

Executive
Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
Connecting, Supporting, Transforming
Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Roster: Andrea Allan, Gary Clark (President), Rod Coates (Secretary), Brent Caslick (Treasurer), Heather Leffler, Jessica Cottrell, Heather Davies, Joyce Johnston, Mark Laird (President-Elect), Tim Reaburn, Terry Smith, Micol Cottrell (Human Resources Commission), Bruce Dickson (Mission & Discipleship Commission), Norm Eygenraam (Covenant Commission)

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

Present: Andrea Allan, Brent Caslick, Gary Clark, Rod Coates, Jessica Cottrell, Micol Cottrell, Heather Davies, Bruce Dickson, Mark Laird, Heather Leffler, Tim Reaburn, Terry Smith, Sue Duliban, Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa

Regrets: Norm Eygenraam

The Executive of the Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council was called to meet via Zoom teleconference on Wednesday, March 17, 2021.

Opening Worship

Mark Laird read a short story from Taking Flight by Anthony de Mello, about a lifesaving station. He then posed the question, "Reflecting on your personal/professional life, what keeps you grounded in your mission and vision?"

Some responses were:

- Weekly rhythm of creating & leading worship.
- Pandemic has changed everything and feeling very much ungrounded in past year. Celebrations (birthdays, anniversaries) in the congregation add energy & ground me.
- Doing simple things every day – dog walking, cleaning house, daily routine, etc.
- Taking time to reflect and take me out of myself.
- Centered breathing as a calming exercise.
- Stopping to count blessings.
- The wider church and its work keep me grounded.
- Spiritual discipline of journaling.
- Praying and reflecting each morning.
- Using a spiritual director.

Mark thanked everyone for their feedback and noted that we have recently seen things moving with respect to the pandemic, we need to keep focused on the things which are important.

Welcome and Constitution of the Meeting

Gary Clark welcomed Executive members present and called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

He declared the meeting constituted in the name of Jesus Christ, the one true head of the Church and by the authority invested in him by the Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council for whatever business may properly come before it.

Acknowledging the Land

Gary Clark stated:

We come together acknowledging that we work and worship on lands traditionally held and stewarded by First Nations people for many millennia. It's their example of stewardship of the land that gives us hope that we might do better. So as we move closer to reconciliation with our First Nations brothers and sisters, may they teach us what we need to know to live together on this land.

Consent Docket

Heather Leffler questioned the need for including bylaws approval in the consent docket and Cheryl-Ann said the information comes to the Executive because it is required, and it would be helpful to discuss the link between the Executive and corporations, in future.

A. Enabling Actions

1. That the Agenda be adopted as circulated.
2. That the minutes of the February 17, 2021 and September 15, 2020 meetings be approved as distributed.
3. That motions and proposals be written and given to the Secretary.

B. Correspondence received

1. Broadview – regional council report proposal (For information)
2. Thank-you correspondence (For information)
3. PTCC 2021 estimated income for WOWRC (For information)

C. Actions

1. Confirm authorization of the Camp Menesetung UCC Camp Capital Assistance Grant Application

D. Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council Omnibus motion – March 17, 2021

That the Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council (8) Executive approve the following actions:

Bimini United Church Camp

...based on the guidance received from General Council Staff, pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the by-laws dated December 7, 2020 of the incorporated ministry known as Bimini United Church Camp
This is based on the members resolution of December 7, 2020 and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada incorporated ministries policy.

Gary Clark declared the consent docket approved by consensus.

Business Arising

1. Commission Reports

a. Covenant

Sue Duliban reported, on behalf of the Commission, that they were glad to have John Neff back, and a sub-group has been formed to review pastoral charge supervisor payment and working with other two regions on this matter.

b. Human Resources

Micol Cottrell reported on the following Human Resources Commission items:

- Diane Blanchard is offering regular Ministry and Personnel training once a month. The last M&P training had 80 people in attendance. There has been a good expression of interest in the April training. Diane is also leading search team training. She is also working towards leading harassment policy workshops.
- The LLWL (Licensed Lay Worship Leader) Resource Team is in the process of organizing a spreadsheet to better track LLWLs in our region including tracking annual reports and interviews. They are working on interviewing those who were recognized by presbyteries previously.
- At the regional meeting we are requesting some time to recognize our LLWLs. There are approximately 26 people to recognize. We would like time in the spring to recognize new LLWLs (approx. 4 people) and time in the fall meeting to recognize those previously recognized by presbytery (this will give time to complete their interviews). We could use our commission time for recognitions if needed.

Micol said there are a significant number of LLWL's needing to be recognized. He suggested allotting time at the spring regional meeting to recognize them & highlight their work, with the remainder being recognized in a second session at a fall meeting.

