purchase by Red Door is not about to proceed, Conference list the property for sale with a closing date of June 30, 2012.

Following discussion, the Executive AGREED with the proposed course of action, adding that there will be no extension of the lease. The Executive requested that the agreement be passed by Conference's legal counsel to make sure there is no room for misinterpretation of the Conference's intentions.

Appointments to other bodies

Marg Walker presented the work that had been done on appointments to other bodies.

MOTION by Marg Walker/Brian Goodings that the report of the task group on appointments to other bodies be received for information (Appendix A).

MOTION

CARRIED.

Marg informed the group that a late response had been received from Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto (CJDT). Following discussion and a time for questions, motions were made. In the first motion CJDT's name was removed from the motion included in the report.

MOTION by Marg Walker/Tom Clarke that Toronto Conference end its relationship with

- Greater Toronto Council of Christian Churches
- Ontario Multi-Faith Council
- Social Justice Network of Ontario Conferences
- Toronto Area Inter-Faith Council

MOTION

CARRIED.

MOTION by Marg Walker/Brian Goodings that Toronto Conference cease naming a representative to Canadian Girls in Training (CGIT), and that Conference provide the addresses of the Presbytery offices for CGIT to get in touch if they wish to have material passed to groups working with youth.

MOTION

CARRIED.

MOTION by Marg Walker/Linda Parsons that Toronto Conference request that Toronto Southeast and South West Presbyteries consider naming one member each to the board of Ecuhome, and that the Presbyteries determine appropriate reporting relationships.

MOTION

CARRIED.

MOTION by Marg Walker/Paget Blaza that Toronto Conference appoint a representative to the Emmanuel College Council when requested, after soliciting nominations from the Presbyteries, and that the primary reporting relationship be to the Presbyteries, and with the settlement and pastoral relations committee and the interview committee upon request.

MOTION

CARRIED.

MOTION by Marg Walker/Paget Blaza that Toronto Conference a) formally request that Five Oaks allow one person per Presbytery to be present at its annual consultations; b) receive a written report annually; and c) continue providing a financial grant with future funding to be based on receipt of a long-range plan, and that the source be a Conference fund.

MOTION

CARRIED.

MOTION by Marg Walker/Don Laing that Toronto Conference appoint a representative to the Francis Sandy Theological Centre board when requested, after soliciting nominations from the Presbyteries, and that the primary reporting relationship be to the Presbyteries, and with the settlement and pastoral relations committee and the interview committee upon request.

MOTION

CARRIED.

MOTION by Marg Walker/Paget Blaza that Toronto Conference a) continue to appoint three members to the membership of the Grand River Spiritual and Educational Resources corporation after soliciting nominees from the Presbyteries; b) communicate with Grand River to see whether their by-laws could be revised to allow for one person per Presbytery, thus enabling greater

communication, promotion and accountability; and c) continue funding Grand River through the Conference budget.

MOTION

CARRIED.

MOTION by Marg Walker/Carol McKinley that Toronto Conference a) continue to appoint a representative to Horizon TV after soliciting nominees from the Presbyteries; b) receive an annual written report from the representative, the report to be forwarded to the Presbyteries; and c) pay the annual membership fee through the Conference budget.

MOTION

CARRIED.

MOTION by Marg Walker/Tom Clarke that Toronto Conference not make an appointment to the Multi-Faith Alliance to End Homelessness, but refer an appointment to this organization to the Toronto Southeast and South West Presbyteries for their consideration with funding to come from the Presbyteries if they wish to participate in this organization's activities.

MOTION

CARRIED.

In addition to the response from CJDT, a request had been made by the Justice and Global Issues Team of Toronto Southeast Presbytery requesting that the Conference extend by six months the appointment of Allan Parker to serve on the group known as Canadians Concerned about Sri Lanka. The task group had not considered this appointment because the original appointment had expired. Following discussion, the following motion was made:

MOTION by Tom Clarke/Marg Walker that Toronto Conference not make an appointment to Canadians Concerned about Sri Lanka, but refer an appointment to this organization to the Toronto Southeast and South West Presbyteries for their consideration with funding to come from the Presbyteries if they wish to participate in this organization's activities.

