**Executive**

**Horseshoe Falls Regional Council**

**of The United Church of Canada**

***Supports, Connects, Empowers Communities of Faith***

**MINUTES** January 24, 2024, 4 PM via zoom

**Roster:** Lennox Scarlett (President), John Hurst (Treasurer), Christina Crawford, James Grunden, Marilyn Johnston, Sula Anne Kosacky, Deborah Laforet, Wendy Lowden, Debbie McMillan, Adrianne Robertson, Pat Tooley, Yvonne Wright

**Staff Support:** Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa, Executive Minister, Sue Duliban, Executive Assistant

**Guests:** Russ Gowan, Mike Arnold, Gary Patterson (Trustees of Garnet United Church); Martha Lockwood, Bill Leighfield(Trustees of Peoples Memorial United Church)

**Constitute Meeting:** President Lennox

*I constitute this meeting in the name of Jesus Christ, the one true head of the Church and by the*

*authority vested in me by this meeting of the Horseshoe Falls Regional Council for whatever business may properly come before it. The bounds of the meeting will be the Zoom call.*

**Acknowledging the Land and Welcome:** President Lennox

**Opening Worship:** President Lennox read Psalm 119 33:40 and offered a prayer.

# Opening Agreements

## Consent Docket

**MOTION:** Yvonne Wright / Adrianne Robertson

That the Horseshoe Falls Regional Council (HFRC) Executive approve the Consent Docket.

1. **Enabling Actions**
2. That the proposed Agenda be approved as presented.
3. That the minutes of the meetings of November 22, 2023, December 13, 2023 and January 13, 2024 be approved as distributed.
4. That motions be written and given to the Secretary.
5. That Russ Gowan, Mike Arnold, Gary Patterson, Martha Lockwood, Bill Leighfield be named as corresponding members.

**B. Omnibus Motion**

Horseshoe Falls Regional Council (9) Omnibus motion – January 24, 2024

That the Horseshoe Falls Regional Council (9) Executive take the following action(s):

1. Niagara Presbytery United Church Extension Council

    …. pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve Niagara Presbytery United Church Extension Council 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Bonnie Bryan

Rick Chandler

Jim Dohn

Debbie Grimes

Paul Heath

Stuart Keeley

Sheila Laundry

Bill Leighfield

Bruce Lilley

Larry McRae

\*Valerie Spear

Diane Walker

*This is based on the draft Annual Meeting minutes of June 6, 2023, the 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.*

 \*N.B.  Valerie Spear passed away in September 2023, but was elected to the board in June.  A new member of the board is being elected at the IM’s next meeting.

1. QUEST Learning Centre for Religious Literacy

 …. pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve QUEST Learning Centre for Religious Literacy 2019-2020 Board of Directors

 Brenda Aston

Judith Bishop

Dalton Fowler

Doug Hampson

Barb Imrisek

Barry Street

Sandy Street

*This is based on the Annual Meeting Minutes of April 14, 2019, the 2019 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.*

 \*N.B.  This IM has been out of compliance for many years and staff continues to work with them to correct this as they consider their future.

1. Wesley Urban Ministries Inc.

     …. pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve Wesley Urban Ministries Inc. 2023-2024 Board of Directors

Shirley Bainbridge

Lita Barrie

Jim Cairney

Klim Khomenko

Carla Lasota

Leanne Lindsay

Lebené Numekevor

Heather Padgett

Kaush Parameswaran

Jim Parke

Julie Vernon

*This is based on the draft Annual General Meeting Minutes of October 25, 2023, the 2023 board member approval form, the board contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada.*

**CARRIED**

Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa introduced the Trustees from Peoples Memorial Church and Garnet United Church.

