



MINUTES FOR COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, January 4, 2024

Held in the Fellowship Hall & on Zoom at 11:30 p.m.

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Council Members Deb Gill (Chair), Mary McFadden (Council Secretary), Virginia Scott (Christian Development), Lois Gill (Fellowship & Outreach), Lori Hyatt – (Finance/Treasurer), Janice Sinker (Grand Bend Place), Rev. Nancy Knowles (Minister), Steve Northey (Ministry & Personnel & Stewardship), Christine Wilde (Office Administration) Debbie Procter (Property Management), Glen Miller (Trustees), Karen Etherington (Worship & Music), Peter Challen (WOW Representative),

Members Present: Deb Gill, Mary McFadden, Virginia Scott, Lois Gill, Lori Hyatt, Janice Sinker, Nancy Knowles (remote), Steve Northey, Debbie Procter, Christine Wilde, Karen Etherington, Peter Challen (remote)

Regrets: Glen Miller

Quorum Present

AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER - Deb Gill - 11:40 a.m.**
2. **APPOINT AN EQUITY MONITOR - Debbie Procter**
3. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TERRITORY (READ ALOUD BY COUNCIL)**
4. **OPENING PRAYER - Deb Gill**
5. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA -**
 - **MOTION to approve the agenda as amended. Moved, seconded and carried.**
 - **Amendments:**
 - Under Business Arising: The new "Membership Working Group".
 - Under New Business: United Church Remit vote.
 - **Confidentiality agreement** - each member was given a Confidentiality agreement to sign and return to Mary. Mary is to file. This is complete.
6. **ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE**
 - **Email from Donna Frim (#1 attachment)** - her email was to thank Deb for the card sent to her thanking her for her kind donation to be used toward Accessibility. After thoughtful discussion as to how to use this donation, it was decided to:
 - research obtaining an elevated chair or alternative ways to alter a regular chair. Deb will work on this.
 - Purchase two large print hymn books. Nancy will order.
 - **Article sent from Donna Frim (#2 attachment).**

7. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **MOTION to approve the November 23, 2023 Council minutes as distributed. Moved, seconded and carried.**

8. BUSINESS ARISING

- **Governance - Deb Gill:** distributed the "Governance package". This document needs to comply with the United Church of Canada standards. Deb emphasized the importance for each member to read the entire document, look for errors or corrections and hand in a hard copy to Christine for updating. This will be brought back to the January 25 Council meeting for approval.
 - **Approval of the new Membership Working Group -**
 - **Propose:** that a "Membership Working Group" under Fellowship and Outreach, be created to determine the actual number of congregants presently attending Huron Shores United Church, contact those who have been inactive to encourage their return, updating all records as to individuals' status and personal contact information.
 - **MOTION to approve the new Membership Working Group under the umbrella of the Fellowship and Outreach Team. Team members must include the Minister and Office Administrator. Moved, seconded and carried.**
- A comment was expressed about Affirming not being on the governance. Council conducted a special meeting to plan the new governance (minutes were not taken) in October. At that meeting it was agreed that the Affirming team had completed its purpose. Different ways of promoting that we are an Affirming church will continue.
- **Draft 2024 Budget - Lori Hyatt (#3 & 4 attachments):** explained the difference of a *balanced and deficit budget* and the concern that the Finance team has about presenting the 2024 Draft Budget. Do they present a *balanced or a deficit budget* to the COF at the ACM? And if a *deficit budget* is presented, how does Finance convey to the COF the importance of working toward a balanced budget? A very thoughtful and general discussion followed. Several views were expressed. As a result of a round table discussion where Deb asked each members' thoughts on how the budget should be presented, it was clear that Council encourages Finance to present a *deficit budget*.
 - **Initiatives that were discussed to increase revenue/cut costs:**
 - Encouraging the COF to increase their givings (particularly through PAR) to meet projected expenses.
 - It was suggested that future programs (camps, workshops) require a registration and fee (at least to cover expenses).
 - Property has taken the initiative not to use the irrigation system or even water the gardens during the summer - urns only will be watered. This will be watched carefully to see if this will make a significant change on the Utility bill (a \$1,100 increase of water usage over a three-month period). It was mentioned that the eavestroughs could be altered to install a water barrel.