MOTION

CARRIED.

The correspondence from Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto had not been reviewed by the task group. The task group will bring a recommendation to the April 14 meeting of the Executive.

Proceeds from sale of former Whitevale United Church

The executive secretary spoke to the report regarding requests for funds from the sale of the former Whitevale United Church in the former York Presbytery (see report, Appendix B). He recommended that the Executive take an action to conclude the commitments which had been made to Heritage United Church as part of the amalgamation plan.

MOTION by Carol McKinley/Linda Parsons that \$75,000 from the sale of the former Whitevale United Church be forwarded to Heritage United Church as per the recommendation of the Executives of the former York Presbytery and the current Living Waters Presbytery.

MOTION

CARRIED.

The executive secretary recommended that further discussion of the report be postponed until the April meeting of the Executive has dealt with policy issues related to requests for surplus property.

Brian Goodings declared a conflict of interest as a member of the church development committee of Toronto United Church Council and did not vote.

MOTION by Tom Clarke/Don Laing that the Executive postpone further discussion of the Whitevale assets until the April meeting of the Executive.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Assets task group

The executive secretary gave a verbal report on behalf of Nick Walker, chair of the assets task group. The news appears to be good, in that much progress has been made toward the establishing of a corporation which will hold and manage funds for the four Presbyteries. The by-laws of the corporation have been submitted to the General Council for review and administrative approval. Conference will be asked to approve the by-laws at its April 14 meeting.

Omnibus motion

The executive secretary explained a number of the points included in the omnibus motion, and answered questions. The Executive made a number of improvements to parts of the motion.

MOTION by David Allen/Brian Goodings that the Toronto Conference Executive take the following actions:

a) Bathurst Street United Church Corporation

... approve Bathurst Street United Church Corporation Board of Directors:

Ray Harris
Rob Metcalf
Beth Moore
Frank van de Water
Deborah Hart
Martha ter Kuile

David McMaster
Wayne White
Margaret Sumadh

b) Bathurst Street United Church Corporation

... direct the former Directors and Officers of the Bathurst Street United Church Corporation to turn over to the current Board of Directors, all books and records of the Corporation and provide the current Board of Directors with the information they reasonably require in order to assume the proper management of the Corporation's affairs.

c) Kingsway Lambton Home for Seniors Inc.

...approve By-Law Number 1A of the Incorporated Ministry known as Kingsway Lambton Homes for Seniors Inc.

d) St. Matthew's Bracondale House

...approve the addition of the following members Diana Stephenson and Christopher Bee to the Board or Directors to fill the two vacancies per the May 14, 2008 annual meeting.

e) St. Matthew's Bracondale House

...approve the addition of the following members Ursula Cannon, Rumana Khalifa and Kira Vallance to the Board or Directors to fill the three vacancies per the May 6, 2009 annual meeting.

f) Bedford Park Seniors Residence

...approve the Board of Directors consisting of:

Dorothy Lillian Amos
Marcia Ann Camaraire
Richardson Owen Coombs
Dorita Corby
Mary Eleanor Gooley
Barbara Jean White
Sandra Warman Seary McKinstry
Wayne John White

g) Oak Street lease

...give its approval to Toronto Christian Resource Centre and Toronto United Church Council to enter into a lease agreement regarding the property at 40 Oak Street, Toronto

h) Guthrie United Church Trustees

...dismiss Guthrie United Church Trustees Edna Caldwell, Don Campbell, Nelson McKay with thanks for their work

i) Hawkestone United Church Trustees

...dismiss Hawkestone United Church Trustees Margaret Baker, Linda Gray, Linda Johnston, and Alice Robinson with thanks for their work

j) Toronto East End Area Ministry

...provide notice to Toronto Southeast Presbytery that unused funds designated for the Toronto East End Area Ministry will be available until June 30, 2010 following which, if no plan is in place, the funds will be used for other Conference purposes (\$156,253 approved by the Conference Executive October 31, 2008)

k) sacraments privileges

...that in accordance with Section 343(e) of The Manual (2007), Toronto Conference grant sacramental privileges to Keith Lockhart, Designated Lay Minister, during his time of appointment at Wasaga Beach United Church and that he be granted sacramental privileges within the jurisdiction of Northern Waters Presbytery during his time of appointment.

