

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA****MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL****MINUTES****April 27-28, 2019**

The Executive of the General Council of The United Church of Canada met in person at the Ivey Spencer Leadership Centre in London, Ontario from 9:00 a.m. Saturday, April 27 until 4 p.m. on Sunday, April 28, 2019. The Moderator, Richard Bott, presided.

**Attendance**

Mitchell Anderson, Sharon Aylsworth, Richard Bott, Kathy Brett, Teresa Burnett-Cole, Jordan Cantwell, Katie Curtis, Samuel Vauvert Dansokho, Paul Douglas Walfall, Larry Doyle, Deb Hinksman, Jane McDonald, Ha Na Park, Tim Reaburn, Deborah Richards, Nora Sanders, Arlyce Schiebout, Janet Sigurdson

**Staff Leaders**

David Allen, David Armour, Michael Blair, Maggie Dieter, Treena Duncan, Alan Hall, Peter Hartmans, Rosemary Lambie, Faith March-MacCuish, Erik Mathiesen, Shannon McCarthy, Kate Rodd, Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa, John Young

**Staff**

Diane Bosman, Shirley Welch

**Sunday, April 28, 2019****Welcome**

A business session followed a time of retreat by the GCE and staff leaders. At the beginning of the retreat the Moderator had acknowledged the land on which we were meeting as the traditional land of the Attawandaran, Algonquin and Haudenosaunee. Currently this region is home to peoples of the Anishinaabe (Chippewa of the Thames First Nation), Haudenosaunee (Oneida Nation of the Thames) and Lenape (Munsee-Delaware Nation).

**Constituting the Meeting**

The Moderator began with prayer and constituted the meeting in French and English.

"Au nom de Notre Seigneur, Jésus-Christ, seul chef souverain de l'Église, et par l'autorité qui m'a été conférée par le quarante-troisième Conseil général, I hereby declare this meeting of the Executive of the General Council to be in session for the work that may properly be brought before it to the glory of God."

**GS 14 Procedural and Consent**

The General Secretary, Nora Sanders, provided background on the consent motion.

**Motion: Nora Sanders/Deborah Richards**

**2019-04-27-019**

The General Secretary proposes that

The Executive of the General Council:

1. Approve the minutes of the Executive of the General Council meeting held on January 26, 2019.
2. Receive for information, the minutes of the meetings of the Sub-Executive of the General Council held March 12 and April 15, 2019.
3. Adopt the agenda for this meeting as circulated, with any changes which may be necessary as the meeting evolves, to be made on the recommendation of the Business Committee.
4. Receive for information the following:
  - Correspondence to the Executive of the General Council received since the last meeting of the Executive (sent to the Executive by email and found online).
5. Approve the following proposals: *[Appendix I]*
  - BP 01 Sub-Executive Alternates
  - FIN 01 Finance Advisory Committee Terms of Reference
  - GS 15 Indigenous Justice Advisory Group
  - GS 16 Worship Coordinator GC44

**Carried**

**Motion: Nora Sanders/Kathy Brett**

**2019-04-27-020**

The General Secretary proposes that staff who are present: Regional Executive Ministers and members of the senior leadership be received as corresponding members.

**Carried**

**GS 19 Signing Authority - Shining Waters Region, Canadian Shield Region**

Nora provided background on this proposal.

**Motion: Nora Sanders/Jane McDonald**

**2019-04-27-021**

The General Secretary recommends that General Council Executive:

- a) Add the names: Rachael Howes, Susan Whitehead and Janet Macdonald as signatories for the Shining Waters Regional Council and the Canadian Shield Regional Council bank accounts, held by the United Church of Canada with the Royal Bank (RBC);
- b) This authority, for the specified accounts, supplements the list of cheque signers applicable to all General Council bank accounts.

**Carried****GS 17 Approval of 2020 Operating Budget Assumptions**

The following proposal was brought to the Executive for approval.

