

**MINUTES** of the Executive of Canadian Shield Regional Council held on June 1, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. online via Zoom.

**PRESENT:** Barb Nott (Chair), Nancy Ferguson, John Watson, Helen Smith, Bill Steadman, Stewart Walker, Susan Lindquist, Dave LeGrand, Mastard Sakala, Jim Jackson, Eun-Joo Park

**STAFF:** Peter Hartmans, Susan Whitehead

**REGRETS:** Joy Galloway, Kathie Smith

Chair Barb Nott welcomed everyone to the meeting of Executive.

Barb honoured the traditional lands upon which we meet and then read the CSRC safe space statement.

### **CHECK-IN**

Executive took time to do a check-in with each other.

Peter opened the meeting with Worship, reading Psalm 104:24-34.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

There were some changes to the Commission dates that needed to be made on the agenda.

**MOTION by Dave LeGrand/John Watson** **2023-06-01-01**  
**That the agenda for the meeting be approved, as amended.**  
**CARRIED**

### **MOA HUNTINGTON UNIVERSITY REVISITED**

Barb shared the revised Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Huntington University (HU) after the last Executive Meeting. Executive members discussed the concerns from the last meeting and how they could be resolved.

The first was the concern that we would not have enough time to elect members of the board and that HU would appoint someone if we didn't do it. Peter shared that the GCO lawyer added a 60-day notice as a deadline for appointing people.

**There was consensus that the 60-day notice is acceptable as a deadline for appointments.**

The second concern was about the document language around divesting ourselves of responsibility of appointing people for all time, not just for a term. Peter explained this is a 2-year document that we can choose to rescind at any time and that if we don't appoint someone in the given time frame, we will be able to do it in the next cycle.

After a lengthy discussion about appointing members and the language in the document, Executive passed the following motion:

**MOTION by Eun-Joo Park/Helen Smith** **2023-06-01-02**  
**That the CSRC Executive forward the amended draft of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to The United Church of Canada lawyer Nicole Treksler, and then to Huntington University for review and response before final approval.**  
**CARRIED**  
**1 Abstention – Peter Hartmans**

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**MOTION by Nancy Ferguson/Bill Steadman** **2023-06-01-03**  
**That the Minutes of the meetings of the Canadian Shield Regional Council Executive held on April 12-13, 2023 at Villa Loyola, in Sudbury be approved, as circulated.**  
**CARRIED**

## RECEIVE MINUTES FROM COMMISSIONS

**MOTION by Helen Smith/John Watson** **2023-06-01-04**  
**That the Minutes of the CSRC Pastoral Relations Commission Minutes from March 22, 2023 be received, for information.**  
**CARRIED**

**MOTION by Peter Hartmans/Eun-Joo Park** **2023-06-01-05**  
**That the Minutes of the CSRC Support to Communities of Faith Commission Minutes from March 28, 2023, April 24, 2023, and May 18, 2023 be received, for information.**  
**CARRIED**

## CORRESPONDENCE

- *Signed MOU Between CS and SW from Executive Secretary*  
Barb shared with Executive that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between CSRC and SWRC has been signed and distributed to each Region.

## HR UPDATE – RACHAEL’S RETIREMENT; SUSAN AND KATHLEEN TO COVER WORKLOAD

Peter shared that Rachael Howe’s retired the day before this meeting and that she will be missed. Kathleen Wolfe has been hired in advance of Rachael’s leaving and that is working out very well. Susan will now pick up work for both Executives and Kathleen will pick up the other pieces for both regions.

Diane Matheson-Jimenez has bought a new house in North Bay and will be settled there by July 2023.

## MODERATOR’S FLOURISHING EVENT IN CSRC – MAY 2-4, 2024 AND RCM 2024

Peter shared that the Flourishing Event in 2024 is being driven by the Moderator and we are partnering with them to offer two events in one. This way, people will only have to travel around the region once, given the vast geography of our region. The Moderator asked for a central location in the north to host this event; the suggestion was made for Sault Ste. Marie, ON, and we are waiting to hear back from the Moderator’s office to confirm.

## FESTIVAL OF FAITH UPDATE

Barb shared that we are over 100 people coming to the event and some people are coming just for the Saturday. Instructions will be going out to people this week on how to get to the residence and venue and any last-minute details. The workshops seem to be well-attended in advance and people seem very excited about the topics. Gifts will be given out to the workshop leaders (pure maple syrup) to thank them for their time. Evaluation forms will be available to fill out to help us plan for the next FoF.

## EXECUTIVE MINISTER’S REPORT

Executive received the Executive Minister Report, for information (*attached as Appendix A*).

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The Joint Executives Ad Hoc Committee met on May 2, 2023, consisting of the Chair and Chair Elect of CSRC and the President and President Elect of SWRC, the Executive Minister, and other staff from both regions. The group was very positive about meeting for a joint Executive meeting in-person between the two regions, which will occur on September 26-28, 2023 at Villa Loyola Retreat Centre in Sudbury, ON. Susan circulated the minutes from this meeting to both Executives.

### **NEXT MEETING DATES:**

- Summer Meeting 2023, if needed
- September 7, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom
- Joint Executives In-Person – September 26-28, 2023 at Villa Loyola in Sudbury
- October 12, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom

### **CLOSING**

Peter and the Executive thanked Eun-Joo for her time on Executive and on the Transition Team and wished her good luck in her new position with Shining Waters Regional Council.

Barb adjourned the meeting at 3:22 p.m. and Nancy ended with a prayer.

