

**Council of Guiding Elders – Minutes April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024**  
**Edith Rankin Memorial United Church**

**In Attendance:** Bill Spencer, Margaret Merkley, Gordon Sinclair, Peter Merkley, Ruth Pettis, Betty Jean Kippen, Chris Sproule, Ken Williams, Rev. Michelle Down

**Regrets:** Joyce Morrison

**Guests:**

1. **Call to order:** Bill called the meeting to order at 9:00 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:** Ken reflected on the progress towards becoming an Affirming Ministry and especially the extensive work undertaken by the Affirming Team. Although some concerns have been heard, as noted in the Affirming Action Plan, this will be a life long learning journey of Christian education, prayerful discernment and spiritual development.

**Commendations, Regrets, Prayer Concerns:**

Bill wanted to especially note the many positive comments he has received about the upcoming church directory and wanted to thank Marg Merkley for taking the lead.

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

**Correspondence:**

Several items of correspondence had been received:

- Brenda Moyer (Chair of Nominating) had submitted a note listing a number of names to be removed from the membership role for various reasons including death, transfer to another church, move to another city or who had expressed a desire to be removed.

**Motion:**

Moved by Gordon Sinclair, seconded by Ruth Pettis to accept the culling of the membership role as presented by Brenda.

CARRIED

- City of Kingston Response re: our proposal for traffic lights regarding proposed residential development opposite church.

Gord Bell had previously noted the upcoming public meeting to discuss the proposed residential development on the lands opposite ERMUC and suggested we should ask for the inclusion of traffic lights. Bill Spencer had prepared and submitted a number of concerns regarding the proposed development. At the request of council, Doug Huddle had attended the public open house to express our concerns to the city. However, in a letter dated April 4<sup>th</sup>, Amy Didrikson, Senior Planner for Planning Services, City of Kingston rejected the need for additional traffic signals citing the recommendations of both their traffic consultants and the planning department.

2. **Business Arising from March 20<sup>th</sup>, Minutes:**

No particular items were raised.

**Minutes of the Previous Meetings:**

Council reviewed the draft minutes of March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**Motion:**

Moved by Ken Williams, seconded by Gordon Sinclair to accept the minutes of the council meeting of March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

CARRIED

3. **New Business:**

1. **Affirmation Update – Voting Procedures:**

It was confirmed that the vote would be held after service on Sunday April 28<sup>th</sup>. The vote will be by secret ballot. Both members and adherents are eligible to vote. Those voting virtually on line will be allocated one vote per device. All virtual votes will also be done by secret ballot. A number of test runs have been conducted and the team is confident the system will work.

A successful vote will require a 75% in favour vote. Abstention votes will not count. Bill is to confirm these rules.

2. **Future Projects, Actions/Reactions, Establishing Priorities:**

Follow-up to the list Bill put forward last month:

- Kitchen Renewal: proceeding well, close to implementation. It was noted we need to focus on one priority per year and have it completed before pursuing secondary priorities.

- Chairs for the church hall: If this is felt to need attention, a Team should be formed, the issue investigated and a report returned to council. Bill will follow up as needed.
- Stewardship Initiative: proceeding
- Collaboration with other local United Churches: proceeding
- UCC Indigenous Relations: ERMUC has reviewed and endorsed the UCC initiative to strengthen and support this initiative. Locally, the JTRG continues. ERMUC has now become a full member. Bill Spencer noted that he had attended the recent Kingston meeting and was very impressed with the work and energy he saw present. All seven United Churches in Kingston are now members. A \$100 annual donation is now required to move this initiative forward.

**Motion:**

Moved by Peter Merkley, seconded by Gordon Sinclair that Edith Rankin U.C. budget for and contribute \$100 annually to support the work of the JTRAG.

CARRIED

- Telephones: Joyce Morrison had noted problems with the existing telephone service, specifically with respect to forwarding incoming calls. Unfortunately, she was unable to attend today's meeting. If she could follow-up with Media and Communications and report back to council on what the solutions might be.
  - Church Wellness, future attendance, cures, etc: Although Council has spent time reviewing some of these challenges it was felt this item continues to need more time and consideration separately at a future meeting.
  - Environment/Climate Change – our ERMUC role: this is a very challenging task as noted in recent Broadview articles. Some ideas of roles we could play included: we could put more messages reflecting more modest, manageable opportunities in Tidings as a start. We could also initiate some “Micro Stewardship” such as providing supplies for members to pick up litter or have a specific event on the ERMUC grounds one day.
- The Homeless: Gord Sinclair briefly reviewed some of his discussions regarding how other local churches are addressing the homeless problem to some degree (lunches etc). One idea might be to open our washrooms to shower once a week. However, this idea needs further development. Due to the time, further discussion will need to be deferred to next meeting for a more wholesome discussion. Peter noted the City does have a co-ordinating team in place that might offer some guidance.

**Reports:**

**1. Treasurers Report:**

Prior to our meeting Peter had circulated Interim Surplus/Deficit Financial Statements for Jan 2024, Feb 2024, and March 2024. Also included were Summary Reports for Tidings for the same months.

**Motion:**

Moved by Peter Merkley, seconded by Ruth Pettis to accept the Treasurer's Report.

CARRIED

**2. Minister's Reports:**

Michelle reported that she had attended a very successful Eastern Regional Council meeting in Lindsay. Also, that Rev. Sheri Frugard, the minister at Crossroads U.C. is moving on after a brief period and we should be thinking about how we can support/collaborate with them.

**Announcements:** none

**Closing Prayer:** Michelle closed with a prayer.

**Adjournment:** the meeting adjourned at 10:45 am.

**Next Meeting:** The next regularly scheduled meeting of council will be – Wednesday May 15<sup>th</sup>. Again, the meeting will be held in person at the church beginning at 9:00am.

---

Bill Spencer, Chair

---

Ken Williams, Secretary