The General Secretary recommends

That the General Council Executive approve the following principles and assumptions:

- a. The COLA factor for 2020 will be 1.9%.
- b. 2nd year of assured assessment income funding for regions in 2020. If income higher than expected, 100% would flow to regions. If shortfall, reserves to fund.
- c. 2nd year of assured M&S funding for regions in 2020 to the regions despite anticipated decline. This is intended to offer a degree of stability during the larger transitions allowing regions to establish mission priorities and begin to make allocation decisions accordingly.
- d. Project for continued decline in M&S (\$1,000,000 per year) and in other revenue sources including some decline in retail sales.
- e. Any budget for further one time restructuring costs outside the core operating budget to be approved in the fall 2019.
- f. Commit to restoring the annual transfer of 50% of bequests to the Foundation but delay this step until the 2021 budget year.
- g. Aim to balance the Core General Council Office budget for 2020, recognizing that this will entail cutting grants and staff to generate \$1.5 million in savings.
- h. Work with the Indigenous church in continuing our right relations journey while identifying and implementing cost reduction from current expenditure levels.
- i. Continue to forego any increase in the amount of M&S allocated to Embracing the Spirit.

After a lengthy introduction by Erik Mathiesen, followed by questions, the following way forward was proposed instead.

**Motion: Samuel Vauvert Dansokho/Paul Douglas Walfall****2019-04-27-022**

The Executive recommends that further work be done by the General Secretary and Finance Committee (particularly around items c. and g.) and be brought back to an online meeting of the Executive before the end of June.

**Carried****GS 18 Establishment of a Property Development Corporation and Seed Funding**

This proposal was introduced by Erik Mathiesen.

The Executive discussed the proposal. Several speakers noted that this could enable congregations to receive much needed assistance in making property decisions. Questions were raised around the suitability of this work given our repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery, and the Calls to the Church (particularly #8). It was also acknowledged that it was possible to

use the land as a tool to build the kingdom of God. The Executive requested that the principles that will guide the corporation, and accountability of the corporation be clearly articulated.

**Motion: Mitchell Anderson/Samuel Dansokho**

**2019-04-27-023**

The General Secretary proposes

That the Executive of the General Council:

- a) Authorize the incorporation of a Property Development Corporation, and
- b) Approve an initial commitment of \$2 million in seed funding in order to fund the corporation, including initial staffing to build out advisory capacity. (The funding structure contemplated is a market rate loan from the Building and Property Fund), and
- c) Direct the General Secretary, working with the Finance Committee, to establish a mechanism for the Executive to consider a larger seed funding arrangement if matching funding possibilities make this financially and strategically compelling.

**Carried**

**Closing Procedural Motion**

**Authorizing the Sub-Executive of the General Council**

**Motion: Nora Sanders/Arlyce Schiebout**

**2019-04-27-024**

That the General Council Executive authorize its Sub-Executive to deal with the business placed before it by this meeting of the Executive and any emergent business that may arise prior to the next meeting of the General Council Executive.

**Carried**

Paul asked that our prayerful support be communicated to those suffering with flooding throughout Canada.

**Closing**

The Moderator read from Luke 8:5 – the seed fell everywhere and in every place it did something.

The Moderator reminded the Executive of scheduled meetings and webinars. There will be an online meeting scheduled for early June to deal with proposal *GS 17 Approval of 2020 Operating Budget Assumptions*.

**Meetings**

- Early June – video conference
- September 21 – video conference
- October 19 – GC43 recall meeting by video conference
- November 22-23 – in person

**Webinars**

**Partner Council, World Council of Churches and Canadian Council of Churches** – Monday June 10, 6:30 pm (EDT) *(This may need to be rescheduled to accommodate the June meeting on financial topics.)*

We will have others scheduled for (usually) the first Tuesday of the month in September, October, November and December

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Moderator, Richard Bott

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General Secretary, Nora Sanders