

**Executive Secretary Report from David Allen
to Toronto Conference Executive
September 14, 2016**

This report provides highlights from the period from approximately June 15-August 31, 2016.

General preamble: From p. 1-6 of the Toronto Conference Executive policy *Handbook*:

The Executive monitors the Executive Secretary regularly and rigorously but only against established policies.

- Are the Ends being met?
- Are the Executive Secretary Limitations being followed?

This report describes how the Executive Secretary is ensuring that the Ends policies are being met and how the Executive Secretary Limitations policies are being followed. In some cases, the wording will include “In compliance” which the Executive Secretary interprets as “everything required by the policy is being done”. In other cases, the words “generally in compliance” are used, which the Executive Secretary interprets as “to the best of my knowledge, there are no gaps, though progress can always be made”.

The Executive is responsible for monitoring how it is adhering to all other policies, i.e. Executive/Staff Relations and Executive Governance policies.

Executive members will need to follow the *Handbook* policy by policy to understand the comments which follow, since the comments relate directly to whether the Executive Secretary is in compliance with the direction given by the Executive through its policies. The Executive Secretary will indicate whether he is in compliance with the policies, what actions have taken place, and what actions need to be taken. The Executive will assess whether items have been missed, or whether actions taken have been acceptable.

Items marked with an asterisk (*) contain a request for discussion and/or action.

Mission/Ends policies

p. 2-3 mission of Toronto Conference – generally in compliance

- Strengthening... to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ – generally in compliance
 - a) annual meeting: Planning for the 2017 annual meeting will begin on September 6. The overall theme will focus on Toronto Conference becoming an Affirming Ministry.
 - b) exchange visit: The exchange with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea will take place in mid-October. A second orientation session for the

- participants will be held September 10-11. One of the people chosen to attend will be having surgery so is unable to go on the trip.
- c) Affirming ministry planning: A number of people from Toronto Conference, including the President, Executive Secretary and members of the Affirming Ministry Task Group, attended the Affirm national meeting in Ottawa in July. The task group will be leading a discussion at this Executive meeting outlining the requirements to be followed in the Affirming Ministry process.
 - d) * Explorer project: See Appendix D for a report from Carol Hancock regarding the 2016 Explorer project. I am recommending that the program continue in 2017 with financial resources from the Conference Fund.
 - Best use of human and financial resources – generally in compliance
 - a) staffing: i) Jody Maltby will be on sabbatical during November, December and January. ii) Staff were on a three-day retreat at the end of August. The purpose of the retreat is always about group building, dealing with emergent issues as a full staff group, learning and praying together. Part of this retreat focused on being staff in changing times when there is uncertainty about the future structure of the church. iii) Kerrie Perry will be on medical leave until approximately the end of October. Appropriate back-up has been arranged for this time period. iv) social justice staff position – In 2015 a request had been made from a social justice consultation that there should be a social justice staff person at the Conference level. The funding would come from the presbyteries. Subsequently one presbytery has declined involvement, one has reserved funds for this, one is only now debating it and the one with a justice staff person is also in discernment. This has taken some time but has been recently reactivated and a decision should be forthcoming soon.
 - b) Five Oaks: The Five Oaks annual meeting took place June 29. The decision was made to cease operations November 15, but a members' task group was established to look at the potential future for Five Oaks. They will report to the Board and members in the spring of 2017.
 - c) property: There are a number of items to report.
 - i) Dunkerron (Northern Waters Presbytery): Work will be completed this month for the fence and stone repairs.
 - ii) Northern Waters office: The construction of the new elevator and the walkway is now finished and is fully operational. All levels of the building are now accessible.
 - iii) Living Waters office: The decision was made to defer the renovations/construction project until 2017 when the decisions on the remits will be known.

- iv) Toronto Southeast office: The doors have been replaced to become AODA compliant as well as brought up to fire safety code regulations. The property manager has been asked for a report outlining recommendations on future capital projects.
 - v) Conference/South West offices: Work to begin in 2 two weeks and will be completed in consultation with the host congregation this fall to make this location accessible.
 - vi) Telephone and computer systems: Ongoing frustrations continue with the internet speed and telephone issues being experienced in all of the offices. General Council IT has assured staff that the new service provider and improved infrastructure will solve the problems. The schedule for the offices are: Toronto Conference/South West on September 21; Toronto Southeast on September 28; Northern Waters on October 5; and Living Waters on October 12. During these days there will be interruptions in the offices but this information will be posted on the Conference website.
 - vii) Glen Ayr United Church (Toronto Southeast Presbytery): There is still quite a lot of interest in this property but with summer vacations everything slowed down but it is expected to pick up again in September and have this resolved this fall.
 - viii) Newton Robinson United Church (Northern Waters Presbytery): The issues around the registration of the parcels of properties related to the cemetery and church properties have been resolved and next steps will be taken to list property.
- d) sabbatical funding: To date 20 grants to pastoral charges and 18 grants to ministry personnel have been provided for a total of \$84,756.00.
- Oversight and compliance – generally in compliance
 - Providing resources – generally in compliance

