

Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday October 20, 2021 at 1900h
Via Videoconference

Present: Al Hubbard (video conference host), Andy Choles, Carol Wilson, Christine Whiting, Clarke Grice, Dana Bryant-Giguere, David Wheeler, Elisabeth Evans, Heather McGillis, Joanne Quennell, John Fargey (representing Stewardship), Louise Sinclair, Marg Shaver, Mary Dowding-Paré (representing Search), Pat Skinner, Rick Cranston, Rick Donaldson, Shawn Bausch, Steve Shaver, Susan Gittings

Regrets: Kay Cranston, Teresa Madeira

Ministry Staff: Rev. Dr. Morar Murray-Hayes, Victoria Keane

Reports attached this month: Communications, Community Outreach, Congregation Support, Finance, Ministry & Personnel, Property, Real Estate Oversight, Recruitment, Spiritual Development, Search, Stewardship, Welcoming & Fellowship, Worship, Trustees, Regional Council, Financial Statements & Treasurer's Report, Senior Minister
Other documents attached: Draft Policy on Expenditure Control

Call to Order

Rick Cranston called the Council Meeting of **October 20, 2021** to order.

A quorum (22) of Council members were present.

Opening Devotional Rev. Morar

Opening Remarks Rick Cranston

Rick welcomed new Council members David Wheeler, chair of Property, and Louise Sinclair, chair of Stewardship. He reviewed video conference courtesies and procedures, including voting by verbal response for opposition or abstention. There were no changes to the circulated agenda.

Review & Approval of September 15, 2021 Council Meeting Minutes

A correction to the circulated minutes was noted under Committee Reports – Property: “air conditioners” should read “air filtration units”.

- MOTION to Council by Rick Donaldson that the council minutes of September 15, 2021 be approved as amended. SECONDED by Pat Skinner. Motion CARRIED.

Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC) Update Heather McGillis

Heather provided observations from the return to in person worship:

- Registration for in person services is going well
- Main concern is traffic flow going into and out of the sanctuary and avoiding congestion in the Narthex
- Asking people to go to the front will help to maintain appropriate spacing and make it easier for Rev. Morar to greet worshippers after the service
- As the weather turns colder, team may consider using the auditorium (managed by the air filtration systems) for socializing after the services

Stewardship Campaign Update Louise Sinclair

- Working on the letters and distribution list
- The challenge of creating/customizing an exhaustive mailing list from various sources, was highlighted; those receiving links to the worship services will be included
- Most communication will be by email, along with hard copy letters by regular mail
- Follow up will be done via email or phone call

Reports from Ministerial Team

Victoria Keane – Youth Music Program Leader

- Victoria has joined the Continuing Education program at Wilfred Laurier University to pursue her Certificate in Disability-Inclusive Ministry and Christian Faith over the next 18 months
- She has been invited to speak at webinars reaching across the province at end of October about youth program planning for Advent and Christmas.

Rev. Dr. Morar Murray-Hayes – Senior Minister

Rev. Morar highlighted her report:

- Busy working with a number of committees, including REOC and Stewardship
- Supporting Search and M & P teams to edge us closer to a new senior minister; reaching out to colleagues to try and expand the search
- In person worship has presented a steep and time-consuming learning curve due to livestreaming challenges. It has also been a challenge to see people and be unable to greet them afterwards

Committee Reports

Discussions Arising from Committee Reports

Rick Cranston expressed appreciation for reports being submitted in a timely way, which allows Council members to be well prepared for our meetings. No issues or discussions arose from the committee reports submitted by Community Outreach, Congregation Support or Real Estate Oversight.

Communications – Al Hubbard

- First full Committee meeting was held October 19th. Having a full slate of members now allows them to start actively reaching out on social media.

Finance – Clarke Grice

- MOTION to Council by Clarke Grice that the revised content of the Policy on Expenditure Control dated October 20, 2021 be accepted as presented. SECONDED by Rick Donaldson.
 - Clarke and Dana Bryant-Giguere explained that the main purpose of this policy is to provide a process for committee chairs to follow for recurring (budgeted) and unexpected (non-budgetary) expenses.
 - Concern was raised about how to handle unforeseen situations where there is a need to act quickly, e.g. urgent building repairs
 - There was ‘friendly amendment’ put forth whereby the policy on expenditure control should be amended to include an approval process for extraordinary expenses in emergency situations
- AMENDED MOTION by Clarke Grice that the revised content of the Policy on Expenditure Control dated October 20, 2021 be accepted, subject to revisions that allow for emergency situations necessitating extraordinary expenses to be dealt with on an exceptional basis and resolved in a time sensitive manner. SECONDED by David Wheeler. Amended Motion CARRIED unanimously.
- Budget sheets will be distributed to committee chairs for completion over the coming weeks.

Ministry & Personnel – Susan Gittings/Heather McGillis

- MOTION to Council by Heather McGillis and Susan Gittings to authorize the M & P Committee to complete the process of extending Morar’s contract until June 30th, 2022, subject to approval by Horseshoe Falls Regional Council. Terms are generally consistent with the current agreement and will follow recommendations by Horseshoe Falls Regional Council. SECONDED by John Fargey.
 - Rick Cranston expressed gratitude to Morar and the M & P Committee for arranging this contract extension
 - Motion CARRIED

Recruitment – John Fargey

- MOTION to Council by John Fargey that David Wheeler be accepted as chair of Property Committee effective September 28, 2021. SECONDED by Andy Choles. Motion CARRIED.
- MOTION to Council by John Fargey, SECONDED by Marg Shaver, that Council recognize and support the notion of sending letters to a dozen or more households, including some Members, indicating their removal from the Christ First Directory of households.
 - It was clarified that a letter is being drafted jointly by John and Marg, as a result of an ongoing process of research and communication by Recruitment and Congregation Support
 - Following discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of such a communication to inactive members, motion was WITHDRAWN. The draft letter will be on hold pending further consideration.

