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## THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

### MEETING OF THE SUB-EXECUTIVE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL MINUTES

November 20, 2001  
(Teleconference Call)

The Sub-Executive of the General Council of The United Church of Canada met from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 20, 2001, at 3250 Bloor Street West, Etobicoke, Ontario. The Moderator, The Right Reverend Marion Pardy, presided.

#### **ATTENDANCE**

##### **Voting Members**

Virginia Coleman, Sheila Duffin, Ron Holotuk, Bill Phipps (part-time), Marion Pardy (Chair), Karen Ptolemy-Stam (part-time), Sheila Snelling, Jack Spencer, Peter Wesley

##### **Regrets**

Hazel Bigby, Claire Borel-Christen, Jon Jessiman, Joanna MacQuarrie, Lynn Maki (voting)

Alan Hall and Walter Sowa attended this meeting as resource people.

#### **CONSTITUTING THE MEETING**

The Moderator constituted the meeting with the following words:

"In the Name of the Jesus Christ the Sovereign head of the Church, and by the authority vested in me by the 37th General Council, I hereby declare this meeting of the Sub-Executive of the General Council to be in session for the work that may properly be brought before it to the glory of God."

Marion opened the meeting with a prayer.

#### **DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Virginia Coleman wished to record her conflict of interest with regard to the General Secretary, General Council position job description and indicated that when there was discussion on this job description she would not be participating unless she was asked to respond to a question directly. She noted that she had given some thought about who else could replace her in this meeting and the only person she could think of who would not be in conflict of interest was Gordon How who was unavailable for this meeting. Virginia Coleman also informed the Sub-Executive that she had not invited the General Council Secretaries to this meeting, as she believed that they would be in conflict of interest; however, she indicated that if it was the will of the members of the Sub-Executive to have the General Council Secretaries present, she would inform them.

Virginia Coleman noted that there was still some concern with regard to the General Council Minister, Racial Justice job description and hoped that this would be resolved at this meeting.

The members of the Sub-Executive indicated that the job descriptions before them now did include the information they wished to have reflected.

#### **JOB DESCRIPTIONS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL MINISTERS**

Alan Hall, the resource person for all the General Council Minister (GCM) job descriptions presented these and clarified the format of these job descriptions. He noted that in the first part of the summary paragraph for all of these positions the collaboration and theological pieces of the GCM's work was emphasized; in the second part of the paragraph focuses more on the specific description of the individual positions.

It was noted that in the summary paragraph of the job descriptions for the General Secretary and the GCM, Programs for Mission and Ministry the word "Theological" related to leadership was omitted and that it needed to be reflected in all the six positions.

The members of the Sub-Executive then moved into a discussion on each position and suggested changes as follows:

### GCM, Planning Processes

- "Monitors the timelines of the General Council", what does it really mean? This needs to be tightened/tidied up and clarified, somehow linking it to the senior leadership team more strongly. New wording was suggested to replace this line was:
  - **Ensures that the work directed to the General Council has had sufficient time for study and reflection as appropriate.**
  - **Monitors the work of the General Council ensuring that work arising from the General Council is assigned appropriately to working units.**

### GCM, Programs for Mission and Ministry

- Under *Oversight of Programs*: With the General Secretary, General Council **and the Moderator** ensures appropriate representation of The United Church of Canada in Ecumenical, **inter-faith** and Global bodies and events.
- Under *Language Skills*: add **Bilingualism in French/English would be a definite asset. Willingness to undertake language training, if required.**
- Under *Complexity and Judgement*: Organizational, administrative and **general** Financial Skills
- Under *Education and/or Experience*: **A demonstrated passion for social justice and a vision of the realm of God in our churches, community, and world.**
- Add **inter-faith** everywhere where ecumenical is mentioned

### GCM, Regional Relations

- Eliminate the title *General Council Management* and add the 2 points that were under this title to *Care of the Whole*
- Under *Care of the Whole*: As a strategist, provides direction and guidance to those systems which enable the mission work of the church to be carried out **in the regions**
- Remove the word Conferences everywhere it occurs and replace it with the word **regions** to broaden it beyond just Conferences. Under *Care of the Whole*: ...mechanisms for the connectivity of the work **especially during periods of transition**
- Under *Care of the Whole*: Ensures a holistic view to the work of the Senior Leadership Team by communicating with the General Secretary, General Council **and the Moderator**, issues and concerns of the wider Church to the team.

### GCM, Resources for Mission and Ministry

- Under *Education and/or Experience*: A minimum of 10 years administrative **management** experience.

### GCM, Racial Justice

The concern with this position is that right now it only mentions two areas of work: First Nations and Ethnic Ministries when in actual fact this position was originally supposed to deal with institutional racism and that there are other areas of work that may need to happen in order to do this. The other concern was how this position relates to the ongoing program work namely the Residential Schools Steering Committee and the Aboriginal work in DMC. The following suggestions were made for amendments to the job description:

- Under the *Summary* paragraph: This General Council Minister is a member of the senior management team and has individual and collective responsibility to demonstrate theological leadership, to model teamwork by working with others to facilitate work and communications, to enable strategic planning and priority setting and to care for the whole of The United Church of Canada. This senior leader is a change agent who will assist the United Church ~~and the General Council Offices in particular to live out the commitments we have made on paper and in resolutions about walking~~ to become an ant-racist faith community and will help us live out the commitments we have made ~~on paper and in resolutions about walking~~ **to walk** a new path toward reconciliation with peoples of First Nations **and others who have been marginalized.** ~~These Leaders~~ This leader will

work ~~also~~ **with staff**, Ethnic Ministries, and others in enabling the church to become anti-racist **community**. Working with an advisory group, the Racial Justice Minister will develop strategies and tools to enable changes in policy and practices.