l) TUCC by-laws

...approve the revised by-laws of the Toronto United Church Council

m) Ina Grafton Gage Home

...give its consent to Ina Grafton Gage Home to register a third mortgage on the property at 40 Bell Estate Road, Toronto on the terms and conditions outlined in its agreement with the General Council, holder of the second mortgage

n) correspondence

...receive the list of correspondence for information (Appendix C).

MOTION

CARRIED.

Dinner

The Executive broke for dinner at 6:00 p.m.; the group sang the chorus of #182, "Grateful" from *More Voices*, and the meeting resumed at 6:48 p.m.

Listening to a variety of voices/connecting with the ownership

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. The Executive spent a few minutes focusing on the questions, "What is going on in your world in relation to the church courts? What is changing in that world? Where is there frustration and emerging satisfaction?"

Some of the comments:

- Clyde Harris conducted a second workshop for treasurers within Toronto Southeast Presbytery; the workshop focused on questions that had been submitted over the last month
- Nick Walker worked with a congregation, encouraging them to look at some changes in their building
- Presbytery has always been an odd duck
- The new system is still a bit confusing; have appreciated having personnel ministers available, appreciated getting advice within an hour or a day
- Still going by the seat of our pants, struggling; concerned about camping ministry
- Continuing the work with aboriginal relations
- Concerns about Pastoral Charges that need to understand what covenants mean with ministers
- Commissions are doing what they can with what they have
- Disappointed by the 2009 M&S figures; there are too many draws on the congregations
- Doesn't seem to be time on the agenda to bring forward issues
- People are trying to be positive about the new system
- Found it frustrating having a retired ministers association disbanded because of lack of funds within the Presbytery
- Appreciate having solutions close at hand
- Some confusion about the roles of Commissions which have over-lapping responsibilities
- Meeting evaluations showed an "us" and "them" attitude between congregations and Presbytery; the Presbytery is talking about having a travelling road-show to explain how things work
- Looking at pastoral oversight and ministry and personnel concerns and the overlaps between the two
- There is a feeling that congregations want to handle problems on their own, which sometimes cuts them off from the help which could have been available to them

- Getting questions about why we have to pay Presbytery assessments; could Conference produce something about what we get for the money?
- We don't do ourselves any favours when we give contradictory advice; people need to be trained when they go into congregations
- Sometimes we give answers to questions that aren't being asked; most congregations are trying to keep the doors open and are more interested in that than hearing about other things that are happening

This conversation will be continued at future meetings.

Development of policies

Communication policy: Marg Walker and Paget Blaza reported on the work done on a communication policy for the Conference. A number of comments were made and suggestions given for improvement:

- The policy doesn't address the message that we want to deliver; it says more about the Presbyteries than it does about the Conference.
- What do we have to communicate and to whom do we wish to communicate?
- Who has the information re the database? How has it been enhanced?
- Preamble #2 could be a policy statement on its own
- Are we talking about communication or publicity?
- The focus needs to be on the Conference and its communication role
- Communication is a way of upholding who we are as a conciliar church
- Add to #2, "down to the congregational level"?

The Executive AGREED that the policy will go back to the task group for revision with a report to the April Executive meeting.

Property policy: Tom Clarke reported on the work done on a comprehensive property policy.

MOTION by Tom Clarke/Paget Blaza that the Executive receive for information the report entitled "Motions and Policies relating to Property, Assets and Ministry" (Appendix D).

MOTION

CARRIED.

The group identified motions it wished to discuss, asked questions and made improvements, following which an omnibus motion was made:

MOTION by Tom Clarke/Paget Blaza that the Executive take the following actions:

Definition of church development

...that Toronto Conference define church development to include redevelopment and revitalization, and eliminate the separation between the two. Church development/redevelopment will refer to the work of any congregation or congregations working together to redevelop property or programs to meet the needs of the community they serve. This could include but would not be limited to amalgamation, specialized ministries such as youth, seniors and community ministries, and it may or may not involve property.