Gary Clark noted that it would be helpful for commissions to submit a list of their agenda items for the spring meeting planning group so that this can be worked into the meeting planning.

c. Mission & Discipleship

Bruce Dickson invited the Executive to peruse the most recent newsletter for issues and items as it explains a good deal of the ongoing work of the Commission. Bruce said the last Commission meeting focus was the April 28th newsletter – what does mission mean to us, and what does discipleship mean to us - and hoping that will foster discussion. Bruce said the Commission was joined by Thérèse Samuel as of March 1st. He noted that Senator Murray Sinclair will be speaking with us at the end of May and that staff are now working on some pre-events for that occasion. Referencing the length of yesterday's newsletter, Bruce commented that it's difficult to share important information without it being too much.

Bruce noted that camp registration dropped 99% in 2020, which is understandable but not sustainable.

Cheryl-Ann said that newsletter used to have a table of contents with links to articles, but creating the link was time-consuming. Heather Leffler said that her experience is to group by subject – e.g., have all WOW information grouped together. Cheryl-Ann said that that is being done but will have another look considering the Executive’s feedback.

2. **Financial Update** (Brent Caslick)

Brent Caslick commented that Ruthanna Mack is learning new software to enable her accessing financial reports.

Proposal 4: CRA Online Authorization

Brent Caslick said that there is an issue of being unable to file tax returns online at present as the authorization has not been updated and the previously authorized individual is not active within the church.

Moved by: Brent Caslick

Seconded by: Mark Laird

That the Executive authorize the Directors named on the T3010 submitted for Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council **108192097 RR 0001 for 2019** to contact CRA to:

- 1) Revoke the online access currently granted Patricia McDermott; and
- 2) Designate R. Savaria of the General Council for online access.

Gary Clark declared this motion CARRIED.

Proposal 5: Audit Fee

Brent Caslick said there didn’t appear to be an audit fee set for certain trust funds, so there is a need to formalize the calculation for the purpose of transparency and to establish a policy, as the audit fee was not included in the 2019 calculation.

The proposal is that:

The Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council Executive authorizes the Treasurer to assess an annual audit fee for the Olivet Fund and Eden Mills Fund calculated as follows:

- 1) ½ of 1% (based upon Opening year’s fund balance minus any current year’s payout plus the current year’s gain or loss) and
- 2) back date this audit fee to be effective January 1, 2019 when WOW was responsible for the trust funds.

Gary Clark declared this proposal approved by consensus.

Proposal 6: PTCC Proposal

Cheryl- Ann provided a brief overview of the PTCC (Presbyteries of Toronto Conference) and how WOW is a successor to the former Northern Waterways Presbytery component of these funds.

Moved by: Bruce Dickson

Seconded by: Heather Leffler

That the Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council Executive agrees to the request of the Board of Directors of PTCC to:

- 1) divide the balance in the New Ministries and Leadership Development Fund as of December 31, 2020 with 25% of that total fund amount to be designated for use in Western Ontario Waterways regional council; and
- 2) name the Executive of Western Ontario Waterways regional council as the screening and recommending body for applications to Western Ontario Waterways regional council's portion of the New Ministries and Leadership Development Fund.

Gary Clark declared this motion CARRIED.

Cheryl-Ann suggested that for 2021 only, given the delay in having the application process in place, we change the grant applications deadline from April 1 to June 1. Bruce Dickson stated that most applicants weren't expecting the form to be available until April 1 and was happy with the proposed June 1st deadline extension. Gary Clark declared the Executive to be in agreement with the proposal.

New Business

Gary Clark requested that Mark Laird take on the role of meeting chair and excused himself from participation in the next several agenda items.

1. Staff Topics

Proposal 1: Updated position descriptions

Cheryl-Ann said the main changes to the position descriptions were to add anti-racism elements; both current and new position documents were posted to Dropbox to enable the Executive to make comparisons between the two.

The proposal is that:

The Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council Executive approves the updated position descriptions for the

- 1) Minister, Congregational Support and Mission
- 2) Minister, Faith Formation and
- 3) Minister, Pastoral Relations

effective immediately and advises the Executive Minister to forward a copy of same to General Council Human Resources.

Mark Laird declared this proposal approved by consensus.

Proposal 2: Sabbatical Plan, including Sabbatical Proposal presented by Kathy Douglas, Minister, Faith Formation

Cheryl-Ann said several regional council staff are overdue for sabbaticals and are now developing proposals, with this being the first one. She provided some additional comments regarding coping with staff absences and which positions will next be eligible for sabbaticals. The Executive continued with some discussion about elements of the current sabbatical programs and what improvements & changes might be appropriate in future,

including the concept of “rest” being an appropriate use of sabbatical time. Heather Leffler offered to draft a proposal, with Bruce Dickson’s assistance, for consideration at a future three-region Executive meeting.