- Under *Education*:
  - ~~Working with Program staff~~, Provides theological leadership and educational expertise to the work of racial justice.
  - ~~Oversees~~ **Ensures that racial justice issues and concerns are reflected in** the design, development and implementation of educational programs and resources for the denomination ~~through the work of the program units.~~
- Under Education and/or Experience: Knowledge of and commitment to the ecumenical and **inter-faith** processes.

At this time Bill Phipps indicated that he had to leave the meeting and exited the conference call.

### **General Secretary, General Council**

At this time Virginia Coleman once again indicated that she was in conflict of interest and would not be participating in the discussion on this position except to answer questions of procedure and policy directly asked of her.

Alan Hall noted that this position description had some changes in the priorities/emphasis from the previous description providing a particular role in leadership with the overall senior leadership team and it removes the direct supervision for the work of the Executive Secretaries of Conferences. He explained that there was a thought that there was a particular need to articulate the doctrine of the church in this position.

- Under the *Summary* paragraph: ...support to the whole of The United Church of Canada and to articulate ~~its~~ **the** vision and theology of The United Church of Canada.

A number of the Sub-Executive members noted that the second line under Leadership reads as though the General Secretary is the major spokesperson in articulating the theological doctrine of the church and their understanding that the Moderator is actually the chief spokesperson for spiritual and theological matters. Is there an overlap and will there be two people doing this? It is the entire senior leadership team that needs to ensure that the work of the church is carried out in a theological context. The following alternate wording was suggested:

- Ensures with the senior leadership team, that the work of the General Council, its Executive and Sub-Executive is considered and held in the context of the theology and faith of The United Church of Canada.

The members of the Sub-executive agreed that they were in essential agreement of this wording keeping in mind that Alan Hall may still have to edit this statement.

- Under Education and/or Experience: Knowledge of and commitment to the ecumenical **and interfaith** process

At this time Karen Ptolemy-Stam indicated that she needed to leave the meeting and exited the conference call. Walter Sowa also exited the meeting.

### **Motion: Jack Spencer/Peter Wesley**

**2001-11-20-0276**

That the Sub-Executive of the General Council adopt the job descriptions for the General Council Ministers and the General Secretary as presented and amended.

**Carried**

A request was made that the members of the Sub-Executive receive the final copy of the job descriptions with the changes made today for their information.

The members of the Sub-Executive expressed their thanks and gratitude to those who were involved in developing these job descriptions.

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## **REDESIGN AND SELECTION PROCESS FOR THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM**

### **General Council Ministers**

Alan Hall reminded the Sub-Executive of the composition of the Search and Selection Committee; three members of the Executive being Kathy Chenier, Jamie Scott and Jack Spencer, the immediate supervisor for each General Secretary, Virginia Coleman (for the General Secretary, General Council, it would be a member of her Supervision Committee) a member of the Human Resources Committee who chairs it, Alan Hall, and an external HR consultant, Lynn Brown and a volunteer/elected member of the Executive of the General Council who is knowledgeable in the relevant area of work for the specific positions.

In the outline of the selection process there is a discernment process in which each General Secretary who wishes to proceed would participate. It had originally been provided that two elected members of the Executive would participate in this process, one appointed/named by the Executive to the Search and Selection Committee, Jamie Scott, and one selected by the individual undergoing the process, if they so wished; if the candidate chooses not to do so then an alternate person would be named from the Search and Selection Committee. It was felt by the Search and Selection Committee that this is where the problem arises. Should the second individual not get selected by the candidate and one was named from the Search and Selection Committee, it would then mean that two members of the Executive would participate in the discernment process, a majority, would be involved in both steps – the search and selection and the discernment process. This could give the impression that the selection decision has been predetermined before the Search and Selection Committee actually meets with the candidate.

The Search and Selection Committee is requesting the agreement of the Sub-Executive that in the instance that the General Secretary chooses not to name a person themselves an alternate person who is a member of the Executive of the General Council but not a member of the Search and Selection process be named. The Search and Selection Committee would also consult with the General Council Secretary on the person that would be named to this process to ensure that he/she does not object to this person.

The members of the Sub-Executive indicated that they understood and were in agreement with this change in the Redesign and Selection process for the senior management team.

### **The General Secretary, General Council**

Alan Hall explained that in the instance of the General Secretary, General Council the immediate supervisor would be a member of the Supervision Committee. When the Search and Selection Committee reflected on this they were concerned that there may be/is a perception that this committee was originally constituted as an advisory and support group and thus may not be perceived as the right source for the discernment and interview process. The proposal was that the Past Moderator be asked to serve in this role and this would constitute a deviation from our established Human Resources policy and would require a motion by the Sub-Executive. At the same time the Search and Selection Committee is aware that such an action could be perceived as a vote of non confidence in the General Secretary's Supervision committee; therefore, the Search and Selection Committee was requesting and would be very appreciate of some wisdom on this from the members of the Sub-Executive.

The members of the Sub-Executive agreed that we have a policy to which we need to adhere. Deviating from the policy would call for a rationale for this deviation and at this time the Sub-Executive saw no extenuating reason to do this.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

After thanking the members of the Sub-Executive and Alan Hall, the Moderator declared the meeting of the Sub-Executive adjourned.

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**Moderator, Marion Pardy**

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**General Secretary, K. Virginia Coleman**