Property – David Wheeler

- John Dymond is happy with his new contract. All requests to be made of John should go through Property or the church office to ensure that his workload and hours can be managed appropriately and his time is respected.
- The Committee addressed all issues identified during the PC Campus inspection at their October 15th meeting. Another meeting has been scheduled for October 27th to deal with any issues arising from the Clarkson Campus inspection.
- Quotations for high priority capital items are in progress with a view to including these in the 2022 budget submission. One issue that must be dealt with urgently is mold resulting from water damage below Morar's office.

Search – Mary Dowding-Paré

- Mary expressed thanks to Morar and M & P for the extension of Morar's contract, referring to it as a 'win-win' situation, given the 3 month planning horizon for the Search Committee
- Activity stats mentioned in her report can be multiplied by about 2 hours per stat to estimate the number of hours spent so far
- Much work still to do but the team remains hopeful about a positive outcome for 2022

Spiritual Development – Victoria Keane

- Victoria highlighted the upcoming Halloween events:
 - October 30th – Committee along with Outreach will join with Compass volunteers (matched 1:1) to hand out goodie bags to kids and adults at the Clarkson Village trick or treat event
 - October 31st – interactive Halloween 9:02 service with costumes

Trustees – Rick Donaldson

- Rick acknowledged David Wheeler's efforts in supporting John Dymond, who is a great asset to Christ First

Welcoming & Fellowship – Elisabeth Evans/Joanne Quennell

- Elisabeth invited suggestions for alternatives to the traditional Advent pot luck supper:
 - Heather McGillis will add this to the agenda for the next EPC meeting agenda, and Victoria Keane will attend the next Welcoming & Fellowship meeting to help generate ideas
 - The following ideas were offered: food truck, fire pit, hot chocolate, outdoor carol sing, candlelight walk, outdoor Christmas tree decorating

Worship – Andy Choles

- Andy highlighted the livestreaming challenges but commended the technical team for their efforts
- More volunteers are needed to fill the various roles for in person worship
- With reference to the 4 baptisms in recent months, there was a suggestion to update our baptism policy. Morar spoke about the opportunity these rituals have offered both to the incoming families and our church community, and suggested that review of the policy be

undertaken once a new minister is in place. This led to a wider discussion about the need to review and update our policies. It was clarified by Carol Wilson that there have been only a few Christ First policies created and approved since amalgamation. There is a set of older policies approved by the Christ Church Council, including a baptism policy, which may have been followed since amalgamation by certain committees as good guidance. It would therefore be appropriate to conduct a review of our historical policies, as well as create new policies that are currently or will soon be required, e.g an accessibility policy. Discussion continued under Business Arising.

Regional Council – Shawn Bausch

- Shawn highlighted the initiatives presented at the Fall Regional Council meeting:
 - New Licensed Lay Worship Leader program, which is a new designation for worship leadership as an alternative to the ministry program format
 - Update on United Property Resource Corporation on their progress and methodology
 - Continued need for Region and communities of faith to put effort into community building, which will be a major focus for the wider church, for which there will be resources available. Further information is available on their website: <http://hfrucc.ca/>

Financial Report – Dana Bryant-Giguere

- Dana reviewed the financial statements setting out the position of Christ First as of September 30, 2021. Favourable results are in large part due to budgeted property expenditures which have been deferred.
- MOTION to Council by Dana Bryant-Giguere that the financial statements of Christ First as of September 30, 2021 which have been reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee be accepted: SECONDED by Carol Wilson. Motion CARRIED.
- Dana asked Council members to give her a heads up about invoices for big expenses, because cheques are written by Janis prior to Dana's review of these payments at month-end.

Business Arising from previous minutes

- Ministers' plaques for Christ Church and Christ First – Trustees will take this project forward. Suggestion made to consider using wood from old pews to match the original plaque for First United.
- Update on Hearing Accessibility project (Carol):
 - Background: Council approved creation of ad hoc committee in January 2020, to consider hearing accessibility for small to medium size meetings. Further to funding approval by the congregation in the 2020 budget, a package of hearing equipment was ordered and received just prior to Covid-19 lockdown in March 2020; the equipment has remained unused until recently
 - With the return to small group meetings with adequate spacing, there is now an opportunity to use our equipment. It has been readied, with the help of John Dymond and Janis Cowie, for use at an upcoming meeting. Ad hoc team will regroup in the near future to continue working on how to manage and promote use of the equipment. Guidance will be sought from M & P and Property regarding whether set up for meetings should be managed by staff or a small group of volunteers, as well as the EPC in order to align with their cleaning/sanitizing protocols.

- Christ First Policy update project
 - older policies to be distributed to related committees to use as a basis for new policies where applicable
 - gaps to be identified where policies are currently required but do not exist

New Business

- Annual Report for 2021
 - Suggestion to create a report with format similar to that of December 2020; to be coordinated by Communications
 - Deadline to be communicated to Council members
 - Carol Wilson to distribute link to 2020 report for everyone to review

Closing Prayer Rev. Morar

Adjournment

Next Council Meeting November 17, 2021



Council Chair – Rick Cranston

November 17, 2021

Date



Council Secretary – Carol Wilson