p. 2-4 compliance – generally in compliance

Over the summer a list of compliance requirements that need to be addressed by communities of faith was posted to the website under the Community of Faith toolkit; an email noting its availability was distributed throughout the Conference.

p. 2-5 oversight: Presbyteries – in compliance

- Reports from presbyteries: Presbyteries will be contacted in December or January to remind them to submit their annual reports to Conference.
- Oversight visits – The presbyteries have been informed that oversight visits by Conference will be suspended until the results of the remit on a three-council model are known.
- Review of records – Mary Gooley has reviewed the records of the four presbyteries. Her report will be received at the November Executive meeting.

Executive Governance Policies

One of the additions to the role of the Executive Secretary is to bring to your attention any areas where I believe you as an Executive are not in compliance with these policies. See p. 5-3, #7.

p. 3-3 – Duties of Executive members

- No non-compliance issues to mention.

p. 3-6 – Conflict of interest

- No non-compliance issues to mention.

p. 3-9 – embracing diversity

- No non-compliance issues to mention. This policy will be reviewed at the November, 2016 Executive meeting.

p. 3-10 – Nominations

- The Nominations Committee will have a number of items for discussion and/or approval at this meeting.

p. 3-37 – Policy review schedule

- No non-compliance issues to mention.

p. 3-39 – Principles of conduct

- No non-compliance issues to mention.

p. 3-41 – Property

- No non-compliance issues to mention.
- There have been no property transactions during this reporting period.

p. 3-44 – Public statements

- No non-compliance issues to mention.
- No public statements have been issued during this reporting period.

*p. 3-45 – Signing officers

- I am asking for a minor change to the policy to recognize that more than one staff person is authorized to sign cheques. In line three of the policy, the new wording would be “...and one or more Conference program ministers....”

p. 3-46 – Training and education

- No non-compliance issues to mention.

Executive/staff relations policies

p. 4-3 – Relationship to staff

- No non-compliance issues to mention.

p. 4-5 – Monitoring Executive Secretary performance

- No non-compliance issues to mention.

Executive Secretary Limitations Policies

p. 5-3 – general constraints

- in compliance
- Re #8; Anne Shirley Sutherland and Jody Maltby have filled in as acting Executive Secretary from time to time and are familiar enough with the role of Executive Secretary to be able to act in an emergency.

p. 5-4 – accessibility

- in compliance; the operational policy is found at p. 7-3

p. 5-5 – budget and financial

- generally in compliance
- re 1(h) – See the financial statement to the end of July, 2016, p. 16/17-28. There are no issues of concern.
- Re 4(b) – The General Council has provided \$6,500 in a final year of learning fund grants. Last year the grants were given to support right relations work. In keeping with the Conference’s process on becoming an Affirming Conference, the grants this year will be used for individuals, groups and ministries involved in affirming activities. Maximum grant is \$250. To date, there has been three grants totaling \$700 given out.

- The following are the assessment arrears for 2015:
 - Living Waters : \$15,629.50 – seven pastoral charges
 - Northern Waters: – no outstanding assessments
 - South West – no outstanding assessments
 - Toronto Southeast – no outstanding assessments

p. 5-10 – communication

- in compliance; the operational policy is found at p. 7-12
- The new website is now up and running and is starting to receive positive reviews, even as the kinks are being worked out. Special thanks goes to Susie Henderson and Donna Rutz who led the redesign, and to the other staff and volunteers who offered critique at the planning stage. All admin staff have now been trained on how to upload material directly to the site which, in the long run, will be less costly than doing this work through an outside web minder.

p. 5-11 – correspondence

- In compliance

p. 5-12 Incorporated Ministries

- generally in compliance
- Housing corporations have been contacted about the removal of oversight requirements as per a new General Council policy. Executive will need to give approval for each incorporated ministry that completes the required paperwork to effect this change.

p. 5-13 – investment

- Proposed changes to the policy will be discussed during the meeting as part of the Oikocredit discussion. A report from our investment advisor will be received at the meeting.

p. 5-16 letters of good standing

- in compliance

p. 5-17 property

- in compliance