

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA  
TORONTO CONFERENCE**

**Minutes of a meeting of the  
Executive of Toronto Conference  
Wednesday, November 9, 2016**

The Executive of Toronto Conference met at the Toronto Southeast Presbytery office on Wednesday, November 9, 2016. The meeting began at 10:03 a.m. A quorum was present.

**Members present**

Audrey Brown (President), David Allen (Executive Secretary), Bryan Ransom (Past President), Sharon Aylsworth (Toronto Southeast), Anne Hepburn (Toronto Southeast), Roger Hutchinson (Toronto Southeast), Angus MacLennan (Living Waters), Betty Lou McNabb (Living Waters), Lawrence Nyarko (diversity), Thérèse Samuel (Northern Waters), Catherine Smith (South West), Marg Smith (Living Waters), Hans van Nie (South West)

**Regrets**

Eiko Hosaka (diversity), Sungmin Jung (South West), Martha Wood (diversity)

**Absent**

- (Northern Waters), - (Northern Waters)

**Corresponding members**

Affirming Ministry Task Group members Warren McDougall, Cynthia O'Connell

**Community building, listening to God**

**Constituting the Court and introductions**

President Audrey Brown welcomed everyone and constituted the meeting in the name of Jesus Christ to conduct the business properly brought before it. She asked people to introduce themselves.

**Worship/lighting the Christ candle/acknowledging the land**

Anne Hepburn from Toronto Southeast Presbytery introduced the opening worship. Sharon Aylsworth lit the Christ candle, and acknowledged the land on which the Executive was meeting. Lawrence Nyarko lit the four directions candle. Sharon read 1

Samuel 3:1-18. The group sang “I Have Called You by Your Name” from *More Voices*, accompanied by Warren McDougall.

### **Questions for evaluating the meeting**

For this meeting, the Executive focused on two questions for evaluating its work: What voices have been heard? What voices have we not heard?

### **Adoption of agenda**

MOTION by Anne Hepburn/Betty Lou McNabb that the agenda be adopted.

MOTION

CARRIED.

### **Corresponding members**

MOTION by Sharon Aylsworth/Bryan Ransom that Cynthia O’Connell and Warren McDougall be made corresponding members of this meeting.

MOTION

CARRIED.

### **Seeing the big picture**

The Executive Secretary spoke about the inter-connected conversations that will take place during the morning session.

### **Affirming Ministry Task Group**

Members of the Affirming Ministry Task Group led a discussion about becoming an Affirming Ministry and the two primary documents that need to be developed, i.e. a vision statement and a plan of action. Members of the task group took notes and will prepare drafts of both documents for further work by the Executive in February and April.

### **Policy discussion**

The Executive reviewed two policies – the Conference’s mission statement and the policy on embracing diversity. No changes were made at this time. Members of the Affirming Ministry Task Group took notes of the discussion to assist with preparation of the vision statement and plan of action.

### **Major Executive decisions**

The Executive looked at four areas where it has made decisions that have significant impact on its life and witness (Appendix A). Members of the Affirming Ministry Task

Group took notes of the discussion to assist with preparation of the vision statement and plan of action.

### **Lunch**

Roger Hutchinson led grace at 12:10 p.m.; the meeting resumed at 1:00 p.m.

### **Executive Secretary's report**

The Executive Secretary's report (Appendix B) had a number of items where discussion was requested or up-dates given.

PROK exchange: The Executive has not passed a motion to spend funds for the return leg of the exchange with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK).

MOTION by Angus McLennan/Betty Lou McNabb that the Executive authorize an expenditure of up to \$40,000 from the Conference Fund to cover the costs of the Canada leg of the exchange with Seoul Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea.

MOTION

CARRIED.

Records of Proceedings: Mary Gooley had submitted her review of the records of proceedings from the four presbyteries.

MOTION by Bryan/Catherine that the Executive receive the report of the review of the records of proceedings of the four presbyteries (Appendix C).

MOTION

CARRIED.

Concern was expressed about the lack of full representation from Northern Waters Presbytery on the Conference Executive. The Executive Secretary has been in touch with the presbytery's chair and secretary.

