

**Human Resources Commission**  
**Horseshoe Falls Regional Council**  
**OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA**

*Supports, Connects, Empowers Communities of Faith*

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**Place:** Zoom meeting 1:00 p.m.

**Roster:** Pat Tooley (L, Chair), Doug Caldwell (L), Barbara Duffin (L), Joanne Hedge (OM), Sandra Litt (L), Morar Murray-Hayes (OM), Allison Playfair (OM), Ted Smith (DLM), Susan Stephen (L), Michael Veall (L)

**Staff Support:** Rev. Micol Cottrell, Pastoral Relations Minister [mcottrell@united-church.ca](mailto:mcottrell@united-church.ca), Pretima Kukadia, Admin, Communication & Records [pkukadia@united-church.ca](mailto:pkukadia@united-church.ca)

**Present:** Pat Tooley, Doug Caldwell, Barb Duffin, Joanne Hedge, Morar Murray-Hayes, Allison Playfair, Susan Stephen, Michael Veall, Micol Cottrell, Pretima Kukadia

**Regrets:** Sandra Litt, Ted Smith

**Absent:**

**Welcome and Constitute Meeting:** The meeting was constituted and opened by Micol Cottrell.

**Acknowledging the Land:** Territorial lands were acknowledged on behalf of the Human Resources Commission by Pretima Kukadia-Kinting:

We are gathered this afternoon to worship on the traditional land of the Mississauga's of the New Credit, covered by the Upper Canada Treaties (St. Paul's Oakville covered under Treaty 9). We recognize and deeply appreciate their historic connection to this ground we worship on. We also recognize the contributions of the Metis, Inuit, and other Indigenous peoples have made to our country. As settlers, this recognition must be clearly connected to our commitment to make the promise and the challenge of the Truth and Reconciliation real in the community in which we live and worship. We are grateful to the Creator for this time and this place.

**Opening Worship:** Doug Caldwell shared worship. From Luke 10, At the Home of Martha and Mary: the contrast between the people that get stuff done and the people that sit thinking and listening for God. This is a lesson for us in our context of those who are overworked and the need to be humble and that we all make mistakes.

**Opening Motions**

Corresponding Members:

**MOTION** that Cathy Dilts be accepted as a corresponding member to this meeting.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

Approval of Agenda:

**MOTION** by Barbara Duffin / Morar Murray-Hayes that the agenda be accepted as amended.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

Approval of Previous Minutes:

**MOTION** by Joanne Hedge / Susan Stephen that the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council approve the minutes of February 22, 2023 as circulated.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

### Business Arising

1. **Email Poll of** March 10, 2023 to be recorded in the minutes.

**MOTION** by Allison Playfair / Susan Stephen that the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council having reviewed the position description for Children, Youth and Young Families Minister, part-time, 20 hours/week, recognize this position as a Congregational Designated Ministry position at St. Andrew's United Church, Hamilton.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

2. **Email Poll of** March 16, 2023 to be recorded in the minutes.

**MOTION** by Allison Playfair / Joanne Hedge that the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council approve the position description for a minister, full-time, for Case United Church, Mount Hope, Hamilton.

*Note: This position is approved pending the adjustment of the time allotted to preaching and worship.*

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

### New Business

1. **Pastoral Relations Minister Report** – Micol Cottrell

Recently I have been working on ensuring that the community of faith tracking document that is used by Lynne Allin and myself is up to date.

I have recently switched to dedicating Fridays to big picture work. The big piece of work I am currently working on is organizing liaison training. To support this, I am no longer checking phone or emails on this day.

I have continued to have conversation with Lynne Allin about how best we can utilize liaisons in our regional council. Liaisons will eventually begin supporting communities of faith from the beginning of their search process. At the invitation of the Congregational Support Commission, they will be a supportive presence assisting with process questions and direct people to resources for the Community of Faith Profile. For this part of the

process, they will direct people towards the Congregational Support Commission. Following this, they will support and empower communities of faith as they create their position description, and resource the search team. The goal is to smooth out the search process as much as possible for communities of faith with one person offering continuous support early on in the process.

