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

Place: Zoom Meeting 10:00 a.m.

Roster: Douglas Hayward (L) (Chair), Cathy Larmond (OM), David Shearman (M), Jane Sullivan (OM)

Staff Support: Rev. Micol Cottrell, Pastoral Relations Minister mcottrell@united-church.ca, Pretima Kukadia, Admin, Communication & Records pkukadia@united-church.ca

Present: Douglas Hayward, Cathy Larmond, David Shearman, Jane Sullivan, Micol Cottrell, Pretima Kukadia

Regrets:

Absent:

Welcome and Constitute Meeting: Douglas Hayward, welcomed everyone to the meeting then then constituted the meeting.

Acknowledging the Land: Douglas Hayward shared an acknowledgement of the land on behalf of the Human Resource Commission.

Opening Worship: Jane Sullivan shared a prayer by J. Philip Newell.

Opening Motions:

Approval of Corresponding Members

MOTION by consensus that Bill Allen for the Tri-Regional Evaluation Team, be accepted as a corresponding member to this meeting.

MOTION

AGREED by CONSENSUS

Approval of Agenda

MOTION by consensus that the agenda be accepted as amended.

MOTION

AGREED by CONSENSUS

Approval of Previous Minutes

MOTION by consensus that the Human Resources Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council approve the minutes of January 17, 2023 as circulated.

MOTION

AGREED by CONSENSUS

Note: Instead of 'approve, accede,' we will use language of consensus with motions going forward, including with this meeting, e.g., 'we concur with.'

Business Arising

1. **Q: How do we fulfill our purpose statement, *Connecting, Supporting, Transforming*?**

CL: Communities of faith ask commission members or staff until they receive the answer they want or need. JS: We support CoF through our tasks. DH: We do our best to support, but get contacted only if there is an unresolved issue. They don't understand that we are here to help and not oversee. CL: We are here for them when needed, not along every single step. DS: We don't seem to have the depth of connection. We have lost the Episcopal sense of commission, of pastoral relations. It is difficult to convey newer policies. The LLWL Resource Team is important as we recommend lay members for credentialing to LLWLs. This supports lay preaching. CL: We connect to the Executive and to the Office of Vocation. In a recent e.g., the OV no longer recommended a candidate continuing, but the HRC is the body that ends the pastoral relationship. JS: HRC works with the CSC and through staff.

Q: How seamless is the work between the CSC and this commission?

CL: Often there can be overlap between roles of PCS and Liaisons. DS: There is a Venn diagram overlap of three circles. CL: Sometimes a person has to wear different hats when working with a pastoral charge. MC: There is a lot of overlap and John Neff (Lynne Allin) and I talk regularly, with OV, and sometimes Executive members. Staff take a lead in some areas. We try to make the processes seamless, or continuing to move.

Q: Which part of the regional council structure are we accountable to, and how do we keep them informed?

DH: We are a commission accountable to the Executive, to pastoral charges and yet we have autonomy. CL: Decisions are recorded in minutes which are posted. DH: Before work comes to us, many processes have been completed.

Q: If work goes off the rails (a disagreement, an issue with a CoF), how do we get informed?

The Executive Minister will inform us. DS: Middle process has been removed, so it is smoother and quicker, but still finding our way. DH: We haven't had the opportunity to work closely with each other because of Covid-19. DS: We have three different cultures within the three regional councils. Have not brought these to a common conversation. DH: As we come out of Covid there is a need for all to learn the new system. We are short-handed. We have a terrible time finding people to appoint. CL: The Executive appoints our members, yet we are accountable to the regional council.

Q: When we have difficulty making a decision, how do we handle it?

DH: We have requested more information. CL: We often will revisit an issue after a period of time. MC: We send position descriptions back for changes regularly. CL: We have not had to refer to the Executive for clarification, as of yet.

Q: In the Search Process, HRC is involved and the CSC. Do we have suggestions to make this smoother?

CL: Liaisons need access to more information and don't always know about decisions and

other people, PCS, involved as they work with different commissions. DH: We need more interaction with all those working with a pastoral charge. CL: Parts of Profile go to the CSC and some go to HRC for approval. DH: CoFs don't know what goes to which commission. JS: In the pilot program in Toronto Conference, the Liaison did all these roles. Now in practice, Liaisons come in fairly late in the process. We are working to change this.

Q: How do we appoint Liaisons?

JS: If someone says yes to being a Liaison, we say yes. MC: We are short staffed, but ideally, we would have someone on the commission that recruits and assigns liaisons. ARWRC has a person to handle Liaisons. CL: Sometimes one person is a Liaison in a CoF and a PCS in other congregations.

Q: How do we handle conflict in CoFs?

JS: We conduct exit interviews. DH: We get excellent information from these interviews. MC: Staff will often handle conflict. The UFS program is there to help in preventing conflict. CL: Conflict often is handled by CSC. DS: Support for a minister comes from OV, and the Pastoral Support Minister (ours is the only one in Canada).

Q: There are resources for CoFs going through change, how aware are CoFs of these?

DH: It is our job to inform them of the resources. DS: There is a sense of being overwhelmed. Documents can be on UCC or RC or Churchhub websites. We are dealing with a largely non-digital generation. JS: Websites don't make everything easy to find. Does everyone comprehend the resources? We can't go back to pre-computers. DH: Some learn in one way and other people in other ways. DS: Churchhub. There is a gap in understanding the processes involved in working with Churchhub. JS: I can understand it, and then it changes. DH: I can't access any of Churchhub as a layperson. I can't help anyone with this.