The proposal is that:

The Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council Executive approves the Sabbatical Proposal presented by Minister, Faith Formation, Kathy Douglas and authorizes her sabbatical leave from May 17-August 13, 2021.

Mark Laird declared this proposal approved by consensus.

Proposal 3: Authority for position description updates

Cheryl-Ann outlined the proposal, noting the current situation that the Executive has authority to approve position description changes. The proposal is that simple changes – those not affecting the key purpose of the role – would be authorized by the Executive Minister.

The proposal is that:

The Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council Executive authorizes the Executive Minister to consult with the staff involved and the Staff Support Committee to make updates to Position Descriptions that do not change the key purpose of the role, or the terms of the position. Any change, other than editorial, in purpose, duties, hours or category would continue to require Executive approval. Any revisions to be reported to Executive for information.

Mark Laird declared this proposal approved by consensus.

2. Proposal 7: Preparation for Session with the Honourable Mr. Sinclair, TRC 101

Cheryl-Ann said that the proposal is about making the most of the time with Honourable Mr. Sinclair. The three regional councils who share staff have made arrangements to host an event led by the Honourable Mr. Sinclair, Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), on May 28, 2021. The focus of Mr. Sinclair’s presentation will be on the Calls to Action to the Church from the TRC.

The proposal is that:

The Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council Executive authorizes a budget of \$1,000 from the Regional Council Meeting budget for educational events focused on preparation for the May 28, 2021 event with the Honourable Mr. Sinclair.

Mark Laird declared this proposal approved by consensus.

3. Executive Minister Accountability Report March 2021: For information

There were no additional comments other than several remarks expressing appreciation for the update.

4. Assessments after 2021: For information only 2022 target date 4.5 percent

Cheryl-Ann shared a PowerPoint presentation with an overview of the issues and options associated with assessments. Remit #4 set the maximum assessment increase at 10% per annum for 3 years, and a decision will need to be made for implementing the full 4.5% assessment beyond 2021. General Council Executive (GCE) will make the decision and it may be complete by the May Regional Council meeting. Tim Reaburn provided a perspective of the GCE decision, noting that there are many financial decisions to be made considering the impacts of the pandemic.

Continuing Priorities

1. Massie Review – update

Cheryl-Ann noted that all the Executive will have received the review and are scheduled to meet on this matter next week – March 23rd. Community of Faith representatives have not yet been named to meet with the Executive, so it is not clear if representation has been designated and if anyone will meet with us at the scheduled March 23rd meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to have the community of faith response to the review recommendations, which form the basis for the Executive decisions.

Gary Clark outlined some of the timelines for the meeting agenda and re-confirmed expectations for the various components of the meeting.

Micol Cottrell asked if there should be pastoral care arranged for the Executive, and Cheryl-Ann will discuss options with Kevin Steeper.

Cheryl-Ann suggested the Executive read the review report once again, well before the meeting, as well as the Handbook, and be well rested.

2. Regional Council Meetings in 2021

a. GC Commissioner engagement – update

Sue Duliban noted that these videos were included in the last newsletter.

b. May 2021 planning – update

Gary Clark said that the planning team had not yet met, and that he, Mark Laird & Rod Coates are currently part of the team. Heather Davies questioned the expected attendance at the Celebration of Ministries service at the meeting, since the Southampton church facility remains closed.

c. Fall dates? Note: GC is Oct. 23

Sue Duliban reported that Antler River Waterways has set a date of October 30 for their fall meeting and staff would prefer to have a 2-week interval between regional council meetings. Gary Clark suggested that it might only be a one-day meeting with focus on getting to know one another, and likely less time than the May meeting since a good deal of the business material would have been addressed then.

3. Workplace and violence report

Cheryl-Ann said that April 8th was reserved for the workplace violence and harassment report. The report lists findings for both M&P and ministry personnel; the Office of Vocation addresses ministry personnel findings whereas the Executive deals with recommendations associated with the M&P committee. Cheryl-Ann reminded us of the confidentiality associated with the report, in part because it deals with our colleagues, and how we handle confidentiality is how people will receive us. She noted that the Executive does not meet with anyone for this report; the Executive make decisions based on the findings.

Gary Clark said that we had come to end of our agenda.

Heather Davies moved adjournment. Gary Clark closed the meeting with prayer at 12:45 PM.

Next Meeting: April 21, 9:30 am, via zoom (no Executive meeting in May)

Worship: TBD