Last week Pretima and I attended a week-long education event at Five Oaks entitled “Engaging Difference! Deepening Understanding for Intercultural Ministry.” Regional Council staff, who haven’t already done so, were encouraged to attend as the regional council continues its work around intercultural ministry. We are thinking about ways the information gathered can be used to help communities of faith. This is especially true around hesitations to look at admissions ministers

Requests were made to Micol by commission members for information on content of liaison and M&P training. We are thinking about ways the information gathered can be used to help communities of faith. This is especially true around hesitations to look at admissions ministers.

## **2. Executive Report – Pat Tooley**

Short Executive meeting, some content was by Tri-Regional Team with Jenny Stephens and Bill Allen. Some United Church Outdoor Ministries issues with keeping up-to-date with government policies and procedures, which has led to a great improvement.

## **3. LLWL Resource Team Report – Cathy Dilts**

We met last night for the first meeting of the year. Mary Parsons was approved in January, needs certificate. Jean Wilson also in process to be approved at Spring Meeting. All those of 1-year term to be interviewed before Spring Meeting. All others to be interviewed in the fall. Held two continuing education days, Marshall Memorial United Church and Ancaster United Church. Some LLWLs offered leadership. There is talk of a fall leadership day. Also, talk of future needs of LLWLs, receiving requests from congregations for funerals and other services. Can we explore making recommendations, providing resources and educational trainings. My 3-year term ends this September, hoping for prayerful discernment.

## **4. Appointment of Liaisons**

Port Nelson, Lowville United Churches, Burlington covenanting April 23 at 4:00 pm at Port Nelson – Allison Playfair will attend as liaison

Central United Church, Port Colborne – Pat Tooley

Munns and Palermo United Church, Oakville – Shirley Buttaro

**MOTION** by Susan Stephen / Joanne Hedge that the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council agree to appoint as liaisons Allison Playfair, Pat Tooley and Shirley Buttaro.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

## 5. Consent Docket

### Request for Change of Pastoral Relations

That the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council concur with the request of Diane Walker, OM-R, for a change of pastoral relations from Wellington Square United Church, Burlington, effective February 28, 2023.

### Approval of Open Positions:

That the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council approve the position description for a Minister of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care, full-time, for Stoney Creek and Pioneer Memorial United Churches and St. Columba Presbyterian Church.

That the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council approve the position description for a Minister for Ker United Church, Stoney Creek, part-time, 10 hours/month, *pending the addition of wider church involvement, hours or percentage with each area of responsibility, and information about what areas of ministry lay people will undertake (e.g., pastoral care team).*

That the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council approve the position description for a Minister, full-time, for Port Dover-Woodhouse Pastoral Charge.

That the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council approve the position description for a Minister, full-time, for Southminster United Church, Niagara Falls.

That the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council approve the position description for a Short-Term Supply Minister for Jordan Station Pastoral Charge, part-time, 20 hours/week.

That the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council approve the position description for a Short-Term Supply Minister for St. James United Church, Waterdown, part-time, Weekend Supply from April 30, 2023 until August 27, 2023.

### Approval of New Appointments

That the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council concur with the request of Long Point Bay Pastoral Charge, Port Rowan, to renew the appoint with D. Richard Hollingsworth, OM-R, part-time, 20 hours/week, from 2023-03-01 to 2025-03-01 according to the terms agreed to in ChurchHub on 2023-02-13.

That the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council concur with the request of Wesley Pastoral Charge, Welland, to appoint Gordon Crossfield, OM-R for Short-Term Supply, part-time, 20 hours/week, from 2023-04-17 to 2023-10-17 according to the terms agreed to in Churchhub on 2023-03-09.

That the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council concur with the request of Erindale Pastoral Charge, Mississauga, to appoint Kenneth MacDonald, OM-R, part-time, 24 hours/week, from 2023-09-01 to 2024-03-29 according to the terms agreed to in ChurchHub on 2023-03-26.

That the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council concur with the request of Trinity Pastoral Charge, Thorold, to appoint Yujene Oh, Candidate, part-time, 25 hours/week, from 2023-03-01 to 2023-06-30 according to the terms agreed to in ChurchHub on 2023-02-13.

**Approval of Calls**

**Voluntary Associate Ministry (VAM) Applications**

That the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council endorses the application of Murray Barnet, OM-R, to be a Voluntary Associate Ministry at Old Windham United Church, Simcoe.

