## Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council

## Fall 2021 Virtual Meeting

# Friday, November 12, 2021

(*“Resurrection Not Resuscitation”*)

The Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council was called to meet on Friday, November 12, 2021 via Zoom teleconference. Approximately 145 participants attended this meeting.

1. **Welcome & Constitute Meeting**

Mark Laird welcomed everyone and opened this session at 6:03 PM.

Mark 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.

1. **Land Acknowledgement**

An acknowledgement of the territory was led by Mark Laird.

Mark introduced the Online Leadership Team members, and noted some technical aspects associated with the conduct of the Zoom meeting (e.g., use of Chat Box, posting of questions & comments, etc.).

1. **BRAVE/Affirm Statement**

Diane Matheson-Jimenez introduced and presented BRAVE – Commitment to Community Safety. Mary Elizabeth Piercy then introduced and presented the tri-region Affirming Ministries Vision Statement.

1. **Worship**

Worship was led by Sue Campbell, Lynda Goy-Flint, Heather Davies & Mark Laird.

The opening liturgy was followed by singing of the hymn, “Behold, I Make All Things New”

Each member of the worship team provided their name, Church, symbol of joy, and a symbol of new life.

1. **Community Building**

Zoom break-out groups were set to discuss the same – name, Church, symbol of joy, and a symbol of new life. But with technology and break-out rooms not cooperating, participants shared these thoughts via Chat Box.

Sue Campbell closed this community building sharing time with prayer.

1. **Opening & Procedural Motions**

Terry Smith provided an overview of Proposal #1 – Opening & Procedural Motions

**Moved by**: Terry Smith

**Seconded by**: Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa

That the regional council adopt the following as a consent docket (Page 18-20 of workbook):

1. Adopt the agenda as circulated and authorize the Agenda and Business Committee to make any changes as necessary;
2. Approve the minutes of the meeting of 2021-05-13-15;
3. Receive the following minutes of the following meetings of the

• Executive

2021-03-23

2021-04-08

2021-04-21

2021-05-19

2021-06-15

2021-07-14

2021-08-04

2021-09-15

• Covenant Commission

2021-04-08

2021-05-13

2021-06-17

2021-07-15

2021-09-09

• Human Resources Commission

2021-04-20

2021-05-18

2021-06-15

2021-07-20

2021-09-21

• Mission and Discipleship Commission

*No Approved Minutes to receive*

1. Appoint Fred Monteith as Parliamentarian;
2. Appoint Terry Smith as Chair, Agenda and Business Committee;
3. Name Maggie Dieter to serve as Equity Support Team Member;
4. Name President Mark Laird, Chair Agenda and Business Committee. Terry Smith, Executive Minister Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa, and Executive Assistant Sue Duliban, as the Agenda and Business Committee;
5. Name regional council staff members as scrutineers;
6. Set the bounds of the meeting as the zoom call and the sanctuary of Melville United Church, Fergus, Ontario;
7. Make the designated representative from any United Church ministry, other than a congregation, which has been invited to become a community of faith by entering into a covenant with the regional council, a member of the regional council for this meeting (Section C.1.2 c);
8. Make all guests corresponding members;
9. Set the deadline for new business to be submitted to the Agenda and Business Committee as 10:00 a.m., Saturday, November 13, 2021.
10. Receive all written reports in the workbook.
11. Adopt the following method for dealing with proposals for action by the regional council

Step One:

The Presenter will outline:

• What is the issue? and

• The suggested way in which the regional council might respond to the issue.

Step Two:

The President will inquire if there are questions for clarification. Please note this is for clarification only.

Step Three:

The President will then ask if there are changes or additions being suggested for the proposal. Using warm and cool signals, the regional council will seek to come closer to agreement on how to respond to the issue.

Step Four:

Once there is significant agreement, the President will invite the Presenter to move the motion at which point the regional council enters the formal debate process.

1. Adopt the following method for dealing with proposals for action by the General Council:

Step One:

The President will inquire if there are questions for clarification. Please note this is for clarification only.

Step Two:

The Chair, Agenda and Business will move that:

Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council agrees with the proposal.

Step Three:

The person or community of faith that submitted the proposal will speak to it first and last before the vote.

Step Four:

Vote on agreement with the proposal.

Step Five:

Follow remaining steps as outlined in Section F, The Manual.

Mark Laird declared the motion **CARRIED**.

1. **In Memoriam & Community of Faith Changes in Life Cycle**

A presentation video honouring those who have passed away & those who have retired. Those named who have passed were Rev. Benjamin Robert Clark Johnson (OM) and Rev. Stanley Albert Wootton (OM)

1. **Honouring WOWRC Retirees**

Those named who have retired were James Ball, Brian Goodings, Vicki Johnson, Sally Ann Longfellow, Marion Loree, Roy Nicol-Macdonald, Kathi Urbasik-Hindley, and Lyn Workman.