Q: We spend a lot of time reacting to issues. Are we able to be proactive?

DS: We have a shortage of members on the commission. We lost a lot of very skilled people at start of regional council. We are still in the building phase. CL: We are no longer a balanced commission between lay and ordered. We have had losses, through death and health. We are short on Liaisons, short on people with experience.

Q: What would we like to see in the recommendations?

We need a better recruitment program, we need more regional representatives, even before more commission members. Voluntary applications to the Expression of Interest is not speaking to members. DS: Is the model broken? Is it lack of compensation? Why is this way not working?

Bill Allen: Thank you for your open and informative comments. Final report to be presented in late May, early June.

New Business

1. LLWL Resource Team: David Shearman

Good meeting last week. Need new members. Re-building. Inquiry from new member

looking at LLWL process. One new member is ready for credentialling. Can be presented by email motion.

Meeting monthly, regularly now.

2. Executive Update: Cathy Larmond

Meeting of executive was just before this one. CSC has a concern. Each church that wants to close, individually, looking at large areas that don't have a church, minister, looking to set aside some land and eventually have a church. Special Commission named to review reports from CoF in distress. Members include: President, President-Elect, Representative to Executive from CSC and HRC and Executive Minister (not entire executive).

3. Exit Interview Update: Jane Sullivan

Retired ministers often intervene in ministry relationships. This is a matter referred to OV. Are we required to pass this on to them?

MOTION that the Human Resources Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council receive for information the exit interview with Laurie O'Leary and share a copy with the Congregational Support Commission.

MOTION

AGREED by CONSENSUS

4. Pastoral Relations Minister Update: Micol Cottrell

The feedback from tri-regional evaluation questions is helpful.

The document in the Dropbox for a regionally recognized ministry is not an actual part of this meeting, it is there just for an example. It is not within our polity to assign someone without oversight. A position description is not just for the search process is for the life of the ministry. This is not the Ministry of Bureaucracy. Information re Armed Forces chaplains goes to OV, Pastoral Relations Minister and Executive Minister. Some are requesting this to be a regionally recognized ministry.

Non-United Church ministers start out by doing pulpit supply, then more and more. There are denominations with which we have agreements: The Pleura Document. The governing body needs to be in agreement. Need to be in good standing with their denomination. These positions have liability through? There needs to be a policy document. There are people who have gifts doing a good worship, can they minister week after week? We can help CoF make good faithful decisions.

Tri-regional evaluation: Admin staff are heavily involved with. M&P training recording posted on website.

Working on having streamlined steps all on regional council website, and linked to UCC website. Working on big-picture pieces. Search Team training registration is now automated. Check-ins for M&P, Liaisons feedback from commission members welcomed. Liaisons will receive training on how to do support parts of the search team training so they

can be involved from the start of the change process – and not at the end. The COF can have familiar personnel throughout.

Will provide written and verbal report.

2. Consent Docket

Request for Change of Pastoral Relations

That the Human Resources Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council concur with the request of Ed Laksmanis, OM, for a change of pastoral relationship, for the purpose of retirement, from St. John's United Church, Wiarton and Shallow Lake United Church effective May 1, 2023.

Approval of Open Positions

That the Human Resources Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council having reviewed the position description for a minister, full-time, for Lucknow Pastoral Charge, in shared ministry with Trinity United Church, Lucknow, concur with the position and ask that it be posted on Churchhub.

That the Human Resources Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council having reviewed the position description for a short-term supply minister, 30 hours/week, for Emmanuel United Church, Waterloo, concur with the position and ask that it be posted on Churchhub.

Notes: This position has already been approved by Micol Cottrell, because of the short change of pastoral relations period. Suggestions for changes can be made. They are evaluating future direction and affordability of ministry. The M&P Committee has committed to working with the supply minister and community of faith to make the necessary adjustments from full-time to a 30 hour/week position.

That the Human Resources Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council having reviewed the position description for a short-term supply minister, sabbatical coverage, 15-18 hours/week, for Westminster United Church, Waterloo, concur with the position and ask that it be posted on Churchhub.

Appointment of Liaisons

Approval of New Appointments

That the Human Resources Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council concur with the request of Lakeshore Pastoral Charge, Goderich, to appoint, Harry Disher, OM-R, from 2023-03-01 to 2023-08-31 for short-term supply, 30 hours/week, according to the terms agreed to in ChurchHub on 2023-01-31.

Approval of Calls

Voluntary Associate Ministry (VAM) Applications

That the Human Resources Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council concur with the application of Gail Fricker, OM, to be a Voluntary Associate Ministry at Parkview United Church, Stratford.

Request for License to Administer the Sacraments

Request for Categorization of Position

Receive for information: Sabbatical Leave

----- End of Consent Docket -----

Approval of Consent Docket

MOTION that the Human Resources Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council concur with the consent docket being accepted as amended.

MOTION

AGREED by CONSENSUS

3. Motions outside of the Consent Docket

MOTION that the Human Resources Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council concur with the request of Emmanuel Pastoral Charge, Waterloo, to appoint Brenda Torrie, OM, for 30 hours/week, from 2023-03-01 to 2023-08-31 for short-term supply, according to the terms agreed to in ChurchHub on 2023-02-16.

MOTION

AGREED by CONSENSUS

Next Meeting: March 28, 2023* at 10:00 am by Zoom

Worship/Closing Prayers: Cathy Larmond

Closing Prayer: offered by Jane Sullivan

Adjournment

MOTION that the Human Resources Commission of Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council having concluded its business be adjourned at 12:22 p.m.

MOTION

AGREED by CONSENSUS