

Council of Guiding Elders – Minutes December 20th, 2023
Edith Rankin Memorial United Church

In Attendance: Bill Spencer, Gordon Sinclair, Peter Merkley, Margaret Merkley, Andrew Robb, Ruth Pettis, Ken Williams, Rev. Michelle Down

Regrets:

Guests:

1. **Call to order:** Bill called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

Mission Statement: We seek to be a welcoming community, anchored in God’s love, challenged to sail on the winds of the spirit, sharing the Good News of Christ with each other and the world.

Devotional: Ruth Pettis reflected on the importance of including youth in our congregation with a reading from celebrated Canadian author Helaine Becker, “Porcupine in a Pine Tree”, a truly Canadian take on the Twelve Days of Christmas.

Commendations, Regrets, Prayer Concerns: Council wanted to commend Chris Sproule for his role in organizing and developing the “Homes for Heroes” initiative which has built a number of temporary, small, individual but self-contained homes for war veterans allowing them to get established.

A number of member’s names were offered up in prayer.

Correspondence: Two items of correspondence were noted:

- Council asked that the Ministry and Personnel Committee review Karl Butler’s note dated Nov 23rd and respond to Council.
- Andrew Robb’s notice of his retirement from Council effective following the AGM in February was received. Council wished to express their sincere gratitude for Andrew’s many contributions.

Motion:

Moved by Peter Merkley, seconded by Gordon Sinclair to express our many thanks to Andrew Robb for his contributions and past service.

Carried

Minutes of the Previous Meetings:

Business Arising from Nov 15th:

- The retirement of Elizabeth Amirault as Minister of Pastoral Care had raised questions of long-term options and opportunities. Gordon had offered to work with Michelle to organize this endeavor. The following motion was discussed:

Motion:

Moved by Gordon Sinclair, seconded by Andrew Robb that a subcommittee be formed to explore possibilities for a creative solution to the vacancy created by Elizabeth Amirault's departure and report back to Council with a recommendation at the January council meeting.

Carried

- Gordon also reported that he had followed up with the Pacific Spirit United Church in B.C. regarding the Governance Policies.

Motion:

Moved by Ken Williams, seconded by Andrew Robb to accept the minutes of the regular council meeting of Nov 15th, 2023 by Video conference.

CARRIED

2. **New Business:**

1. **Update on Electronic Sign:**

Brian McCracken has reported that the new sign will be installed and functional by the end of January. There were certain electrical needs to be accommodated including surge protection and a 20 amp service. He noted the need for council to be responsible for the wording to be used. Council noted a need for a policy to be developed with input from the Media & Communications Team and the Welcome Center. Control of the device itself should be standalone with oversight by the Media & Communication Team.

Council wanted to express their sincere appreciation for all the time and work put in by the sign group to develop what will be a very important element of our communication efforts going forward.

2. **Kitchen Clean-up Misunderstanding:**

Council noted there have been a number of such misunderstandings recently and clarified that those who use our facilities have been briefed on the proper protocols for opening and closing; cleanup etc. We are fortunate to be as active a church as we are. Going forward, Council asked that any complaint from or regarding a renter be forwarded to Peter Merkley for follow-up.

3. **Gord Bell's Winter Concerns:**

Council acknowledges Gord's concerns and asked that we continue to monitor the situation.

4. Christmas Janitor's Coverage:

Council felt there was no need for janitorial coverage over the Christmas break and that he be on paid leave during the holiday period. There was one proviso noted that there was a possibility of a new rental group coming in over Dec 29/30. If so, Barry would be here to cover and would be paid by the rental group.

5. Affirming Committee Progress:

Council wants to maintain steady progress of this committee. It was noted that the end of year goal to submit the final documents has slipped (This includes the Mission Statement and Plan of Action) but this shouldn't greatly affect the longer-term objective to submit to the UCC for their review and approval.

6. Photo Album & Website:

Paul VanNest has offered several options to better inform the congregation of how to use the website and the progress of the proposed new photo album. Council felt the most effective option would be to have a series of short presentations before service on Sundays complimented by a full-length webinar/seminar which could then also be posted to the website.

7. Vacancies:

Brenda Moyer (Chair of the Nominating Committee) has noted the challenges of finding people to fill vacancies. Council understood the issue and considered ideas noting the differences between positions which the Nominating Committee was mandated to fill vs. positions/roles individuals on Teams could decide. There was also the issue of how many consecutive terms various Committee Chairs should hold. Although this is laid out in the Governing documents, and should remain so, council felt there needed to be some flexibility.

It was noted that there had recently been a number of new members attracted to ERMUC through activities which could be approached and encouraged to get more involved.

8. Oral History of ERMUC/Collins Bay U.C.

Ruth Pettis suggested it would be a good idea to begin to collect the stories and history of the evolution of Collins Bay U.C. to Edith Rankin Memorial U.C. from those members who would have been through the changes. Council agreed this would be a good idea and that a task group be collected to consider how this might proceed.

9. AGM:

After discussion with Chris Sproule, it was agreed the AGM would be held Sunday, February 25th immediately after church.

Reports:

1. Treasurers Report:

Peter had circulated (both the overview and the detailed numbers) prior to the meeting (attached). The “Annual Notice to Reader Financial Statements for Dec 31, 2022” were presented to Council.

Motion:

Moved by Peter Merkley, seconded by Andrew Robb that Council approve the Annual Financial Statements for the year ended Dec. 31, 2022.

CARRIED

2. Minister’s Reports:

Rev. Down first wanted to thank the team filling in for Stephanie Van Der Pryt through her medical leave. She felt the Congregational Meeting held Nov 19th had been quite successful and no questions had been raised since. Since the last council meeting, she has had four funerals and the ongoing need for the GRIEF series was noted. Small groups have come together to support each other. In the longer term there is a need to recognize our history and develop stewardship and collaboration. The Christmas Envelope campaign was quite successful raising \$8280 to this point.

She wanted to especially acknowledge Ruth Judd for her efforts to include the children. We often see several for Sunday Morning services and the last TGIF (Thank Goodness it’s Family Night) attracted over 70 individuals (adult and children).

Announcements: none

Closing Prayer: Michelle closed with a prayer.

Adjournment: the meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.

Next Meeting: The next regularly scheduled meeting of council will be – Wednesday January 17th, at 9:00 am. Again, the meeting will be held in person at the church.

Bill Spencer, Chair

Ken Williams, Secretary