1. **Financial Update**

Brent Caslick said audited financial statements are still not ready due to several issues with the audit process. He then continued with an introduction and brief overview of Proposal #2 – Reviewing 2021 Year-to-Date Financial Statements (Page 21 of Workbook).

1. **Licenced Lay Worship Leaders**

Marion Boyd, Chair of Human Resources (HR) Commission HR Resource Team, introduced and presented the list of Licenced Lay Worship Leaders (LLWL’s) currently authorized by the HR Commission: Susan Barnett, Marion Boyd, Michele Braniff, Theresa Carse, Liz Dillman, Dulcie Facey, Karen Falk, Michael Finnigan, Ridley Gilmore, Paul Knierim, Angie Lannin, Trish Macgregore, Wendy May, Andrew Middleton, Kate Monk, Joyce Osborne, Linda Paul, Bill Rusk, Lynn Rusk, Murray Scanlon, Patty Sinnamon, Wendy Smith, Penny Squirrell, Gloria Wiltbee, Bruce Whitmore, Sonya Wu-Winter. The list of currently approved LLWL’s is held by Diane Blanchard. A video presentation introduced each of the current LLWL’s.

1. **Stewardship**

A video presentation by Dave Jagger, Stewardship & Gifts Officer, outlined the donations to Mission & Service (M&S) and emphasized some of the many projects & initiatives which have benefitted from the United Church’s M&S fund.

1. **Reminders**

Mark Laird reminded the meeting participants of the contact information for submitting any new business items.

Mark then asked participants to share their symbols of new life on their respective screens.

1. **Closing Prayer**

Mark Laird closed this evening meeting session with prayer, giving thanks for new life and joy at 7:50 PM.

## Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council

## Fall 2021 Virtual Meeting

# Saturday, November 13, 2021

(*“Resurrection Not Resuscitation”*)

1. **Welcome**

Mark Laird welcomed all in attendance and opened the meeting at 9:31 AM. He thanked everyone for their use of the Zoom Chat Box & online meeting tools last evening.

1. **Worship**

Heather Davies opened the worship session, briefly summarizing some recent significant events involving conflict or loss. Heather said there would be time to lament this morning.

Following a territorial acknowledgement for her region, Heather offered an opening prayer for lament and sorrow, and helping with grief.

The topics for focus of lament, presented by Sue Campbell, Lynda Goy-Flint, Heather Davies & Mark Laird, were:

* Unmarked Indigenous children’s graves.
* Violence against Missing & Murdered Indigenous women and LGBTQ2+
* COVID-19 pandemic
* The Climate Crisis

Each lament focus was interspersed with the singing of the hymn, “God Weeps”

Mark Laird concluded this time of worship with a prayer.

1. **Community Building**

Mark Laird introduced the break-out groups, asking that participants talk about the traditional territory in which their church is located and how this acknowledgement of territory has impacted their worship.

At the conclusion of this period of sharing, Mark Laird thanked the participants in the break-out session and this time concluded with singing of the hymn, “Spirit Open My Heart”

1. **GC44 Proposals**

Executive Minister Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa explained the process for proposals going to General Council, noting that the regional council only has the option to agree or disagree with the proposal.

Terry Smith introduced Proposal #6 - Including Rest and Renewal for General Council and Regional Staff on Extended Developmental Leaves (Page 31 of the Workbook).

Bruce Dickson elaborated on the proposal & its background, noting that rest & renewal was not automatically a component of sabbatical plans.

Mark Laird asked for questions of clarification.

Questions raised were:

* Brent Caslick asked about the duration of sabbatical. Cheryl-Ann confirmed it was 3 months.
* Cecil Ormand – does this expand the number of people eligible or broaden the scope? Cheryl-Ann said it only broadened the scope of the sabbatical.
* Sue Campbell raised a point of privilege regarding the opportunity to discuss the proposal & not just raise a question.

**Moved by**: Terry Smith

**Seconded by**: Bruce Dickson

That the Western Ontario waterways Regional Council agrees with *Proposal #6: Including Rest & renewal for General Council and regional Staff on Extended Developmental Leaves* as presented on Pages 31 & 32 of the WOWRC Fall 2021 Meeting Workbook.

Proposal #6 reads as follows:

**The Executive of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council proposes that the General Council could:** Rework *Human Resources Manual Policy 2.15 on Compensation and Leaves* and make the need for rest and renewal a part of any leave – not an option and not something you have to prove you need.

Mark Laird declared the motion **CARRIED**.

Mark Laird asked if there were any requests to provide notes to accompany the proposal to General Council.

