**Executive**

**Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council**

**of The United Church of Canada**

***Connecting, Supporting, Transforming***

# Wednesday, April 27, 2022

**Roster:** Mark Laird (President), Gary Clark (Past President), Rod Coates (Secretary), Brent Caslick (Treasurer), Andrea Allan, Jessica Cottrell, Heather Davies, Joyce Johnston, Heather Leffler, Terry Smith, Cathy Larmond (Human Resources Commission), Bruce Dickson (Mission & Discipleship Commission), Ann Harbridge (Covenant Commission)

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

**Present**: Brent Caslick, Rod Coates, Jessica Cottrell, Bruce Dickson, Sue Duliban, Ann Harbridge, Mark Laird, Cathy Larmond, Heather Leffler, Terry Smith, Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa

**Regrets:** Gary Clark

The Executive of the Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council was called to meet via Zoom teleconference on Wednesday, April 27, 2022.

**Welcome and Constitution of the Meeting**

Mark Laird called the meeting to order at 9:15, stating, “I constitute this meeting in the name of Jesus Christ, the one true head of the Church and by the authority vested in me by Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council for whatever business may properly come before it. The bounds of this meeting will be the Zoom call.”

**Acknowledging the Land**

Mark Laird said that as we listen for God to speak to us during our meeting today, we also look to see that physical face of God in our lives and we do not have to look far for God comes to us. Jesus comes to his disciples through locked doors, God comes to us even when we do things that separate us from God when we act more human than made in the image of God. God searches with love and peace and finds us broken, locked away looking for what we had lost. And one small step in rebuilding that brokenness between us and the First Peoples of this land is to acknowledge that I live, work and worship on the traditional territories of the Mississauga, Odawa, and Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nations and their relationship with the First Nations and creation and with God begin to be mended as the light of Christ shines and searches our brokenness.

Mark Laird recognized and thanked secretary Rod Coates and all Executive members about to retire from their roles.

**Opening Worship & Check-in**

## Mark Larid asked the Executive to share a check-in sharing how they were doing and include an optional church humour or joke.

**Consent Docket**

1. **Enabling Actions**
2. That the Agenda be adopted as circulated.
3. That the minutes of the meeting of March 16, 2022 be approved as distributed.
4. That motions and proposals be written and given to the Secretary.

**B**. **Correspondence Received**

1. Application for UCC Technology Support Grant: Christian Resource Centre, Mitchell

The Executive of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council supports the Christian Resource Centre “Application for Technology Support Grant” in the amount of $1,500.00.

1. Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) WOWRC Property Management Detailed Report @ December 2021 (Received for information)
2. Nominees for Presbyteries of Toronto Conference Corporation (PTCC)

That Betty Morrison and Mary Ellen Parsons, two (2) existing members of PTCC, be put forward as nominees for a term of three (3) years from 2022 to 2025.

1. **Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council (8) Omnibus motion - April 27, 2022**

That the Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council (8) Executive take the following action(s):

a) Waterloo Presbytery Extension Council

…pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve Waterloo Presbytery Extension Council 2021-2022 Board of Directors

Bill Allen

Greg Case

Don Davidson

Wayne Dawson

Don Douglas

Bob Elliott

Mary Feldskov

John Fraser

Nancy Lennox

Cindy Lunau

Mark Rutledge

This is based on the draft Annual General Meeting minutes of April 28, 2021, the 2021 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada incorporated ministries policy.

Commenting on the Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) item, Cheryl-Anne mentioned that two properties were asked to be managed by TUCC. She said that the Waverly United Church property sale was stalled and has a cemetery associated with it; the congregation disbanded before the cemetery was dispositioned and severed, so still need to be determined is whether it will be managed by the cemetery board or by the township.

Mark Laird declared the Consent Docket approved by consensus.

**Business Arising**

1. **Commission Reports**
   1. **Covenant**: For information: Ann Harbridge will be the Acting Minister Congregational Support and Mission during John Neff’s sabbatical (May 9 – August 8). Arthur Hills will be Acting Chair, Covenant Commission. Marg Krauter will be the Covenant Commission representative to Executive.

Additional to this information, Ann Harbridge said that a volunteer has been reviewing annual reports, with 37 received in the past month, and that some additional reviewers would be helpful. Ann said that the Commission is looking for a pastoral charge supervisor recruiter and has a job description for this position. The Commission is also looking at congregations having an extended term pastoral charge supervisor.

Ann reported that the Auburn United Church sale was approved, as well as the closing of two more congregations – Gorrie & Wroxeter – and that every meeting of the Commission is dealing with a church closing.

Cheryl-Ann said that smaller rural churches held on during the COVID pandemic but now seem to be experiencing a wave of closures, especially in the Antler River & Western Ontario Waterways regions.

Bruce Dickson asked if there was a common denominator to these closures and if there was support or encouragement or help which the regional council might provide. Anne said the pandemic exacerbated some issues which didn’t matter when the churches were closed, and now with re-opening things are coming to a head.

Ann said that new streamlined governance models are being introduced as there aren’t enough people to fill the positions in the current model. Congregations looking to change things (i.e., creativity) will survive and those who keep things the same are less likely to continue. Cheryl-Ann said we need to look at ways to support small, engaged congregations who will never have the capacity to call a minister but can be resourced in other ways – e.g., via a circuit.

Anne said the Commission is looking at the options of having a paid pastoral charge supervisor, since it is asking a lot for a minister who already has a home congregation to be responsible for this additional role.