Principles of conduct: The Executive AGREED to continue having the principles of conduct included on each agenda.

Legal expenses: The Executive Secretary gave a brief up-date on legal expenses incurred by the Conference.

Members had an opportunity to ask questions. Questions were asked about presbytery assessments in arrears, and phone system upgrades.

### **Business matters to be considered by the Executive**

### **Minutes**

MOTION by Bryan Ransom/Marg Smith that the Executive approve the minutes of the September 14, 2016 Executive meeting and receive for information the sub-Executive minutes from its meeting of September 15, 2016.

MOTION

CARRIED.

### **Correspondence**

MOTION by Marg Smith/Lawrence Nyarko that the Executive receive the correspondence report (Appendix D) and adopt the recommendations for action.

MOTION

CARRIED.

### **Grand River Spiritual and Educational Resources/AVEL**

The September Executive meeting had requested a report on Grand River Spiritual and Education Resources/AVEL. See Appendix E.

The Executive discussed whether to take an immediate action. A proposed motion would be:

...that Toronto Conference give notice to Grand River Spiritual and Educational Resources Inc. that the Toronto Conference grant will end on December 31, 2017.

Before acting on this proposed motion, the Executive decided it wanted further information from Grand River, i.e. which communities of faith are using AVEL resources? What is the long-term plan for Grand River/AVEL? From the Conference's point of view, we will also want to develop a plan for how resources can be delivered to current users.

### **Omnibus motion**

MOTION by Hans van Nie/Sharon Aylsworth that the Toronto Conference Executive take the following actions:

a) Interim Ministry

... on the advice of its Conference Interview Committee, which has reviewed the application (IM) and references from the applicant; met and interviewed the applicant's request for initial designation as an Interim Minister hereby designate Rev. Christine Smaller as eligible to serve as an Intentional Interim Minister with the following conditions: for a period of five years; and that a presbytery within Toronto Conference assign a trained, experienced intentional Interim Minister as a mentor during her first intentional Interim Ministry to meet with her on a regular basis during the first term of her appointment; and that quarterly reports from Rev.

Christine Smaller and the mentor be sent to the appropriate committee of the presbytery. The mentor should be assigned in discussion with Rev. Christine Smaller and the presbytery.

b) General Council Executive policy for incorporated ministries

...authorize Executive Secretary David Allen to finalize and sign the release agreements for the incorporated ministries as they are reviewed and approved by General Council staff/legal counsel.

c) New Ministries Development and Leadership Fund's Grant Review Committee (Grants Review Committee)

...appoint Roger Hutchinson as one of the Conference representatives to the New Ministries Development and Leadership Fund's Grant Review Committee (Grant Review Committee).

d) Beginning Again Richmond Hill

...approve the Beginning Again Richmond Hill 2016-2017 Board of Directors

Shahin Akter  
John Sguigna  
Carol Thompson  
Mel Thompson  
Timothy Yeung

e) Fred Victor Centre

...approve Fred Victor Centre 2016-2017 Board of Directors

Dave Black  
Valerie Chavossy  
Deane Collinson  
Phillip Dufresne  
John Dynes  
Dawnmarie Harriott  
R. Scott Lawrence  
Claire McIntyre  
Jennifer Manning  
Janet Mason  
Wangari Muriuki  
Karen O'Connor  
Paulett Ramsey  
Annette Warring

Lis Wigmore

f) Lake Scugog United Church Camp Inc.