**Request for License to Administer the Sacraments**

**Receive for information: Sabbatical Leave**

----- End of Consent Docket -----

**Approval of Consent Docket**

**MOTION** by Allison Playfair / Joanne Hedge that the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council approve the consent docket as amended.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

**6. Motions Removed from Consent Docket**

**MOTION** by Allison Playfair / Barbara Duffin that the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council endorses the application of Morar Murray-Hayes, OM-R, to be a Voluntary Associate Ministry at Erin Mills United Church, Mississauga.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

Morar Murray-Hayes abstained.

**7. Ministry in a New Call Survey**

Positions are changing, cutting down positions due to money and changing demographics. Many are becoming part-time, collaborative, etc. How can so much, or the same amount of work, be expected for lesser hours. Ministers also need to state boundaries. There is a big picture here of changing times and expectations. We need to train and recruit liaisons that can address these issues early on. We need tools, like full position descriptions, with notes on boundaries, self-care. Where is oversight, accountability and checking back in to learn if the position description is a good fit? There is a list of skills and traits for a Search Committee and should be for M&P Committees. Getting people to take the trainings and do this work for the congregation.

**MOTION** by Joanne Hedge / Allison Playfair that the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council That the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council endorses the forming of a working group, consisting of Barb Duffin, Sue

Stephens, Morar Murray-Hayes, Allison Playfair and Doug Caldwell, to look over survey responses and report back to the Human Resources Commission.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

**8. Retired Ministers**

Michelle Hogman is calling retirees that we do not have contact information for. We are looking at area gatherings. One is in planning after Easter and another one needs to be planned. A great deal of dissatisfaction with connection with wider church.

This would be most helpful to bring this to Executive and Kevin Steeper. Executive may have funding for retired ministers' events.

**9. Voluntary Associate Minister Process – Morar Murray-Hayes**

After retirement a minister cannot be involved in their former church for a year but still need to be a VAM at the same congregation after that time period. This now requires involvement with other churches. Maritime regional council does not have this requirement to be a VAM. For experienced, retired ministers this can be an obstruction.

Can be pulpit supply, or Sunday supply. The best practice of staying away from the church for a year, is a employment law not a church law.

**10. Exit Interviews**

To be discussed at the next meeting of this commission.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, April 26, 2023 at 1:00 pm by Zoom

**Worship/Closing Prayers:** Morar Murray-Hayes

**Adjournment:**

**MOTION** that the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council having concluded its business, be adjourned at 3:27 pm.

**MOTION**

**CARRIED**

## APPENDIX – Summary of ‘Ministry in Communities of Faith’ Survey

### On a positive note...

- Lots of positive comments about opportunities to be creative and to develop meaningful worship services
- Many mentioned how special it is to travel with congregants on their life journey – even to end of life
- “I needed support last year as I was close to burnout and when I reached out to M&P they supported me”

### Summary of Concerns with my Questions re Response...

***Several months ago, we talked about setting up a subcommittee of HRC to focus on caring for our Ministers – maybe it is time! That said, I recommend we set up a sub-committee. I recommend that the Sub-committee be struck to review the survey results, prepare recommendations for responses to each concern, identify strategy to attain more surveys, and report all findings and recommendations back to HRC.***

- Feeling unsupported so left the non supportive environment – ***Glad we have the survey to help uncover ahead of breakdown in relationship between minister and community of faith***
- One person mentioned, a very negative congregation with negative comments on almost everything – but feels supported by M&P – ***Does this need intervention or assistance – they said they were open to it – how should we handle?***
- One person reported the loss of a 2<sup>nd</sup> 30-hour ministry staff – now only one minister - not dealt with by M&P or board in terms of what this means for the minister still there – are they to do 1.5 of a job? – the role that was eliminated worked at least 10 hours with youth – now it is the lead Minister’s role to back fill – ***Does the HRC have to approve the removal of a position? How do we do that? Do we ask for a strategy so extra work does not just get dumped on already full, full-time minister role?***
- Two have said no autonomy over music and they mentioned music staff is toxic – ***How should we respond? Minister in both cases mentioned they feel “second in command” to music staff?***
- Inability for leadership of church to appreciate planning – not a lot of detail provided so unsure what was meant – ***Do we follow up?***
- From a new minister – ended up not the role they are hired for – much was promised during search that has not panned out – ***Do we intervene? They again said yes to help.***
- Several reported not getting all or any vacation – ***Is the need to support time off for the Minister part of the M&P training? Should we intervene?***
- Many mentioned that they were on call 24/7 – no boundaries – it was expressed that the congregation expected instant answers to emails 7 days a week ***Do we intervene?***

