

Covenant Commission
Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
Connecting, Supporting, Transforming

Thursday, July 9, 2020, 9:00 am, Zoom Call

Roster: (9) Marg Bakker, Judy Chalmers, Ann Harbridge (DLM), Sandy Loomis, Ross Carter, Norm Eygenraam, Arthur Hills, Thom McDonough (RDLM), Kate Crawford (Rev.)

Staff Support: Rev. John Neff, Minister, Congregational Support and Mission
Sue Duliban, Executive Assistant

Present: Marg Bakker, Judy Chalmers, Ann Harbridge (DLM), Sandy Loomis, Arthur Hills, Thom McDonough (RDLM)

Regrets: Kate Crawford, Norm Eygenraam

Welcome and Constitute Meeting: Ann Harbridge welcomed all and constituted the meeting in the name of Jesus Christ for all business that comes before it.

Acknowledging the Land: Ann Harbridge

I live in the southwest corner of Simcoe County, which is on the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg people. The Anishnaabeg include the Ojibwe, Odawa and Pottawatomi nations, collectively known as the Three Fires Confederacy. We are dedicated to honouring the Indigenous history and culture and committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation and respect with all First Nation, Metis and Inuit people.

Opening Worship: Ann Harbridge opened with prayer.

Opening Agreements

Approval of Agenda:

The Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council **agree** on the agenda.

Approval of Previous Minutes:

The Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council **agree to** approve the minutes of June 11, 2020, June 25, 2020, and June 30, 2020 as circulated.

Business Arising

1. Walters Falls Disbursement of Funds
 - a. Status of bank account and GIC? Where is the money located? The account was understood to be closed out. John Neff will check with Ruthanna Mack (WO Admin. Assistant, Finance) to determine if the monies have been received.

The commission agreed to honour what was previously decided upon by the Congregational Life Commission and Trustees of Walters Falls.

MOTION Thom McDonough / Margaret Bakker

The Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council Covenant Commission **approves** the following as terms of the disbandment of Walters Falls United Church

1. All expenses (such as presbytery assessments, salaries, commitments to central treasury, care and sale of property) be paid before disbursements;
2. Disbursement of 25% of the remaining capital as follows:
 - 40% to Chapman House Hospice (Charitable Registration Number: 831877105RR0001)
 - 30% to be shared by two local cemeteries if they have registered charitable status at the time of disbursement and plaques to be erected recognizing the donation from the funds received.
 - Walters Falls Cemetery
 - Temple Hill Cemetery
 - 20% to the Walters Falls Community Centre for accessibility upgrades.
 - 10% to Temple Hill United Church, the sister church in the pastoral charge;
 - In addition, 50% of the remaining funds to be given to Temple Hill United Church for their ongoing ministry;
The portion of the funds coming from the property sale will be considered restricted.
3. The rest of the remaining funds to be disbursed according to the WOW Regional Council policy. **CARRIED.**

It was noted that Temple Hill United Church does anticipate receiving some funds. They will be made aware that the portion of the monies coming from the property sale will be considered restricted, but that a request can be made to the commission for use of the restricted funds for potential projects.

2. Massie UC – Letter to Massie governing body outlining 200625 decision of the Covenant Commission

John Neff contacted Patti Evans who would be interested in taking on the task in the fall, if and when Covid-19 restrictions allow and with proper safety protocols are in place. John added that once September rolls around some decisions will need to be made. Ann Harbridge is working on the draft letter to the Massie governing body.

3. Reflection on how things have gone with the commission over the last year and Exec rep to report to the Executive.

Staff noted that commissions will have time during the fall regional council meeting to give an overview of their work.

Commission members agreed that overall they are pleased with the way the work has been dealt with, particularly during the pandemic. Ann Harbridge noted her appreciation that the commission was able to meet in person before Covid and feels that has helped the commission do its work. Appreciation for the invaluable work of the staff was expressed. John Neff added that there have been some challenges faced re: access to information and scheduling. Those challenges have, for the most part, been resolved. John will meet individually with commission member(s) to resolve issues with the zoom program.