# Trustees of Peoples Memorial United Church: Update

# Martha Lockwood noted that a low offer with many conditions was received for the property just before Christmas and not accepted. The realtor is confident that more interest will be forthcoming in the spring. The contents of the building have been emptied with a great deal of assistance. Approximately 90% of contents have gone to other ministries. Trustee Diane Walker, who was unable to attend the executive meeting, arranged for historically important items to be given to the Fort Erie town museum. Bill Leighfield noted that a bridge loan might be required to cover expenses (heat, lights) until the property is sold. The trustees will present a request to the executive should a loan be required. Also noted, it is a designated heritage building.

The Executive thanked Martha and Bill for their work and asked that thanks be extended to

Diane Walker on behalf of the Executive.

Martha Lockwood and Bill Leighfield left the meeting.

# Trustees of Garnet United Church: Report

Ross Gowan referred the Executive to the detailed written report from the trustees, highlighting the request at the conclusion of the report. Russ reported that the trustees have recently received assurance that a septic system can be installed.

**Business Arising**

1. Request arising from Trustees of Garnet United Church Report

**MOTION:** Adrianne Robertson / Debbie McMillan

That the HFRC Executive grants permission for the Trustees of Garnet United Church to gather three different quotes, from licensed archaeologist consultants and contract with a consultant to conduct an archaeologic assessment not to exceed $35,000 with intention to sever and sell the lot with church building. **CARRIED.**

The Executive thanked the trustees for their work. Ross Gowan, Mike Arnold, and Gary Patterson left the meeting

1. Carried forward from January 13, 2024 meeting (Proposals 1-6)

Proposal 1 240113: Ministry Sharing Agreement

**MOTION**: Yvonne Wright / Deborah Laforet

The HFRC Executive agrees to:

1. Approve and adopt the updated Ministry Sharing Agreement to run from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2029.
2. Direct the Staff Support Committee to provide an updated draft Mandate, that includes a plan for the evaluation of staff sharing at least 6 months prior to this agreement, to the February meeting of each regional council Executive. **CARRIED.**

Proposal 2 240113: Honourarium Update to Governance Handbook

**MOTION**: Deborah Laforet / Debbie McMillan

The HFRC Executive agrees to change the HFRC Governance Handbook to the following:

President

During the two-year term as President, the home community of faith of a President who is in a pastoral relationship will receive an honorarium in the amount of $1,200 per year to assist with coverage for any absences of the President. Any President not in a pastoral relationship will be invited to designate to the UCC ministry of their choice a donation of 1,200 per year.

At the conclusion of the term, the former President, once no longer serving in that capacity, will receive an honorarium of $2,000.

Past President

If someone else, such as the Past President or President Elect needs to take on a significant role of President, it is up to the Executive to determine a reasonable honorarium in keeping with what is outlined above.

Treasurer

The Treasurer will have travel expenses associated with this role reimbursed. Each December, the Treasurer will be invited to name a United Church ministry to receive a donation of $1,000.00 in recognition of the Treasurer’s service.

All other sections of the Governance Handbook concerning Officers to remain the same. **CARRIED**.

Proposal 3 240113: Executive Financial Support Restorative Care Leave (Micol Cottrell)

**MOTION:** John Hurst / Wendy Lowden

The HFRC Executive agrees to the following:

1. To provide financial support for a community of faith whose ministry personnel goes on restorative care leave before a pastoral relationship can be fully formed, within the first 6 months after the start date or for the months after the date a pastoral relationship was to end (no more than 6 months) by:

Providing 100% of the costs of 15% top-up and employer expenses for congregations .

1. Authorize the Minister, Pastoral Relations, to offer this support when these situations arise;
2. Confirm payment of this support once details of expenses incurred by the pastoral charge are presented to the Executive for authorization of the amount of payment to be covered from the unrestricted reserve. **CARRIED.**

Proposal 4 240113: Celebrating and Commemorating UCC 100th Anniversary

1. Decide if this will be regional council by regional council or involve some joint celebrations;
2. Commit time on the agenda to brainstorm ideas and refine them with a view to communicating with congregations after Easter 2024.

Prefer to not to do joint celebrations. However, if events are being planned by other regional councils, keep at the forefront of the Executive and keep Regional Council informed.

