

Executive
Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
Connecting, Supporting, Transforming
Tuesday, April 28, 2020

Roster: Gary Clark (President), Rod Coates (Secretary), Brent Caslick (Treasurer), Heather Leffler (Past Chair), Jessica Cottrell, Heather Davies, Gord Dunbar, Joyce Johnston, Margaret Krauter, Mark Laird, Tim Reaburn, Peg Schieck, Joyce Ward, Micol Cottrell (Human Resources Commission), Deanne Dickson (Mission & Discipleship Commission), Norm Eygenraam (Covenant Commission)

Staff Support: Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa (Executive Minister), Sue Duliban (Executive Assistant)

Present: Brent Caslick, Gary Clark, Rod Coates, Jessica Cottrell, Micol Cottrell, Heather Davies, Deanne Dickson, Sue Duliban, Margaret Krauter, Mark Laird, Heather Leffler, Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa, Joyce Ward

Guest: Mary McKeen (PTCC)

The Executive of the WOW Regional Council Executive was called to meet via ZOOM teleconference on Tuesday, April 28, 2020. Gary Clark called the meeting to order at 9:34 AM.

Welcome and Check-in

Gary Clark opened with a brief reading from the book Celtic Parables. He then asked each participant to reflect on the question, "What things have slipped through your fingers?" Each person shared thoughts about what they were experiencing during this time, with common themes of schedule & calendar, church/worship planning, time & structure, eating bad things, & staying up late. Gary Clark concluded with a brief prayer by E.E. Cummings ("I thank you God for this most amazing day").

Acknowledging the Land

Gary Clark stated:

Easter is a time of renewal and celebrating that the power of God can draw out of death new life and new hope. That vision calls us to seek reconciliation with the first peoples of this land. We seek forgiveness for the devastation that contact with Europeans brought with it. Our ancestors were like a pandemic destroying the culture, religious practices and leadership structure of the first peoples. We brought small pox, measles and others diseases as well as a lust for land that clearly wasn't ours to possess. Many of us have not repented of the destruction that these diseases nor the damage our prejudices continue to inflict. Both still ravage these nations.

Repentance is an act of hope. Despite hundreds of years of harm, there is still reason to hope for resurrection and healing.

So it is that we acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional territory of Indigenous Peoples. Our gain has come at a great cost to these peoples.

Some day may all celebrate as new life is breathed into relationships that have felt and regularly feel, crucified.

Purpose of Meeting

Gary Clark stated that this was to be an information, not a deciding, meeting, to allow us to become familiar with our financial situation to enable decisions at the next Executive meeting.

Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation (PTCC)

Cheryl-Ann provided an overview of the Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation (PTCC) assets, details of which are described in the “PTCC Overview” document provided prior to the meeting (via Dropbox). She said that one of the questions for the Executive is whether we want to utilize the annual net revenues or reinvest them, thereby increasing the fund balance. Depending upon the amount of the grant requested (5% - 20% of principal), there are lead times of 3 – 6 months’ notice. Cheryl-Ann noted that we are also partners in New Ministries and Leadership Development Fund, an additional account within the PTCC fund.

The Executive members discussed options for use of PTCC funds and whether we might wish to replenish the funds from future church property sales within our region. The question remains: do we wish to designate the annual net revenues as grants for use of regional council, or reinvest for future use? There was additional discussion around the investment strategy with respect to our participation and representation in the PTCC governing corporation, our region’s use of ¼ of the total funds, and our partial control over the overall assets.

Mary McKeen joined the meeting at 10:30 AM; she is a PTCC director representing the Western Ontario Waterways (WOW). In response to a question from Gary Clark, Mary said that at their last PTCC meeting (with Shining Waters Regional Council) the investments were down 15% and it was decided to avoid issuing new grants for at least 6 months. The WOW component of available grants now stands at about \$180,000 (sum of 2018 + 2019 fund revenues).

Mary McKeen outlined some of the PTCC structure – membership, directors, and meetings. She said she will be stepping down as a director as of the PTCC annual meeting in June, and that WOW needs to nominate a replacement.

Mary McKeen said reports should be provided for WOW Executive review of two ongoing grants: 1) Tottenham Rich Hill United Church (mental health care program - \$20K in 2020) and 2) Westminster United Church, Orangeville (kitchen staffing program, \$10k). These reports are to be received by WOW Executive and then forwarded to PTCC for allocation of the remaining 2020 funds for these in-progress projects.

[BREAK – 11:10 – 11:20]

Conclusion of discussion:

With respect to filling the pending PTCC vacancies, Cheryl-Ann agreed to draft an article for the next WOW newsletter explaining PTCC and asking for expressions of interest.

Waterloo Presbytery Funds

Brent Caslick reviewed the Waterloo Presbytery restricted funds summary, provided prior to the meeting, with the purpose and restrictions noted per the following list.

Internally Restricted (Set aside by Presbytery for a specific purpose):

- Candidates Assistance Fund.
[Note: Executive discussed options to turn existing loans into grants, or a balance between partial repayment and partial loan forgiveness.]
- Waterloo Universities Chaplaincy.
- Fund for Disabled Clergy.
- New Church Development Fund
- Internship

Externally Restricted:

- Grace United Church
- Olivet United Church
- Eden Mills United Church
- Ecumenical Campus Ministry - Guelph

[Note: Regarding the Guelph Ecumenical Ministries the Executive discussed funds allocated for this ministry, how fund assets should be valued, what the final payout would be, etc.]

Other Business

Gary Clark said that he had asked the annual meeting worship committee to provide some worship materials for a “Regional Sunday” to be celebrated when the May annual meeting was originally planned. He also requested submission of any agenda items for the rescheduled fall regional meeting.

Deanne Dickson asked that the draft WOW bursary fund guidelines be reviewed. Cheryl-Ann questioned whether the process should be a committee administering the fund requests or a set of published guidelines with the Executive approving requests.

Heather Leffler asked about the nominations process, given there has not yet been an annual meeting with nominations and elections already conducted. It was suggested that it might be appropriate to send a letter of acknowledging/explaining the extension of tenure until the rescheduled annual meeting for those currently in role (Executive and Commissions).

Closing

Gary Clark thanked all present for this gathering and their dedication. Gary Clark closed the meeting with prayer and declared the meeting closed at 12:50 PM.

Upcoming Meetings:

- Regional Council executive, May 20th, 9:30 AM