

September 18, 2019

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Communities of Faith Commission
Wednesday, September 18, 2019**

The Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council met on Wednesday, September 18, 2019 by video conference. The meeting began at 9:30 a.m.

Members Present

Christine Smaller (Chairperson), Ross Leckie, Cindy Randall, Calin Lau, Gloria Tozek, Carolyn Harding, Sandra Nottegar, Kevin Logie, Harry Ramsaran, Amy Lee, Emma Pipes

Jody Maltby (Staff Lead), Karen Hilfman Millson (staff), Susie Henderson (staff)

Welcome, check in and prayer

The chairperson welcomed everyone, and shared a reading from 1 Timothy chapter 2. We can rest in the knowledge that people are holding us in prayer and with prayer all things are possible. She opened with prayer, gave an acknowledgement of the land, and acknowledged our commitment to being a safe place for all people to gather and participate in our Region. Members checked in.

The chairperson constituted the meeting in the name of Jesus Christ.

Agenda

MOTION by Cindy Randall/Calin Lau that the agenda, as amended and circulated, be approved.

MOTION

CARRIED

Minutes

MOTION by Ross Leckie/Amy Lee that the minutes of the meetings of the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council dated May 16, 2019, June 18, 2019 and August 22, 2019 be approved as circulated.

MOTION

CARRIED

Omnibus Motion

MOTION by Ross/Leckie/Cindy Randall that the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council take the following actions:

- a) Approve the Constitution of Bond Head United Church dated March 2019;
- b) Receive for information the Report of the Intentional Interim Ministry Committee dated September 2019 (Appendix A);
- c) Approve the policy on Transition Team Liaison for Intentional Interim Ministry;
- d) Approve the request by Fairlawn United Church for an extension of their original 18-month intentional interim ministry to the end of June 2020 and recommend to the Pastoral Relations Commission that the contract with their Intentional Interim Minister be extended to this date as well.

MOTION

CARRIED

There was a point of clarification regarding the relationship between this commission and the Intentional Interim Ministry Committee. When a Listening Team makes a recommendation for intentional interim ministry, the commission will make this decision and then refer it to the Intentional Interim Ministry Committee to begin the process. When a congregation wants to request an intentional interim ministry, they would go through the Intentional Interim Ministry Committee and the committee would make a recommendation to the commission.

West Hill United Church – Next Steps

- Congregational meeting

Emma Pipes and Jody Maltby reported on the congregational meeting that was held on September 10th. There was not unanimity regarding a way forward. Some people wanted to make a decision to sell the building. Others wanted more information, including how much of the proceeds from the sale of the building would remain with the congregation. Others want to keep the building and seek financial support from the wider church. Would the congregation be able to use any equity in the building to do repairs and renovations? Another question was whether this Commission would endorse a request to the Toronto United Church Council to forgive their mortgage. There are concerns about staff burnout and a decline in volunteer leadership.

The congregation did not come to a decision at the meeting. They will gather more information about a possible sale and are also waiting to hear from us about the policy and how much of the proceeds they might be able to use.

- Flow Chart
Christine Smaller presented an example of what a flow chart might look like. She noted that a flow chart is a visual representation of the policy and process for

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approving a sale of property where a congregation is neither closing or amalgamating. The first step is to create the policy. The chart will be populated by the information in the policy. We are trying to create useable resources to help congregations navigate through our policies.

We need to consider every situation individually. At the same time we are committed to consistency, transparency and fairness in how we apply policies

- Authority to make decision
The chairperson is still working on this and will report at the next meeting.
- Formula
Gloria Tozek presented her initial work on this. She identified which included considerations for the development of a policy and for the development of a formula. She noted that the report from Toronto United Church Council on strategic sites has some good suggestions that could also inform this work, particularly the use of quadrants as opposed to a straight financial formula.

We need to have a core understanding of the purpose of the policy and what it is for. Is our purpose to put funds back in play for both the community of faith and the region – to support identified goals? If so, what are these goals for the region? Is it to support new communities of faith or new vision?

As well, our statement of purpose needs to reflect our faith – who we are and why we are doing this as an expression of our faith. Every policy needs to support and embody our vision for our work as a commission and the mission of the region to support and connect communities of faith.

- Strategic location – It was noted that the report from Toronto United Church Council is useful and will inform our policy development.
- Updating the mapping process
The chairperson provide background for new members on the intent of having a map of communities of faith within the region to help us understand their context and potential for ministry.
Susie Henderson joined the meeting. Susie met with Sharon BATTERY from EDGE and shared the notes from the commission retreat in May. They are recommending two projects.
The first is a basic regional annotated map that can show data we already have – for example Affirming congregations and accessibility information. We could embed this map on our website and it will be available to anyone. Sharon is willing to create a customized map for us and then we would maintain it, which would mean updating it a few times each year. Central Ontario East Region has a similar map already on their website.

Susie will work with Donna Rutz to ensure our excel spreadsheet is current and will then provide this information to Sharon.

For a more detailed map based on the criteria from the retreat, Sharon has a program that can pull data from other sources, including the United Church year book, census and Environics. This could provide information to help us look at the potential for viability. The region might look very different depending on what criteria is used.

There was some work done by EDGE in the former presbyteries. Jody and Karen will gather what they can find and send it to Susie.

Christine Smaller will work with Susie to develop a proposal for EDGE. We will spend time looking at the data and what we can learn from it as part of retreat.

Susie left the meeting.

Next Steps

All of these pieces of work together can inform a policy for the sale of property when a congregation is neither closing nor amalgamating. Christine Smaller, Gloria Tozek and the Staff Lead will weave these threads together.