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- The Rotary Club installed public water filling station. We are charged for the water usage (all other public water filling stations are covered by the municipality). A letter requesting that the municipality cover our cost was denied. Deb will pursue this further for reconsideration. She will also request that our request be put on a municipality meeting agenda. Suggest to ask Rotary to partially cover the cost.
- Queens Ave. lift if malfunctioning. To have service come on a weekend day is very costly. In the future, service call will wait until a weekday and the Main Street lift will be used.
- Due to a recent costly service call to repair the boiler, to be more economical the boiler will be added to a service contract.
- Mission and Service Fund. This year's budget will propose the goal of \$12,500. Will encourage more local support.
- Some categories have been reorganized such as Copyright licenses - they are now all under GBP.
 - **MOTION to adopt the proposed deficit budget to the Community of Faith and the Annual Congregational Meeting. Moved, seconded and carried.**
- Deb complimented Lori and the Finance team on all their hard work.
 - Rather than putting a lot of effort into fundraising, Stewardship was encouraged. A new and lovely brochure has been created and is scheduled to be sent out the community in April.
 - If organizing a fundraiser, it was stressed to fill out a form for any event.
 - Suggest each team think of a fundraiser. Encouragement was given for teams to collaborate to run a fundraiser. A fundraiser with a specific theme or appeal is more successful. Suggest two or three a year (spring/fall). Proceeds will go to operating funds.
 - A special meeting will be called to brainstorm fundraising.
- **Accessibility - Deb Gill** - a meeting that was to occur to discuss how Accessibility will look like in the future was cancelled. It will be rescheduled. Deb shared proposed information (#5 attachment).
- **Communication Board - Deb Gill** - Dan Gill has submitted an estimate of \$3,000 for a two sided 36 X48 board. Cost includes materials and labour. The board will be placed by the water station. The Legion has indicated that they would like to share the board. Christine will approach all the affiliated organizations that make up the "Grand Bend Cares Community Group" to find out of their interest in sharing the board and possibility contributing to the cost. Our church will monitor what is posted.
- **Facilities renewal application concerns - Glen Miller** - will table until the January 25 Council meeting.
- **MOTION to approve the resignation of Ruth Ann Eagleson from Music & Worship Chair. Moved, seconded and carried.**

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9. NEW BUSINESS

- **Change of Council meeting time -Deb Gill:** All liked and agreed to the idea of luncheon meetings on the last Thursday of the month and at 11:30 a.m.
- **Social fund contributions - Deb Gill:** reminded all to contribute. Christine is managing.
- **Remit - Peter Challen:** Since September, John Scott and Peter have been collaborating to provide information to the COF about this remit. This remit vote, "**Establishing an Autonomous National Indigenous Organization within the United Church of Canada**" is to be completed by March 31, 2024. The Indigenous communities are requesting this remit. This will be voted by Council, not the COF. The vote will be done at the January 25 Council meeting; Peter will ensure the United Church of Canada is informed of the result of our vote. A MAILCHIMP will be sent out as soon as possible with more information and a link that the COF can use to familiarize themselves with the remit. The COF will be asked to stay after the service, Sunday, January 14. Peter and John will provide both sides of this remit and ask for a 'straw vote'. Nancy expressed some concerns if the Indigenous communities do separate such as funding and accountability. Also that there is not enough information to make an informed decision.
- **Officially accepting Rev. Nancy as our minister - Steve Northey:** A letter has been received from Rev. Dr. Kate Crawford confirming her intent not to return as our minister. Plans are in the making for Nancy's Covenanting service. Thamesview U.C. will be invited. All necessary protocols will be put in place before a date is set.
- **Cost of weekly Shorelines newsletter distribution - Deb Gill:** due to conflict of interest, Christine and Mary were asked to leave.
 - **MOTION to go in camera at 1:30 p.m. Moved, seconded and carried.**
 - **MOTION to go out of camera at 1:45 p.m. Moved, seconded and carried.**
MOTION to increase the hours of Christine Wilde up to two hours to complete the newsletter. Frequency to determined. Effective Feb 1, 2024. Moved, seconded and carried.
 - Correction in the motion: edited to read, "Frequency of Shoreline publication to be determined".