....approve the Lake Scugog United Church Camp Inc. 2016-2017 Board of Directors

Janet Adamson  
Ken Adras  
Bianca Borden-Heron  
Karen Hamilton  
Jim Lilly  
Shannon Lundquist  
Tim Magwood  
Sally Jo Martin  
Melody Onuotu

g) The Massey Centre for Women and Toronto United Church Council

...grant permission to The Massey Centre for Women and Toronto United Church Council to renew mortgage of up to \$229,443 for a term of three years.

h) Mount Albert United Church Senior Citizens' Foundation

....approve Mount Albert United Church Senior Citizens' Foundation 2016-2018 Board of Directors

Anne Cooper  
Henry De Jong  
Mary Joseph  
Alan Mainprize  
Anne Perrin  
Betty Sanders  
Lynda Young

i) St. John's United Church Alliston Foundation

....approve St. John's United Church Alliston Foundation 2016-2017 Board of Directors

John Downey  
Marilyn Holmstrom  
Dorothy Kennedy  
Joan Kerr  
John Lindayen

Nancy Mann  
Herb Oliver  
Heather Power  
Gord Rintoul  
Maureen Wilson

... based on advice received from the lawyer retained by Toronto Conference to review by-laws, and from General Council Staff, approve the by-law of the incorporated ministry known as St. John's United Church Alliston Foundation

j) Toronto Christian Resource Centre

...approve Toronto Christian Resource Centre 2016-2017 Board of Directors

Peter Adamson  
Joy Connelly  
Bill Dines  
Debbie Drewett  
Nancy Easton  
Andrew Gray  
Leanne Herbert  
Mary Morison  
John O'Leary  
Gary Schlee

k) Weston King Neighbourhood Centre

... approve the Weston King Neighbourhood Centre 2015-2016 Board of Directors

Timothy Barlow  
Jean-Marie Boutot  
Al Farrington  
Tim Gernstein  
Sylvia Hampton  
Michael Kooiman  
Lang Moffat  
Michael Noel  
Robert Schell  
Ken Stier  
Barbara Stone  
Jagada Venketeshwaran  
Wendy Whiteley

- l) Interview Committee Vice-Chair person position description  
 ...approve the Interview Committee Vice-Chair position description with correction to the term to three-year term, renewable once (see Appendix F)
- m) Interview Committee Admission appointments  
 ...delegates authority to the Interview Committee to determine minimum requirements for admission appointments.
- n) Interview Committee Exit Interviews for Interim Ministers  
 ...delegates authority to the Interview Committee to determine how to conduct exit interviews for interim ministers.
- o) 2017-2018 Toronto Conference Executive Meeting Dates and Locations/Hosts  
 ... approve the following 2017-2018 meeting dates and locations/hosts
- September 13, 2017 – South West Presbytery  
 November 8, 2017 – Toronto Southeast Presbytery  
 February 7, 2018 – Northern Waters Presbytery (one week earlier due to Lent)  
 April 11, 2018 – Toronto Conference  
 June 13, 2018 – Living Waters Presbytery

MOTION

CARRIED.

### **General Council restructuring**

The Executive Secretary gave a brief up-date on General Council restructuring. There was discussion about the proposed General Council office renovations, consensus decision-making, and remits.

#### **Discussion items named by Executive members**

There were no discussion items named by Executive members that had not been covered elsewhere in the agenda.

### **Evaluation**

The Executive returned to the questions for evaluating the meeting and moved into a general conversation. The following comments were made:

- Frustrated by the evaluation questions. Do we need different questions?



- Considering the current questions might keep us more aware.
- We did our best when we tried to imagine other voices that might need to speak to us re AVEL.
- It's more important to consider the questions as we deal with items rather than waiting until the end.
- We tried to listen for those who might not be comfortable with the affirming ministry process.
- We heard voices from the margins, e.g. in the affirming conversation. What does it mean to be dominant culture?
- There wasn't enough space to voice concerns.
- We're on the journey to becoming affirming; it's good to know where we are in the conversation.
- Our neighbours to the south just voted against everything we said today.
- Frustration about the article in *The Observer* focusing on Gretta Vosper and the Paris incident.
- People will always feel excluded; how do we be gracious? Our voices were not heard in *The Observer* article.
- Felt attacked by an item of correspondence that had been sent to the Executive.
- Toronto Southeast is trying to define what support means for West Hill United Church.
- Appreciation to CES for holding a lot of stuff for the Conference.

### Closing

With the business completed, the President declared the meeting ended at 2:28 p.m. Roger Hutchinson offered a blessing.

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Audrey Brown  
President

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David W. Allen  
Executive Secretary