* Lavern Clark (Blyth Pastoral Charge) said that Rest & Renewal (R&R) should not dominate the sabbatical, but only be a component thereof since it was intended for continuing education.
* Jenn Brown (Clifford Pastoral Charge) asked for clarification of which position R&R applies at present, to which Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa said it was only Minister, Pastoral Relations.
* Ann Harbridge spoke against adding a note, with the rationale that R&R remains a component of the sabbatical and therefore hesitated to put constraints on it.
* Gord Dunbar spoke against adding a note, with the rationale that R&R brings in an additional element that is part of the plan.
* Norm Eygenraam spoke in favour of Ann Harbridge’s argument and against providing a note.
* Micol Cottrell said the HR policy speaks to educational leave, but this proposal expands the scope.
* Cathy Larmond & Cathy Hird both noted that it was a surprise that this was not already part of an established development leave.

**Moved by**: Cathy Larmond

**Seconded by**: Andrea Allan

As a Regional Council we were surprised to learn that rest and renewal was not already a component of Extended Developmental Leave.

Mark Laird asked if there was any further discussion, and all indicated in favour of ending discussion.

Mark Laird declared this motion **CARRIED.**

1. **Mission & Discipleship Commission** (Bruce Dickson)

Bruce Dickson thanked the regional council for their support for the Commission’s work, especially the M&S Funds which support the work of the Commission. Bruce delivered a PowerPoint presentation outlining some of the Commission’s highlights, with a full report of Commission being on page 13-14 of the workbook.

The meeting then switched to break-out groups, with the discussion question, “What does Mission & Discipleship mean to you?”

Following the break-out groups, individual contributions were submitted to an online Word Cloud to highlight expressions of M&D identified by the break-out groups.

Bruce Dickson thanked everyone for their contributions and said the information would be shared with the group after the meeting. He concluded by thanking some of the staff members who support the M&D Commission.

Timeline

Description automatically generated

**Moved by**: Terry Smith

**Seconded by**: Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa

That the order of the day be extended from 11:30 until noon.

Responding to a question from Gavin Williams, Cheryl-Ann said that “point of privilege” means that someone doesn’t understand what is going on and can’t participate.

Mark Laird declared this motion **CARRIED.**

1. **United Property Resource Corporation (UPRC)**

Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa introduced Tim Blair, Chief Executive Officer of the United Property Resource Corporation (UPRC), which is a wholly owned entity of the United Church of Canada.

Tim Blair shared a UPRC video outlining the work of the corporation, following which he answered some general questions from meeting participants, including examples of rural and small projects, and how UPRC works with various communities of faith.

1. **Covenant Commission** (Ann Harbridge)

Ann Harbridge said the Covenant Commission’s full report was in pages 10-12 of the workbook. Ann raised the issue of the need for companions to walk with communities of faith (COF’s), as well as pastoral charge supervisors. She emphasized the benefits of having the COF profile updated, and that volunteers to assist with property-related matters would be helpful.

Ann introduced a game involving an online poll with ten questions incorporating key elements of the Covenant Commission’s role, which finished by reviewing the results with the meeting participants.

1. **Closing**

Mark Laird noted that it was now just time for lunch, then closed this session at 11:59 AM.

**[BREAK]**

1. **Opening**

Mark Laird opened the meeting & resumed proceedings at 1 PM.

1. **Human Resources Commission** (Micol Cottrell)

Micol Cottrell presented a video which outlined the work of the Human Resources Commission.

1. **Introduction of Gavin Williams, OM Candidate, and Young Seo, Candidate for Admission**

Tanya Cameron introduced Young Seo, a Candidate for Admission, with a brief biographical summary. Young Seo then addressed the court with her journey of faith.

Tanya Cameron next introduced Gavin Williams, Candidate for Ordered ministry, with a biographical summary. Gavin then addressed the court and outlined his journey of faith.

1. **Community Building**

Heather Leffler briefly introduced the regional council & its constituent groups and provided an overview of their roles and responsibilities. She then asked for the break-out groups to consider the following:

* Share your experiences serving in WOW or in one of our former Presbyteries or Conferences
* Record questions you have for Commission Chairs or the Executive about a role you might be interested in
* Volunteer!!!

*When you volunteer, you will receive training in your role. Sharing what you learn will benefit your congregation too.*

Returning from the break-out room sessions, Mark Laird noted that if there were any questions arising from these sessions that they could be directed to the Commission chairs & information provided in response.

1. **Financial Decisions** (Moved from morning session – Part of Unfinished Business)

Mark Laird provided an overview of the outstanding finance proposals still needing to be addressed in the context of the remainder of the day.

Brent Caslick introduced Proposal #2 highlights. He noted the delays with the audit are partly due to audit staff and partly due to consolidation of previous presbytery and conference funds. He said that the 2021 expenses were largely on target and within budget.