Break from 10:50 – 11:05

Policies

- Communities of Faith: Service, Support and Oversight to Communities of Faith

MOTION by Carolyn Harding/Kevin Logie that the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council, approve the Commission policy, *Service, Support and Oversight to Communities of Faith*.

MOTION

CARRIED

The commission offered thanks to Cindy Randall for her work on this policy.

- Communities of Faith: Liaisons

MOTION by Kevin Logie/Calin Lau that the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council approve the Commission policy, *Liaisons*.

MOTION

CARRIED

The Staff Lead spoke about the plan for recruitment and training. Christine Smaller will help with some pieces of training. Ross Leckie and Emma Pipes will help with

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the training on Listening Teams. The Staff Lead is putting together a manual to support the Liaisons in their work. The commission expressed thanks for this

Cosburn United Church

The commission considered a letter from Brenda Percy, a member of the former Cosburn United Church requesting a review of the governance of Cosburn United Church since the merger with East End United Regional Ministry.

As per section J4 of The Manual (2019), the region must take seriously any concerns regarding a community of faith. These concerns may be raised by

- a) the regional council itself, including any member or committee of the regional council;
- b) the ministry personnel called or appointed to the community of faith;
- c) the pastoral charge supervisor;
- d) the governing body of the community of faith; or
- e) a proposal signed by 10 full members of the community of faith that the community of faith's governing body has passed on to the regional council.

MOTION by Ross Leckie/Carolyn Harding that no action is necessary by the regional council with respect to Cosburn United Church.

MOTION

CARRIED

The Staff Lead will forward a response on regional letterhead signed by the chairperson. The commission will take no further action on this matter.

Celebration of Ministry Service, May 23, 2020

Health, Joy and Excellence of lay leaders

The Staff Lead reported that the regional Celebration of Ministries Service will be held on May 23, 2020 and the regional meeting will be held later in the fall. The Pastoral Relations Commission is planning an event for ministry personnel about health, joy and excellence to be held earlier on the day of the service. This is an opportunity to provide similar program for lay leaders in our congregations. Participants will then have the opportunity to stay for the service if they wish.

MOTION by Ross Leckie/Gloria Tozek that the Communities of Faith Commission organize an event for lay leaders to provide fellowship, support, and skill development, to occur in conjunction the Celebration of Ministries Service.

MOTION

CARRIED

The Staff Lead will consult with the chair of Nominations to seek someone to take leadership in planning the event.

King City UC – Offer to Purchase

MOTION by Cindy Randall/Calin Lau that the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council approve the Agreement of Purchase and Sale between White Owl Properties and Trustees of the King City United Church Congregation, in the amount of Five Hundred and Ninety Thousand, Seven Hundred Eighty-eight Dollars, Sixty Cents (\$590,788.60) for those parts of PIN 03373-0032 (legally described as Lot 2, Registered Plan 85, Township of King) that are identified as Parts 1, 2, and 3 on the Plan of Survey attached as Schedule “A” to the Agreement of Purchase and Sale.

MOTION

CARRIED

A concern was raised that the plan for the disposition of the proceeds from the sale that was presented with the proposed sale in June 2019 was based on a much lower sale price. An updated plan was not provided with this offer.

The commission had a full discussion about how this sale is connected to the work being done to develop a policy for the sale of property by a congregation that is not closing or amalgamating. It was agreed that the policy will include the requirement that a plan for the disposition of funds must be approved by the commission prior to or with the agreement of purchase and sale. If the agreement of purchase and sale changes, the plan must be updated and approved with the new agreement. If there is no approved plan, funds are to be held in trust by the congregation’s lawyer until a plan for disposition of funds is approved by the commission.

In this case, the closing date for the sale will be 15 days after approval to sever is received from the Municipality Planning Division. King City United Church will be encouraged to provide an updated plan for the use of the funds for the next meeting of the commission so that the disposition is not delayed. However, if there is not an approved plan by the closing date, the funds are to be held in trust by the congregation’s lawyer until a plan is approved.

MOTION by Carolyn Harding/Ross Leckie that unless there is an updated plan for the disposition of funds from the sale by the closing date, the proceeds are to remain in trust with the congregation’s lawyer until plan for their use is approved by the commission.

MOTION

CARRIED

The Staff Lead will communicate immediately with the congregation and advise them of this requirement.

New Business

Amy Lee reported that the Intercultural and Diversity Network will be presenting a

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proposal to the Shining Waters Regional Executive for a fourth commission that will be the Intercultural and Diversity Commission.

Christine Smaller and Karen Hilfman Millson received a request from Angus MacLennan for funds for a cluster. The Staff Lead provided an update on the Task Group that was formed in the spring to consider this work. The group met once and then it was learned that there was a proposal to the regional meeting for a Social and Ecological Justice Commission. Many networks will relate to this commission. The Task Group felt they needed to suspend their work pending this decision. The commission is now appointed and Susan Eagle, who was also on the Task Group, is the chair. The Staff Lead and Emma Pipes will connect with Susan Eagle to regroup. Karen will respond to Angus explaining this.

Ross Leckie raised possibility of involving retired clergy as mentors for clusters and networks. How do we tap into this resource?

Next Meeting

Wednesday, October 16, 2019, 9:30 a.m. via Zoom video conference

Christine Smaller and Emma Pipes are planning another retreat and will provide more information at the next meeting. Look for a doodle poll shortly.

Closing

Christine Smaller closed in prayer and the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.