* 1. **Human Resources**

Cathy Larmond noted that she has been liaison for congregations attempting to find a new minister and it’s been difficult to attract to rural congregations. She said that M&P workshops are ongoing and been very well attended. Cathy said there will be a shake-up within Human Resources as the commission chair is leaving and a new staff support minister arriving.

* 1. **Mission & Discipleship**

Bruce Dickson said camps were up and running, with some celebrating camping Sundays, and registrations are starting to come in. Bruce said that registration is a prime source of revenue, and that recruiting of camp counsellors is part of an overall trend of recruiting young people.

Bruce said that Indigenous Right Relations work is ongoing and to keep an eye out for events occurring to support this work, with many being in Newsletter.

Bruce noted that Gail Fricker & Jenn Hind-Urquhart are looking to co-chair his role as he leaves the Commission chair position.

Cheryl- Ann said that WOW absorbed a 40k$ cut in M&S grant in its budget, but due to salary costs & grants it may be necessary to make some cuts to the 2022 budget in consideration of this.

Cathy Larmond noted that the region’s UCW had recently met.

1. **Proposal 1: Cost of Supporting Congregations**

Mark Laird noted this has been on the agenda for several meetings, and we now have a proposal which arose from General Council conversations & guidelines.

Heather Leffler noted that not all congregations would be aware of the support this proposal provides, with Mark Laird noting that in the conversations between staff personnel & communities of faith this would be outlined as an option and a tool which could be used to assist.

**Moved by**: Terry Smith

**Seconded by**: Cathy Larmond

That. . .

The Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council Executive:

Authorizes staff to offer the resources best suited for supporting and strengthening congregations on the following terms:

1. For congregations with an income of less than $150,000 and less than $37,500 in unrestricted reserves to provide resources costing up to $5,000 with the prior knowledge of the President and Treasurer;
2. For congregations with an income in excess of $150,000 or more than $37,500 in unrestricted reserves to provide 50% of the cost for resources totaling up to $5,000.
3. Any need to exceed these limits requires the Executive’s prior approval.

Mark declared the proposal approved by consensus.

**New Business**

1. **Financial items** (Treasurer Brent Caslick)

Brent Caslick reviewed the history of this issue and explained the motion was required to provide a record of authorization.

**Moved by**: Brent Caslick

**Seconded by**: Terry Smith

To authorize the total disbursement of the Eden Mills Restricted funds to the Waterloo Presbytery Extension Council in the total amount of $136,591, with an advance payment of $130,000 out of our Restricted Funds on Friday, April 8th and to rescind our previous motion made in early 2021 to advance $126,000. Balance of funds ($136,591 less $130,000) to be sent once the 2021 Audit has been completed.

Mark Laird declared the motion carried by consensus.

Brent Caslick said the 2nd motion was to pay out the funds as stipulated in the details of the motion wording.

**Moved by**: Brent Caslick

**Seconded by**: Cathy Larmond

To authorize the disbursement of the 2021 Investment (Realized/Unrealized) Gains made on the Olivet Funds held in Restricted Funds of $42,084 to be split evenly between St. James'-Rosemount United Church and Calvary Memorial United Churches in Kitchener, with advance payments of approx. 80% totaling $16,835 each be sent to St. James'-Rosemount and Calvary Memorial as soon as possible, with the balance of the funds sent once the 2021 Audit has been completed.

Mark Laird declared the motion carried by consensus.

1. **Gorrie United Church: Trustees required as of August 1, 2022**

As per WOWRC Covenant Commission motion April 21, 2022 meeting: MOTION Arthur Hills / Matthew Lindsay: That the Covenant Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council approves the request of Gorrie U.C. to be disbanded effective July 31, 2022; that its last worship service be June 26, 2022 at the Gorrie church; and that Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council handle all matters associated with its disbanding in accord with charity law and the property policy of the regional council and, in exchange, forfeits the opportunity to direct a portion of the proceeds. CARRIED.

Mark Laird asked if we needed to appoint trustees today, and Cheryl-Ann said the congregation is walking away from the church and not interested in the disbanding process, hence the Gorrie community of faith has forfeited the opportunity to assign their portion of the funds. Cheryl-Ann outlined some of the issues associated with doing this work. Mark suggested names of local persons who might be able to act as trustees be forwarded to him and Cheryl-Ann. Cheryl-Ann introduced a suggestion that a portion of the proceeds be allocated to the congregation of the trustees appointed to do this work.

1. **Proposed dates for RC Meetings**

Sue Duliban said this is for the purpose of planning, which helps staff and takes out the last-minute nature of the work. Cheryl-Ann noted we also need to contemplate when we might be able to do a 3-region in-person meeting. Today’s focus is fall 2022 and spring 2023. Chery—Ann said 2 weeks between regional meetings is required. The suggestions of Nov 18-18, 2022 and May 26-27 2023 for WOW were agreeable for all.

**Ongoing**

1. **May RC meeting - update**

Mark Laird said several things have had to change but work is ongoing and all should be in readiness for the May regional council meeting.

1. **Camp Day: June 25th, Camp Bimini**

Mark Laird said the hope is there will be an outdoor meeting at Camp Bimini. He & Kathy Douglas are on the planning team & they would welcome additional help.

Mark suggested that the May Executive meeting be skipped and not meet again until June since it follows closely after the regional meeting, to which everyone agreed.

Mark thanked those who participated, and closed the meeting with a blessing at 11:30

Next meeting: Wednesday, June 15th: 9:15 am, zoom