10. EQUITY MONITOR - we made it through with flying colours!

11. NEXT MEETING: Thursday, January 25, 2024 in the Fellowship Hall at 11:30 a.m.

12. MOTION to adjourn at 1:50 p.m.

Deb Gill,
Acting Council Chair

Mary McFadden
Council Secretary

From: **Donna Frim** <rdfrim150@gmail.com>

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Date: Tue, Dec 5, 2023 at 8:35 PM

Subject: Thank-you from Donna Frim

To: John Gill <john.deb.gill@gmail.com>

Hi Deb,

Today when I went to the mailbox I received a beautiful card adorned with Birch trees. Birches are my favourite, Aunt Rose's too!

Thank-you for your kind words in your message.

I have enjoyed being part of HSUC since 2016 and really enjoyed working on the Accessibility Team in the last year.

I am truly proud of how HSUC renovated with accessibility in mind and has continued to upgrade and put their accessibility goals into reality!

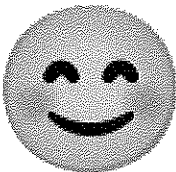
Having travelled with Aunt Rose in her wheelchair across Canada from shore to shore and up into Alaska, I can confidently say that there is no other building in all of Canada, (and probably the USA), including our capital city of Ottawa, that has as many assists in place for those with accessibility issues as HSUC!

AMAZING! and GOOD ON YOU! as my Aussie friend likes to say.

As to Accessibility suggestions for the immediate future, I would like to see Vince get his higher chair & perhaps a second one for another person; a few large print hymnals and as we spoke 2 additional cement wheelchair pads outside and perhaps a better surface rather than the gravel in the Green Cathedral.

I also would like to see HSUC sing their own praises to the community of Grand Bend at large! The Community should know what HSUC has accomplished and take inspiration from their good works! I think that HSUC could be a real leader through their Community Wellness initiatives in assisting Grand Bend to make their store fronts accessible. Please see article attached- re: Stop Gap charity. Also getting better or more 'free' parking spaces in the downtown would be beneficial, an additional 'rubber pad runway' over the sand and down to the water would be so special and maybe a booth where you could rent 'balloon tire' wheelchairs to go right down to the water's edge would be such fun! Aunt Rose would have loved to put her toes into Lake Huron!

Thank-you again for my time at HSUC.
Merry Christmas to All and Happy, Healthy 2024!



Donna

THE LOCALER

Luke Anderson

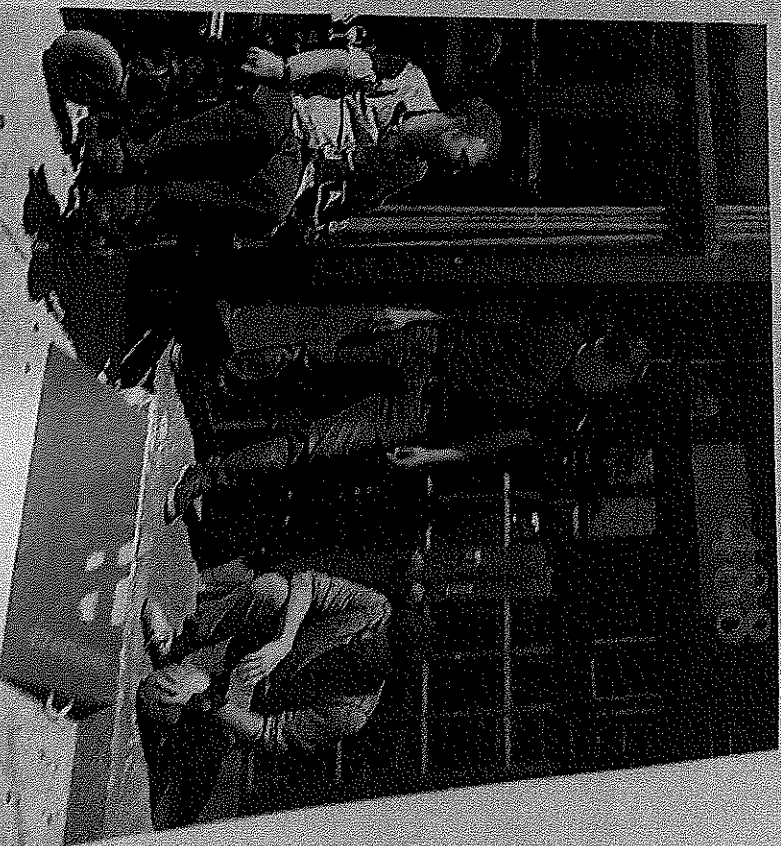
A JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES begins with a single step. So said the ancient Chinese Taoist philosopher Lao Tzu. This wisdom is illustrated well in Luke Anderson's work on StopGap Foundation.

