

November 3, 2020

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

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Social and Ecological Justice Commission
Tuesday, November 3, 2020**

The Social and Ecological Justice Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council met on November 3, 2020 by video conference. The meeting began at 11:00 a.m.

Members Present

Susan Eagle (Chairperson), Lois Brown, Tina Conlon, Elizabeth Cunningham, Alana Martin, Moon-Ja Park, Eleanor Scarlett

Susan welcomed Elizabeth Cunningham as a newly appointed member of the commission.

Staff: Bri-anne Swan, Kim Uyede-Kai

Regrets: Cameron Watts, Donna Lang

Welcome, check in and prayer

The chairperson welcomed everyone, 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.

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

There was a time of check-in.

Agenda

MOTION by Tina Conlon / Alana Martin that the agenda, be approved as circulated

MOTION

CARRIED

Minutes

MOTION by Tina Conlon / Moon Ja Park that the Minutes of the meeting of the Shining Waters Social and Ecological Justice Commission held July 15, 2020 be adopted as circulated.

MOTION

CARRIED

Email vote

The Commission voted by email in favour of the following in September:

- Endorse the private Member's Bill, M-46 Guaranteed Liveable Basic Income;
- Request that our Shining Waters president send a letter of endorsement for the Private Members Bill to the Prime Minister's office and to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Chrystia Freeland

The Commission also made acknowledgement of the Commission's Anti-Racism conversations held over the summer.

Business Arising

- Update on summer Anti-Racism workshops and pre-annual meeting conversations about racism – *Susan Eagle*

Is there anything else that we need to be doing about that right now? After we get the feedback from the October 8 and 13 conversations, this will inform the ongoing work of the Commission and what next steps we might be able to take. HyeRan Kim-Cragg's presentation was informed by the pre-annual meeting workshops. These events are not one-offs. There will be additional follow-up. White clergy requested a conversation on their own. Also, a separate conversation for Asian lay/clergy. There was support for trying to dovetail any regional level anti-racism work with the work being done at General Council. It will be key for the commissions taking on anti-racism work to look to the diversity which exists within the Regional Council. The commission asked Bri-anne Swan and Kim Uyede-Kai to be kept in the loop about follow up conversations. There was some question about whether the same format of the pre-annual meeting conversations should happen again, so that those who were not able to attend would have another chance. Elizabeth Cunningham volunteered to be part of a working group, perhaps with members of other Commissions, to look at this work.

- Update on Basic Income strategy and Vigil – *Susan Eagle*

There was a small turnout for the in-person gathering in front of Chrystia Freeland's office due to there being a 25-person limit on outdoor gatherings. Vigil organizers were pleased with the support from Chrystia Freeland's office, with a representative of her staff joining the vigil, receiving the signed letter from Shining Waters Regional Council, and addressing the gathering.

The committee/coalition that's loosely formed between national and regional people will continue to meet.

November 3, 2020

General Council does not have a media list. Concern was expressed about needing to ensure we have a communication strategy in place, which doesn't seem to exist regionally or nationally.

Action items that were taken,

- Prayer sent out
- Regional President signed a letter of endorsement
- Information and a petition for signature was distributed throughout the Region

“Livable Income” is a new term, mirroring the language of the NDP bill. This is the language that should be used, in order to remain consistent.

- Commission Report to Regional annual meeting - *Susan*

The report was accepted for information. The report has been previously sent out to Commission members.

- Report from Bri-anne Swan

Bri-anne reported on her activities over the past few months. Highlights include:

- Supporting efforts to create a more welcoming environment for those who have been moved to the Roehampton-Hotel Shelter
- Along with Kim Uyede-Kai, Anti-Racism pre-annual meeting conversations
- Along with Kim-Uyede-Kai, Coordinating the plenary workshop about anti-racism with Dr. HyeRan Kim-Cragg
- Launching *do justice. the podcast*
- Creating justice focused Advent/Christmas/Epiphany materials that can be used for online worship (Calling with the Wilderness:
<https://shiningwatersregionalcouncil.ca/programs-and-resources/justice/cwtw/>)

Part of the *Calling with the Wilderness* resource is a bank of music that can be used for online worship. Leaside United Church, Jubilee United Church and Metropolitan United Church have agreed to contribute pieces. The Commission was invited and encouraged to send Bri-anne material which may be helpful for this resource.

- Visioning follow-up

Congregations who are inclined to, have already completed the social and ecological justice survey identifying their priorities. It is unlikely we will receive any more, even after follow up. In order to move forward, the Commission needs to identify its priorities and passions. Ecological justice and racial justice are identified priorities on a Regional level. Bri-anne will send out an email for people to be able to identify where their passion lies, and what areas of work they would personally be willing to take a leadership role in.

- Finances

Discussion deferred to next meeting

- Workshop end of May

The workshop planned for May 2020 (cancelled because of Covid) is proposed for May 2021.

New Business

- Upper York Sewage Issue

The Upper York Sewage Solution (East Gwillimbury) has been facing opposition from the Chippewas of Georgina Island. The Commission expressed interest in working with the Living Into Right Relations (LIRR) circle, starting with inviting Brandon Stiles, the Chippewas of Georgina Island's Environmental Coordinator, to come and speak to both groups about the proposed sewage plant. Bri-anne Swan will contact Mr. Stiles to check on availability and will be in conversation with Kim Uyede-Kai, who provides staff support to LIRR and Susan Eagle about a meeting date. Commission asked if Brandon Stiles could join us for some time at our next meeting on December 8.

- Christian College Accreditation as a University

There is concern about Charles McVety's Canada Christian College being given University accreditation and the ability to award degrees in arts and science (they are currently able to award degrees in theology and Christian counselling), circumventing normal accreditation processes. The Commission discussed the possibility of drafting a letter in opposition. Susan Eagle will forward the letter from her church when it is completed.

MOTION by Tina Conlon / Eleanor Scarlett that Bri-anne Swan conduct research about Canada Christian College, and consult with the Commission about her findings, with the possibility of a letter being written and sent by the Regional Council.

MOTION

CARRIED

Closing

The Chairperson closed the meeting with a prayer and the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Next Meeting: December 8, 2020 at 12:30 p.m.