Proposal 5 240113: Hosting GC 46 in 2028

1. One regional council could host in which case the logical choice would be Horseshoe Falls (last held in Niagara Falls in 1952); OR
2. The three regional councils could offer to host jointly.

Executive concluded they would welcome the opportunity to host GC46. While recognizing support from the other two regional councils can be counted on, the invitation will be offered in HFRC’s name and HFRC will take on this role by themselves for ease of planning.

**MOTION:** Yvonne Wright / Deborah Laforet

That Horseshoe Falls Regional Council agrees to offer to host GC46 in 2028. **CARRIED.**

Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa the HFRC invitation to host GC46 to General Council. Cheryl-Ann will also inform the WOWRC and ARWRC presidents.

Proposal 6 240113: Financial Matters: Signing Authority

**MOTION:** John Hurst / Adrianne Robertson

The HFRC Executive agrees to

1. Remove Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa:
2. As one of the individuals who can authorize expenses; and
3. As a member of the investment team

Effective March 1, 2024 and communicate the same to the General Council Office and to investment advisor, BMO;

1. Name Mark Laird as one of the individuals who can authorize expenses effective March 1, 2024 and communicate the same to the General Council Office; (Authorization requires any two of Mark Laird, Susan Duliban, Krista Ford, and John Hurst).
2. Name Mark Laird as a member of the investment team, effective March 1, 2024 and communicate the same to investment advisor, BMO; (Investment Team: Mark Laird, John Hurst, Ralph Hayman, Steve Lowden).
3. Remind the investment team to minute their meetings and to submit the minutes to the Executive for information. **CARRIED.**
4. Proposal 1: Day of Fellowship

Question was asked if there is a plan to provide food/beverages as this is to be a day long event. President Lennox shared that the plan was to have a potluck event; churches to bring food to allow for diversity of food options. Discussion followed, with a great deal of concern expressed about food safety and possible public health regulation violations. The Executive recommended that the planning task force should research public health regulations and ensure all guidelines can be followed and will be followed. The Executive also suggested that the task force consider meal options (provision of food trucks was suggested). Meal options to be presented and considered at the next Executive meeting.

**MOTION:** Debbie McMillan / Yvonne Wright

The HFRC Executive agrees to

1. Grant approval to the Task Force already assembled to continue working on plans to mark this day.
2. Approve a budget of $7000.00 to come from the Unrestricted Reserves, to offset costs associated with this event, broken down as follows:
3. Toronto Mass Choir: $3500
4. Wellington Square United Church: $1200
5. Children and Youth Activities: $600

**CARRIED**. 1 Abstention (Marilyn Johnston)

The event will be a kickoff to the UCC’s centenary year.

1. Commission Reports (written reports)
   1. Congregational Support Commission: Written report received from Chair Adrianne Robertson
   2. Human Resources Commission: No report
   3. Discipleship and Justice Commission: No report (Commission has not yet met this year)
   4. UCW

: No report

1. Brock University Ecumenical Chaplaincy director

**MOTION**: Christina Crawford / Deborah Laforet

That HFRC Executive agrees to name Jessica Swance as a representative from Horseshoe Falls Regional Council, The United Church of Canada to the Board of Directors of Brock Ecumenical Chaplaincy. **CARRIED.**

Staff noted that one more director is required. To be circulated in the e-newsletter.

1. Volunteer Recruitment Team Mandate

Proposed Volunteer Recruitment Committee Mandate.

The Volunteer Recruitment Committee will

1. Seek and contact potential volunteers throughout the year to fill vacancies as required on the Executive, Commissions, Staff Support Committee as well as the election of Commissioners to General Council.
2. Track all volunteers in the Regional Council ensuring diversity and best use of volunteers’ gifts and experiences.
3. Communicate with Communities of Faith through different mediums to raise awareness of the importance of appointing Regional Council Representatives and encourage networking.
4. Acknowledge receipt of and review Expressions of Interest forms.
5. Review expressions of interest and prepare a slate to be accepted at the Spring Regional Council Meeting.
6. Appointments outside of the Spring Regional Council meeting will be authorized by the Executive and confirmed at the next Regional Council meeting. The term of executive/commission members runs from calendar year when it commenced to the regional council meeting three years later.
7. Will regularly review and update the Expression of Interest form on the website and update with staff.
8. Communicate the decision of the Regional Council with thanks and connect the volunteers with their respective Chairs.
9. Thank outgoing volunteers.