And that this action be forwarded to the Presbyteries of Toronto Conference.

Initiation of church development projects

...that Toronto Conference inform the Presbyteries within its jurisdiction that Toronto Conference understands that Presbyteries and congregations are responsible for initiating a church development project.

Funders and Service Providers List

...that no action be taken on the May 13, 2009 motion to develop an Approved Funders and Service Providers list.

Viability of church development projects

...that Toronto Conference request the Presbyteries to provide a status report on their review of church development projects and the viability of those projects, and that the Presbyteries report to the April 14, 2010 meeting of the Conference Executive.

Information and resources

...that no action be taken on the May 13, 2009 motion to develop a repository of information and resources regarding church development and redevelopment.

Policy on distribution of assets

...that the Conference Executive take no action on establishing a Commission to develop a policy for distribution of the proceeds of surplus property.

...that Toronto Conference adopt a policy that allows for the establishment of a Conference Fund with a cap, maintain compliance with the contingency policy, and equal distribution to the four Presbytery funds held by the Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation, and that terms of reference for the Conference Fund be presented for consideration at the April 14, 2010 meeting of the Conference Executive.

Disposition of property

...that the executive secretary draft a policy regarding disposition of property and any other property matters, and that the Executive consider this policy at its April 14, 2010 meeting.

Proceeds to Inter-Presbytery Fund

...that the Executive take no action on the motion to establish an Inter-Presbytery Fund.

Naming Commission members

...that no action be taken on the motion to name members of a Commission on property policy.

Funding commitments

...that Toronto Conference...

1. receive for information the chart of funding commitments (final page of report) as the basis for Decision-making on commitments made in the previous Conference/Presbytery structure;
2. request the Toronto West Presbytery Corporation and Tri-Presbytery Corporation to provide funding in 2010 for ministries which have traditionally received funding through those corporations identified on the chart which accompanies this motion;
3. secure funding in 2010 for those ministries identified on the chart not funded by the Toronto West Presbytery Corporation and the Tri-Presbytery Corporation; and explore use of the St. Enoch's Fund for funding commitments to ministries previously supported by Toronto South Presbytery;
4. provide the funds necessary to complete the current church development projects (North Star, Painswick, Holly, Pathways and New Hope) unless these Missions or Congregations are deemed not to be viable by the new Presbyteries;
5. inform all ministries on the chart that funding beginning January 1, 2011 will be done through the Presbyteries to which those ministries are accountable.

Presbytery assets to fund commitments, setting up Presbytery funds, establishing a technology fund, and funding extra restructuring costs

...that a technology fund in the amount of \$100,000 be established to allow Pastoral Charges and Outreach Ministries to purchase necessary computers and internet services in order that they may communicate electronically, and that the source of funds be the assets of the Cedar Glen Fund.

...that the Conference Executive take no action to establish a restructuring fund.

Inter-Presbytery Fund

...that the Conference Executive take no action on the motion to establish an Inter-Presbytery Fund to receive the proceeds of surplus property and sale of property until such a time as the Conference has developed a new property policy.

Assets of the nine Presbyteries

...that the Conference Executive take no action on the motion that the assets of all the existing nine Presbyteries held as of June 30, 2009 be divided equally among the four new Presbyteries creating four Presbytery funds.

Technology fund (see motion, above)

...that the Executive take no action on the May 13, 2009 motion that a technology fund of \$100,000 be created using money from the Cedar Glen Fund to allow Pastoral Charges and Outreach Ministries to purchase necessary computers and internet services in order that they may communicate electronically.

Current church development projects (see motion, above)

...that the Conference take no action on the motion to provide the funds necessary to complete the current church development projects (North Star, Painswick, Holly, Pathways and New Hope) as defined in Appendix C and E of the "Steering Group Report on the Toronto Conference Assets and Funding Implementation" report unless these Missions or Congregations are deemed not to be viable by the new Presbyteries.