**Should we offer training re ministers learning how to set healthy boundaries for mental health and physical self care?**

- One said it was hard to take time off/vacation when members of their congregation pass away and this is particularly hard when the minister is close to them - **Do we intervene?**
- Some said finding supply for vacation and study leave is left to them when they are going to be off and a few mentioned there is no money for supply Minister – **Should we be adding this to the compensation for a call – that is, funds for supply for vacation and study leave?**
- Interim Ministry process was not effective so the new minister feels like they are doing this function now – **Should we be investigating and finding why this process was not done well?**
- Several reported the loss of volunteers – due to declining membership – aging membership – many reported dysfunctional or non-existent committees – so a lot is falling on the Minister – **How do we support this?**
- M&P being Minister’s rep. – **What is the role of the minister as it pertains to M&P?**
- Being caught up in financial fights – one said there is always talk of financial issues and having to close – negative feelings are created from this – **How do we ensure they are supported?**
- Many reported their days off, vacation and study leave are not respected - **Do we need to provide training re setting healthy boundaries for our ministers so they can learn to say “no”?**
- One said they are not supported for study leave and vacation – when this minister goes on vacation, they have to write sermon before they go – **Should we intervene**
- M&P training is needed – **This was mentioned a lot**
- Only one said their church knew what October Minister appreciation month was – many are recognized on their birthdays etc. – **Should we be promoting this next fall?**
- No secretarial support – **How should we handle this? Is it part of M&P training?**
- Never given annual review – **Is training needed here? Is it part of M&P training?**
- One said their call is 20 hours, but they are working 30 hours - time is not respected – **Should we intervene?**
- Burnt out volunteers who are toxic, who refuse to leave positions, and constant input from former interim Minister - **Should we intervene?**
- Mentioning limited help with pastoral care – **Is there support or training for volunteers who wish to do pastoral care?**
- When two churches amalgamate – **Are they assigned a liaison with HR experience?**
- It was reported by one that the region is out of touch with what congregational life is like – in old days presbytery was good place to get support – **Not sure what to do here?**
- Sabbatical – many don’t know responsibility to provide – a few say they also don’t plan for it – one Minister said never want to take – one said their church was furious about



having to provide – one said they didn't know what they would do during a sabbatical – one said it never would be supported by congregation as they hated when they took parental leave – one said they never considered sabbatical leave because their congregation didn't have funds – one said they would never take 3 months off from their congregation – some have taken sabbaticals with no issues – lots of lack of awareness – ***Should this be part of M&P training?***

- One noted they had a ¾ time call but working 40 hours per week and to make ends meet they must have another job to have enough income – this change to ¾ time was not supported or guided and it is essentially 40 hours – ***Went from full time to part time but nothing changed – How should we respond?***
- One said it is was very hard to meet the needs of an aging congregation with on only 20 hours per week – many weeks working many more hours – congregation members are throwing out ideas of what it used to be like when we had 2 full time ministers – they don't understand the new reality of a part time minister – ***How should we respond?***
- One was concerned about not getting fair compensation but music staff received 6.99% increase – ***How should we respond?***
- One said, when they were hired the plan was to hire a youth minister too – because of this the two main youth volunteers quit – now all the youth programs are up to this minister – ***How should we respond?***
- One said, their committees are ineffective, and they must manage it all - only meet if this minister asks for the meeting and they must run it – ***How should we respond?***
- One said they were not been purchased a computer so they use their own personal computer – they were supposed to get a computer – ***How should we respond?***
- Dealing with bullies causes stress – ***How should we respond?***
- Dealing with unrealistic timelines causes stress – ***How should we respond?***
- One minister said there was no room for them as a person – this minister's mom is very sick and their congregation doesn't provide support or understanding or respect for personal time – They are very burnt out – ***How should we respond?***
- One said they feel isolated in new community – they said there is not the same connections without presbytery in this new structure with regions and limited communication from region – not even Merry Christmas – no correspondence from Kevin – ***How should we respond?***