Consent Docket

1. Pastoral Charge Supervisors
 - a. Mary Elizabeth Piercy to Trinity UC, Collingwood from July 1 – Aug 16, 2020 while minister, Brian Goodings, is on holidays.
 - b. Bonnie Holliday to Brucefield UC starting June 29, 2020 until the minister, Randy Banks, return (approximately 6-8 weeks).
 - c. Kate Ballagh-Steeper to Londesborough/Auburn Pastoral Charge starting June 29, 2020 until the pastoral charge supervisor, Randy Banks, return (approximately 6-8 weeks). Except August 11-25 when on holidays and Elise Feltrin will fill in.

The Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council **agrees** by consensus to the Consent Docket.

New Business

1. Pastoral charge records. What will the CC require of pastoral charges/communities of faith?

Background information:

In a request about the need for regional councils to review pastoral charge minutes the following was stated by Cynthia Gunn:

The Manual says that communities of faith must conduct regular self-assessments, and the regional council must review reports of the self-assessments from communities of faith.

There is nothing in The Manual (or anywhere else, as far as I know) that specifically says a regional council must review PC minutes line-by-line. I'd say it's up to the regional council to decide on the process (beyond reviewing self-assessments, which is mandatory) to ensure a PC or other community of faith is functioning properly. That may or may not include reviewing minutes on a line-by-line basis. There could be other ways e.g.

- reviewing the PC's annual report;
- asking the PC to prepare a list of the decisions that it made in the past year and reviewing that;
- asking for the minutes of one meeting as a sample, asking the PC governing body to certify that all PC minutes are being kept in the same format as the sample etc., and then reviewing the sample etc. etc.

The commission determined that the criteria to ensure a pastoral charge or other community of faith is functioning properly will be receipt and review of the self-assessment document and annual report. John Neff will place a notice in the newsletter and with the Facebook group encouraging communities of faith to submit their self-assessment checklist and annual report. (John noted that 12 annual reports have been received thus far). It was agreed that ministers, administrative staff, community of faith contact will be sent the reminder, including specifically where to send the documents. Communities of faith will also be asked to let the commission know of their decisions regarding churches reopening, for information.

2. Insurance – Use restricted funds to cover the increase?

MOTION Arthur Hills / Sandy Loomis

The Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council authorizes communities of faith with funds restricted by either the previous presbytery or regional council to access these restricted funds, if needed, to cover 2020 insurance renewal premiums. The governing body's decision to access these funds to be communicated to the Covenant Commission on the form being used to report the use of restricted funds for payroll in March-August, 2020. **CARRIED.**

3. Sale of Manse from St. John's UC, Elmvale

MOTION: Arthur Hills / Sandy Loomis

The Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council **approves** the sale of certain Real Property, the legal description of which is Plan 299 Pt Lot 5 to 6 Plan 335 Lot 7, and the municipal address of which is 23 Young St S., Elmvale, Ontario, pursuant to an agreement between the Trustees of St. John's United Church, Elmvale, a congregation of The United Church of Canada, as Sellers, and Cameron Harbin and Charlotte Johnston-Harbin, as Purchaser, dated the 7th day of July, 2020, the terms of which are as follows:

Purchaser: Cameron Harbin and Charlotte Johnston-Harbin

Sale Price: \$380,000

Deposit: \$10,000

Balance due: \$370,000

Scheduled Closing Date: September 30, 2020

Irrevocability: 5 PM, July 14, 2020

To the following disposition of the proceeds arising from the transaction:

Proceeds are considered restricted funds. Proceeds may only be invested, and only the interest may be applied to the church's general expenses if required.

The Real Property referred to in the above resolution is within the bounds of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council;

The said Real Property is held by the Trustees of St. John's United Church a congregation of the United Church of Canada and part of the Elmvale Pastoral Charge, in trust for St. John's as a part of the United Church of Canada. **CARRIED.**

The commission agreed that there will be no regularly scheduled meeting in August. Should an emergent property issue (or any other emergent issue) arise before September, John Neff will call for a meeting.

Next Meeting: Regular meeting Thursday, September 10, 2020 by Zoom Call - 9:00 AM

Worship by:

Land Acknowledgement: Ann Harbridge