Requests from Presbyteries regarding surplus property

...that Toronto Conference...

1. develop a policy on how to respond to Presbytery requests on surplus funds;
2. consider such a policy at its April 14, 2010 meeting; and
3. not dispose of any surplus funds in response to Presbytery requests until the policy has been approved.

Previous property policies

...that Toronto Conference adopt policies based on the motions related to property, assets and ministry passed at this February 10, 2010 meeting, and that these new policies supplant all previous policies related to property and assets.

MOTION

CARRIED.

The Executive AGREED that the following motion needs further work:

...that the balance of assets from the former nine Presbyteries, the Toronto Conference, the Tri-Presbytery Corporation and the Toronto West Presbytery Corporation provide equal distribution to the four Presbytery funds held by the Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation after taking into consideration the request of the former Toronto West Presbytery that the Jane-Finch and Davenport-Perth Community Ministries receive committed funding for up to eight years beginning in 2009.

The task group will do more work on this motion and will have a recommendation for the April meeting of the Executive.

Marriage licence policy: The Conference has had a marriage licence policy for many years; the policy needs to be put into a format similar to other policies. In discussion, the Executive discussed where this kind of policy should be placed in the *Handbook*, perhaps in an “Administrative Policies” section, and it noted that the policy seems to mix policies and procedures.

MOTION by Linda Parsons/Brian Goodings that the Conference Executive adopt the marriage licence policy attached as Appendix E.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Incorporated Ministry approvals: The Executive was to discuss the information it wishes to receive when it is being asked to give approvals required by Incorporated Ministries but, in light of the hour, put this topic off to the April Executive meeting.

Extra appeals policy: The Executive was to review criteria which had been used in the past regarding extra appeals, but put this topic off to the April Executive meeting, noting the mixing of policy and procedures

Monitoring and compliance with policies

Monitoring policies

Marg Walker was about to lead the Executive through the review of two policies - Executive Secretary Limitations, and Executive Governance: Public Statements, but these were put off to the April Executive meeting.

Compliance with policies

The executive secretary delivered his report (Appendix F) and answered questions from the Executive. He had asked for direction on a number of items:

Learning fund: The executive secretary had suggested that learning funds have a particular focus that would benefit the church at large, not just the individual and/or

his/her congregation or ministry. In discussion, the following comments/questions were raised:

- Could the money be split for each Presbytery to be used for a particular use?
- How has the money been used by the General Council learning-in-community events?
- We could use the General Council priorities.
- Focus on rural? Urban? Interim Ministry?

Having had this preliminary conversation, the Executive agreed to return to this topic at its April meeting.

Oversight visits: The executive secretary suggested that oversight visits of Presbyteries take place in the fall of 2010. The Executive AGREED with this course of action, and will do work on this at its April meeting.

Interview Committee: The executive secretary suggested that the Interview Committee policy be amended to make the secretarial task a staff function.

MOTION by Brian Goodings/Carol McKinley that the membership of the Interview Committee be amended to eliminate the position of secretary, with the secretarial task being a staff function.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Budgeting: The current policy calls for the presentation of three-year budgets, but the 2009 approved only one year. Following discussion, the Executive gave the following direction to the executive secretary.

MOTION by Marg Walker/Paget Blaza that the executive secretary prepare a three-year budget for the April 14 meeting of the Executive.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Request for funds

Linda Parsons presented a request for the Conference to provide a \$2,000 grant to assist with four workshops focusing on right relations. Following discussion, the Executive AGREED that this is “means” work which belongs with the executive secretary.

Evaluation and closing

The meeting concluded with an evaluation of how things had gone at this meeting.

What did we do well?

- Accomplished a lot, made decisions
- Covered a lot of ground
- We talked and listened
- We were compassionate

What did we accomplish?

- Set some huge policies, e.g. property

What could we have done better?

- We need another hour
- Like to feel we're not rushed, trying to balance efficiency with good conversation

Adjournment

The business of the meeting completed, the president declared the meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m. The Executive sang #224 from *More Voices*, "May the God of Peace".

Carol Gierak
President

David Allen
Executive Secretary

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