Three key principles will be considered when preparing the list of nominees:

* Living into the mandate of diversity adopted by the regional council
* Commitment to be an Affirming ministry; and
* Supporting the development of leaders by providing opportunities and support.

Membership: 1 member from each of the commissions, 1 or 2 members from the Regional Council to be appointed by the Executive and with a commitment of 3 years, renewable once.

Meetings: The schedule for meetings will be based on the needs of the HFRC and particularly in preparation for elections/appointments at Regional Council meeting and the needs of Executive, Commissions and Staff support throughout the year. Workload and personal schedules will be taken into consideration. The majority of meetings to happen virtually.

Currently on Volunteer Recruitment Team**:** Lennox Scarlett, Sula Kosacky, Christina Crawford

The recruitment team will meet to look at the mandate and report back to Executive with any changes.

8. Sharing notes from fall meeting Regional Council Evaluation breakout room discussions: how, to whom. Deborah Laforet, Yvonne Wright and Debbie McMillan offered to review the document, determine next steps and present at the next meeting of the Executive.

**New Business**

1. Executive Retreat

The Executive agreed a retreat would be beneficial. President Lennox and Wendy Lowden will bring forward a proposal, including possible time/place/activities, to the next meeting of the Executive. Five Oaks was suggested as a possible location.

Deborah Laforet left the meeting

1. Proposal 2: St. Paul’s Oakville (From Business Arising)

Adrianne Robertson, Chair Congregational Support Commission, referred to the proposal and provided background. Noted in the proposal submitted: The congregation of St. Paul’s United Church, Oakville, has been working towards the redevelopment of its site. The plan involves the sale of the existing property with income from the interest earned on the proceeds from the sale to generate income for the congregation. To determine market value for the property, St. Paul’s secured letters of opinion. The Congregational Support Commission also had the benefit of an appraisal. These materials place the value of the property in excess of the price being offered. The Congregational Support Commission has developed the principle that the sale price must reflect fair market value and has directed St. Paul’s to reopen negotiations with the seller. St. Paul’s financial needs are urgent. Since the Commission has taken action that delays the sale, the Commission offered to approach the Executive for a bridging loan for St. Paul’s.

It was noted that acceptance of the proposal would greatly alleviate the anxiety currently being felt by St. Paul’s.

**MOTION:** Adrianne Robertson / John Hurst

1. Approve the Congregational Support Commission’s request for bridge financing for St. Paul’s.
2. Authorize a maximum loan of $180,000 interest free for two years with interest on the unpaid balance of 5% per annum starting February 1, 2026.
3. Require full repayment of the loan upon closing of the sale of the property.
4. Authorize payment of the loan in three installments of $60,000 with
5. the first processed as soon as possible;
6. the second available for June 1, 2024 contingent on receipt of a current income and expense statement; and
7. the third available for November 1, 2024 contingent on receipt of a current income and expense statement and a draft budget/ministry plan that demonstrates financial viability as of February 1, 2025; and
8. Direct the Executive Minister to prepare the loan agreement according to these terms. **CARRIED.**

Wendy Lowden left the meeting.

New Business continued.

2. Executive Minister: Exit Interview Reflection: Cheryl-Ann invited executive members to send her questions; if you were on an exit interview with Cheryl-Ann, what would you like to know.

Cheryl-Ann’s reflection on her sabbatical, as outlined at the Tri-Executive meeting on January 13th, will be shared with Executive members.

Next regular meeting: February 28, 2024, 4 pm, via zoom.

**Adjournment.**