

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
SHINING WATERS REGIONAL COUNCIL

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Social and Ecological Justice Commission
Tuesday, May 17, 2022**

The Social and Ecological Justice Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council met on May 17, 2022 by video conference. The meeting began at 1:00 p.m.

Members Present

Susan Eagle (Chairperson), Lois Brown, Esther Collier, Tina Conlon, Don Ford, Irene Green

Staff: Jeffrey Dale, Rachael Howes

Guests: Brian McIntosh,

Regrets: Cameron Watts

Absent: Won Hur, Moon Ja Park

Welcome, check in and prayer

The chairperson opened the meeting at 1:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Susan Eagle read a poem by Walter Bruggeman as an opening. She asked all members to acknowledge the lands on which they reside, 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 and the Commission looked at the mandate of the Commission for the benefit of the newest members.

The Commission discussed making a recommendation to the Executive to make a change in the responsibilities shown in the Commission policy.

MOTION by Don Ford / Esther Collier that the Social and Ecological Justice Commission request the Executive of Shining Waters Regional Council to amend the Commission policy to add the words ‘and ecological’ after the words ‘social’ in numbers 1 and 5 under the Responsibilities section, so it reads, ‘social *and ecological* justice.’

MOTION

CARRIED

Agenda

Addition of an item regarding funding.

MOTION by Irene Green / Lois Brown that the agenda be approved as amended.

MOTION

CARRIED

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Minutes

MOTION by Lois Brown / Don Ford that the Minutes of the meeting of the Shining Waters Social and Ecological Justice Commission held April 26, 2022 be adopted as circulated.

MOTION

CARRIED

Regional Council Annual meeting

The Commission reviewed the final version of the proposal going to the regional council meeting.

MOTION by Esther Collier / Don Ford that the Proposal, *Raising and Indexing Social Assistance Rates in Ontario*, be amended to change the wording of number 4. 1. to read: initiate a three-year plan to raise social assistance incomes above the Market Basket Measure of Poverty

MOTION

CARRIED

MOTION by Tina Conlon / Esther Collier that the Social and Ecological Justice Commission of Shining Waters Regional Council approve the proposal, *Raising and Indexing Social Assistance Rates in Ontario*, as presented and amended.

MOTION

CARRIED

UCW request

The Commission was advised that it is not the policy of Shining Waters Regional Council to designate specific positions for the Executive and Commissions. This matter will come back to a future meeting.

Ontario Election:

- ISARC Follow-up election materials - ISARC has sent these materials out across the Province and shared them with various networks. It was decided to send these out to Shining Waters communities of faith.
- SJNORC follow-up from Election Forum – Jeffrey suggested that we put together a small task group to help keep people connected and build this Commission’s presence.
- GLI Signs – another notice about the availability of these signs will be sent out to communities of faith along with the ISARC materials email.

Community Ministries update – Jeffrey

May 31st is the next meeting of this working group and they will start to solidify some pieces around what support the community ministries are looking for.

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GC44 Issues:

- Proposal GS08 – Climate Justice Commitment

Jeffrey Dale reported that the Executive has asked that each commission look at this GC44 proposal. He specifically pointed out the part around the strategic objective: *amplify and integrate current initiatives in a bold, hopeful denominational climate strategy that accelerates reductions towards the goal of an 80% decrease in emissions by 2030; with a commitment to measure, report and adjust based on learnings.*

The Commission discussed tackling this challenge and it was decided to set aside a significant amount of time to specifically talk about the matter. Esther Collier and Don Ford agreed to help focus the discussion.

- Palestine Israel – no update
- Harm reduction – this goes forward to General Council on Wednesday, May 18th; Jeffrey Dale has done some podcast interviews that will go live on Wednesday morning as part of background information for GC Commissioners; they will also be available on the website.

Summer students

Jeffrey Dale reported that on Friday June 24th, 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. the students will be presenting on what they are working on this summer

Affirm Week

The regional council has a pride flag available for pride parades and activities. Jeffrey Dale gave information on dates of upcoming events in the region;

June 18th – Interfaith Pride and York Pride

June 24th, 25, and 26th – Toronto Pride

July 17th – Gravenhurst Pride

July 24th – Bracebridge Pride

Don Ford left the meeting.

Report from UNJPPI event

This commission sponsored Tina Conlon and Lois Brown to attend the event and they will give a detailed presentation at a future meeting. Tina and Lois gave some brief broad impressions.

Staff reports – Jeffrey Dale and Kim Uyede-Kai

Kim reported;

- we are still in Asian Heritage Month; the region has some resources on their website as has General Council.
- Korean peace appeal – the country has been at war for 70 years and the impacts are wide-spread and ongoing. The United Church of Canada has joined this appeal and there is a petition; everyone is encouraged to learn about the appeal and get signatures on the petition.

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- shooting in California at a Taiwanese church is having huge impact and ripple effects across the United States as well as Canada. It was motivated by political tensions between China and Taiwan.

Jeffrey reported;

Faith Formation Ministers from Shining Waters, Canadian Shield, Antler River Watershed, Western Ontario Waterways, Horseshoe Falls and Eastern Ontario Outaouais will be reading the book, *The Encounters*, by HyeRan Kim-Cragg and EunYoung Choi in the Fall; they will then be inviting people across the regions to read the book and will host four sessions for discussion, at which actors will perform some of the monologues from the book. The cost of the book is \$20.

Funding – this will come to a future meeting.

Planning for Commission Work through sub-committees

Susan Eagle asked the members to consider which sub-committee they might be interested in joining and whether or not all of them are still needed.

Homelessness (Cameron, Susan)

Poverty/Income Inequality (Susan, Moon-Ja, Tina)

GLI National Group

Anti-Racism (Moon-Ja, Lois)

Right Relations (Lois, Cameron, Tina)

Environment (Moon-Ja)

North Toronto Churches Cluster Green Team

Israel/Palestine - *Tina, Lois*

Closing Prayer and Adjournment

Jeffrey offered a closing prayer and the meeting ended at 3:22 p.m.

Next Meeting: June 29, 2022 at 1 p.m.