Anderson is a structural engineer, social entrepreneur and the co-founder of the StopGap initiative, which he started in 2011. Now a registered charity, it began as a one-off project—the installation of the first-ever access ramp in Toronto, in front of a shop in the west end. “Navigating the world was very different for me after my spinal cord injury in 2002,” recalls Anderson. After talking to others frustrated by the lack of accessibility in public spaces, he turned his irritation into action. Since then, more than 2,500 StopGap ramps have been installed in 60-plus communities across Canada—at stores, coffee shops and restaurants.

Anderson and his team have garnered many awards, one being the Jane Jacobs Prize, which honours those working toward positive, community-fuelled change. “That lights me up,” Anderson says, “because Jacobs was such a force in raising awareness of the importance of a connected neighbourhood.”

With more than 22 percent of the Canadian population living with disabilities, Anderson believes that disruption is key to generating change. “That usually happens from a grass-roots bottom-up approach. And it doesn’t happen overnight. It involves changes in building codes and our own perceptions—and helping us with our biases that are deeply ingrained.”

—Staff



StopGap co-founder Luke Anderson (left) is working toward “guiding people into a new era of accessibility awareness.”



Nominate a Localer. Do you know someone who goes above and beyond? We'd love to hear about them. Send nominations to drivenbygood@caasco.ca and they could be our featured Localer in an upcoming issue.

Draft Budget approved by Finance Team for Review by Council

I am forwarding to you the draft budget which has been compiled by the Finance Team based on the feedback from teams and working groups.

This is a difficult document to present as it shows a financial picture which may come as a surprise to some. For the past few years, we have experienced declining givings but during COVID our expenses were also lower than normal. Now that COVID is behind us our expenses have returned to a more realistic level and when you factor in the current rate of inflation that equates to a substantial increase.

At the finance table we have made some minor adjustments to team/working group requests but have left the majority as per request.

In order to balance the budget receipts to the Operating Fund need to increase by \$35,000 over last years budgeted amount but more importantly the increase over last years actual givings needs to increase by \$50,000.

At first glance these numbers seem daunting but with forward planning and ingenuity we can come up with plans and methods to overcome the current financial situation

I ask that everyone takes a few minutes to review this document and come to our meeting with both questions and ideas. Are there areas where we can reduce costs without negatively impacting day to day operations and program advancement? What initiatives can we implement to increase receipts to the General Operating Fund?

Respectfully Submitted By,

Lori Hyatt

Chair of Finance

Accessibility Monitors

The Accessibility Monitors are responsible:

To do a walk through of the grounds and buildings quarterly.

*Note: An inspection in July would allow enough time to apply for a grant should Council agree with any recommendations.

Identify any **unsafe** or **accessibility** concerns.

Complete a written report and submit to the Chair of Council quarterly at the end of the walk through.

Council will consider these recommendations at that time, and apply budgeted amounts as possible, or look into grant opportunities.

If an urgent, or unsafe, concern arises, it should be brought to the attention of the Chair of Council immediately, but general recommendations should be limited to the quarterly reports, relating only to matters of safety and accessibility.