## **Appendix A Executive Minister Report June 2023**

### *JOINT EXECUTIVE AD HOC COMMITTEE:*

Happy Spring!!! The Joint Executive Ad Hoc Committee of Canadian Shield Regional Council and Shining Waters Regional Council met on May 2, 2023. The group included Chair Barb and President David, Chair Elect Nancy and President Elect Tina. The conversation focused on our relationship between Regional Councils, planning between both regions, and a discussion about the 2025 Festival of Faith.

The Ad Hoc Committee discussed the upcoming joint Executive meeting between the two regional Executives, including making the meeting a 1- or 2-night stay. The decision was made to drive up to Sudbury to the Villa Loyola retreat centre in the afternoon of Tuesday, September 26th, 2023 to get there for a dinner time start, stay for 2 nights, and return home in the afternoon on Thursday, September 28th. We have sent emails to both Executives with this information and Susan has confirmed the dates and times with Villa Loyola. David shared that he was very thankful that the CS Executive invited the SW Executive to come up to share a joint meeting in September and feels it will be very beneficial to both regions. SW and CS Executives will work jointly on the agenda for the meeting.

The Ad Hoc Committee discussed the in-person dates for both Regional Council Meetings (RCMs) in 2024. After an extensive search through dates that would work for both SW and CS, and didn't interfere with holidays or special days within the UCC, it was decided that the SW in-person RCM for 2024 would be the weekend of June 7, 8, 9 and the CS in-person RCM for 2024 would be May 3, 4, 5, in partnership and working around the Moderator's Flourishing Event on May 1-4. We have corresponded with the Flourishing Event planning committee to let them know we plan to work around the event to host our 2024 Regional meeting. This will consolidate travel and facilitate travel support. The suggested location given to the Moderator's Planning Committee is Sault Ste Marie, a central location for both events.

### *FESTIVAL OF FAITH 2023 and 2025:*

The 2023 Festival of Faith planning is going very well. The planning committee and local arrangement are well organized and we look forward to wonderful event! Presently, 102 people have registered.

The Joint Ad Hoc Committee started conversation around the joint Festival of Faith in 2025 and the team looked at possible calendar dates in 2025. I shared with the committee that the Moderator's Planning Committee asked Regional Councils to consider partner events for their official visit. The Moderator-lead Flourishing Event will not be considered our official visit. The Ad Hoc Committee decided to reach out to the Moderator's Advisory Committee to see if she would consider participating in a Festival of Faith event tentatively set for June 13-15, 2025.

### *UPCOMING MODERATOR'S FOURISH VISITS, hosted by the Moderator:*

As previously mentioned, the CS Moderator's Flourish visit will be May 1- 4, 2024. Peter will inquire if we can share that visit with the CS RCM. Location still TBD, but suggested location Sault Ste. Marie.

### *2023 REGIONAL MEETING NOVEMBER, BUDGET AND STAFFING:*

Janet continues planning for the 2024 budget and planning for the online Regional Council Meeting will not likely start until mid to late summer or first thing in the fall.

We say goodbye to Rachael Howes as of May 31, 2023. I have deeply appreciated her work, sense of humor and great skill over the past 5 years. It has been an honour to work with her. We hired a new Congregational Support Minister for SWRC, whose primary work will focus south of the 407 in Shining Waters Regional Council. The successful applicant is Eun-Joo Park! We are delighted for Eun-Joo and SWRC. Currently, she is serving is the Canadian Shield Regional

Council and the minister at St. Andrew's United Church in Sault Ste. Marie. She will start August 1, 2023.

Recently at our Executive Minister management meeting, Erik Mathiesen the CFO for the United Church, shared that the General Council needs to cut our GC operating budget by 6 million dollars over two years. He also feels that communities of faith do not have the capacity to increase General Council assessments. One of the acute challenges at this time for General Council is both the challenge of inflation and receiving smaller returns on investment. While the Regional Council operating grant will remain the same until 2025, M&S Grants to Regional Council will likely be cut in 2024/25, which could have an impact on our operating income. The cut will also have an impact on granting.

In the near future, we have pre-planned some room for cuts to our income. However, my sense is in the future, we will face cuts to our operating budget while at the same time our expenses will increase. Part of the way we are addressing this future challenge is by partnering more and more around staffing and budgeting related to staffing. However, my suggestion to both Regional Councils is to start talking about how we can partner more as two regional councils. Erik Mathiesen raised the delicate point that he has concerns around the economic sustainability of 16 Regional Councils. For me, I am mindful that he has the challenging task of being the messenger and not the author of our economic challenge. My sense is we could approach this future challenge in two ways: one, we could wait and deal with the challenge when we need to face it head-on, which is a legitimate strategy, as the Regional Council would likely be more accepting facing a budget challenge in real time; and two, would be to intentionally reach out to the Canadian Shield Regional Council about partnering more beyond staff. Perhaps experiment with ways we could consolidate our administrative work as a Regional Council; consider how we could partner around RCMs and at the very least, consider how we are **distinctive** as a Regional Council and consider what work are we doing that is essentially the same. My sense discussing with President David from SWRC is that we need to proceed carefully and thoughtfully, as we work toward creating a strong community between the two Regional Councils. However, as our Regional Council policy already has a mechanism for partnering, I am recommending that we work at the joint Executive meeting this fall to brainstorm how we can strengthen our partnership and perhaps, consider how we can work together. If we can figure out a path forward together, perhaps we can offer leadership to the entire church as we face our future challenges together. We could also provide leadership to our communities of faith as they face similar challenges and conversations with neighbouring United Churches.