Some questions raised were:

* Gail Fricker asked why Executive meeting expenses doubled in 2022. Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa said it was for governance oversight review.
* Bob Funstan asked why there were no travel expenses for June year-to-date, and Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa said no travel expenses had been incurred due to the provincial lockdown.
* Cecil Ormond asked who the auditors were, and Brent Caslick said Price-Waterhouse Coopers (Toronto).
* Andrea Allan noted that 2022 travel expenses were reduced and asked if consideration had been given for in-person and Zoom meetings, which Brent Caslick confirmed was the case.

**Moved by**: Brent Caslick

**Seconded by**: Terry Smith

That the regional council:

1. Receive the 2021 operating statement to date for information;
2. Direct the Executive to deal with the 2020 Auditors’ Report; and
3. Direct the Executive to forward the 2020 Auditors’ Report via email to the roll of this meeting once it is approved.

Bruce Dickson asked if we were concerned about the fact that we were still awaiting an audit and if we had confidence that we would have good financial data. Brent Caslick said that he had confidence in the auditor.

Cathie Stewart Savage asked if there was risk of losing charitable status as a result of the loss of audited statements. Brent Caslick said the church had filed statements with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and that updates would be posted once the audits were finalized.

Gail Fricker noted nothing had been budgeted for emergent ministries in 2022, and Brent Caslick said we don’t plan for this (issues, conflicts, etc.) and money is taken from reserves if required.

Mark Laird stated this motion was **CARRIED.**

Brent Caslick introduced Proposal #3, noting that PWC (Price Waterhouse Coopers) was used by the national church and is our current auditor.

Mark Laird asked for questions of clarification, for which there were none raised.

**Moved by**: Brent Caslick

**Seconded by**: Terry Smith

That the regional council:

Name PWC to perform the 2021 audit of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council at

the General Council Office.

Mark Laird stated this motion was **CARRIED.**

Brent Caslick introduced Proposal #4, Operating Budget 2022.

Mark Laird asked for questions of clarification, for which there were none raised.

**Moved by**: Brent Caslick

**Seconded by**: Terry Smith

That the regional council:

1. Endorse the following principles used to develop the budget:

* Due to the pandemic, churches learned how to gather virtually for worship and for meetings. This significantly reduced carbon emissions and also respected the time of regional council representatives and staff. The budget reflects an expectation that the majority of meetings involving the regional council, its leaders and its staff will be virtual gatherings. Meeting and travel budgets have been adjusted accordingly.
* As in 2021, every effort was made to sustain a similar level of Mission and Service available for grants.
* Operating expenses have been increased by 2%.
* Salaries reflect anticipated increases within the salary grid along with cost of living increments.
* Expenses incurred in dealing with matters under Section J: Oversight and Discipline of the Manual will be funded from the Unrestricted Operating Reserve as these fluctuate in numbers and cost.

And

1. Adopt the proposed 2022 budget authorizing the Executive to adapt as necessary within the above guidelines.

Mark Laird stated this motion was **CARRIED.**

Patricia Greig noted the use of word “churches” instead of COF in item #1, and Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa said it was in reference to the broader church but not the regional council or its commissions. Continuing, Cheryl-Ann said a COF had a specific definition and was in a covenant relationship.

**Moved by**: Terry Smith

**Seconded by**: Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa

That the order of the day be extended by ½ hour (to 3 PM).

1. **Closing Motions**

**Moved by**: Terry Smith

**Seconded by**: Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa

That the regional council:

1. Entrust any unfinished business from its November 12-13, 2021 meeting to the Executive;
2. Authorize the Executive to fill any vacancies on the understanding that appointments will be confirmed at the next regional council meeting;
3. Direct the Executive to plan to convene a meeting of the regional council in the spring of 2022; and
4. Entrust the Executive and Commissions with the responsibilities and authority of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council in accordance with The Manual of The United Church of Canada and the Governance Handbook of the Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council.
5. Close the November 12-13, 2021 meeting of the Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council at the close of the Celebration of Ministry Service on Saturday, November 13, 2021.

Mark Laird declared this motion CARRIED.

1. **Courtesies**

Gary Clark extended thanks to those who had assisted with this regional council meeting:

* Planners of meeting
* Tech support
* Worship team
* Musicians
* All staff people
* All serving on commissions
* Dave Jagger
* Melville United for hosting Celebration of Ministries service this evening
* Lynda Boyd-Flint for preaching this evening
* All for participating in this meting and work done for WOW

Gary Clark spoke to the joy of Mark Laird’s leadership.

1. **Closing Worship**

The closing worship was led by Sue Campbell & Mark Laird, beginning with a dialogue between in vitro twins discussing their life after delivery. This concluded with a singing of the hymn, “In the Bulb There is a Flower”

Mark Laird noted that online Zoom link to the Celebration of Ministries Service was sent out, and said that an evaluation form would be issued and completion would be appreciated.

Mark Larid closed the meeting with a benediction at 2:45 PM