

February 23, 2022

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

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Social and Ecological Justice Commission
Wednesday, February 23, 2022**

The Social and Ecological Justice Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council met on February 23, 2022 by video conference. The meeting began at 1:00 p.m.

Members Present

Susan Eagle (Chairperson), Lois Brown, Tina Conlon, Cameron Watts

Staff: Jeffrey Dale, Kim Uyede-Kai, Rachael Howes

Regrets: Moon-Ja Park

Welcome, check in and prayer

The chairperson welcomed everyone. Tina Conlon opened the meeting with a reflection based on Jeremiah 4 and Isaiah 43. She also gave an acknowledgement of the land. There was an acknowledgement of 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 / Cameron Watts that the agenda be approved as circulated

MOTION

CARRIED

Minutes

MOTION by Lois Brown / Tina Conlon that the Minutes of the meeting of the Shining Waters Social and Ecological Justice Commission held January 18, 2022 be adopted as circulated.

MOTION

CARRIED

Business Arising

Letter to Communities of Faith

A letter was sent to communities of faith to request that at their annual general meetings they commit to an action in the coming year around homelessness, anti-racism, or environmental action, under the *Daring Discipleship* section of The United Church of Canada's Mission. There was discussion on how the Commission could get feedback from communities of faith on actions that they took. Staff will look into putting something on the website for this.

Shelter Rally

The Commission emailed information to the regional council about a rally held on January 20th in Toronto to tell the City to provide residents with N95 masks – not just workers, and to provide access to Rapid Tests.

Broken Hearts Day

The Commission emailed information to the regional council about the Broken Hearts Day gathering held on February 15th at Toronto City Hall. The gathering created space to mourn the 3.6 homeless deaths a week in Toronto and the 132 deaths in Toronto's shelter system in 2021.

Mid Winter Event - Susan Eagle and Jeffrey Dale

Tuesday, March 8, 9:30 am – 12:00 noon; Clergy Zoom Event: Preaching about Social Justice. There was discussion on the format and process of the event, questions to prepare for breakout rooms, and the focus of the speakers' remarks.

Nomination Process

A video was made to promote participation on the Commission. Submissions have now closed and the Nominations Committee is meeting this week.

Revised Commission Mandate

The Commission mandate was updated to reflect that the Commission is now permanent and it was circulated to the commission members.

Update on Annual Meeting Planning ad hoc committee

There will be an Annual Meeting planning ad hoc committee to work with the President and Past-President in developing an agenda for the meeting with an educational component. There is a separate planning group for the Celebration of Ministries service so the focus of the ad hoc planning committee will only be the regional meeting. The Commission was asked for a representative to the planning committee and Susan Eagle has agreed to participate.

Equity Leads

The Commission does not have anyone willing to take on the role of Equity Lead.

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Community Ministries Working Group – Jeffrey Dale

A group is being formed to explore what the region's relationship is with the Community Ministries particularly regarding sustainability. This commission is being asked for a representative to be part of the working group. There was no one currently able to take on the role but it will come back to the Commission in the near future.

Staff reports – Jeffrey Dale and Kim Uyede-Kai

Kim had the following announcements;

- Kim shared two links with the Commission: Black History resources on the Shining Waters website, and two events that are coming up – a right relations event Shining Waters is co-partnering on with south western Ontario regions, called *Together in Spirit* starting on February 24th, and one on March 10th called, *Truth Before Reconciliation*.
- International Women's Day, March 8th, a resource list will be posted on the Shining Waters website soon.

Jeffrey reported;

- May 4th Jeffrey will be presenting to GC44 learning sessions around our proposal on Harm Reduction
- Budget request: \$ 2,000.00 to host a series of conversations, with guest speakers, following up on last year's Harm Reduction conversations. A different format is being considered this year, to do interviews and podcasts, and then offer up conversation sessions to explore more fully.

MOTION by Cameron Watts / Tina Conlon that the Social and Ecological Justice Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council pay up to \$2,000 for the harm reduction conversations to pay for guest speakers.

MOTION

CARRIED

MOTION by Cameron Watts / Lois Brown that the Social and Ecological Justice Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council pay honorariums of \$300 each for guest speaker, Eleanor Scarlett, and for the musician at the March 8th mid-winter event, *Preaching about Social Justice*.

MOTION

CARRIED

- There will be Holy Week resources around climate grief available on the Shining Waters website.

Social Justice Network of Regional Councils (SJNOR) Report - Tina Conlon

Tina shared her report with the Commission by email.

Ongoing Commission Work

Sub Committees:

- Israel/Palestine (*Tina, Lois*)

PalNet has asked for endorsement from this commission to support UNJPPI gathering in May in London, ON.

MOTION Tina Conlon / Lois Brown that the Social & Ecological Justice Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council endorse the UNJPPI gathering being held May 5-8, 2022 in London, Ontario.

MOTION

CARRIED

Closing: Susan Eagle gave a benediction and the meeting closed at 3:10 p.m.

Next Meeting: March 15, 2022, 1 pm – Cameron Watts will do opening.

Deferred Items:

- Justice for workers (item deferred from December meeting) - Tina
- Decent hours and scheduling in long-term care workers, equal pay/benefits regardless of status (temp/contract workers, migrants)
- Reach Out Response Network, in February 2021 – follow-up Tina
COP26 Climate Summit - follow-up

