MINUTES OF

THE EXECUTIVE OF BC CONFERENCE

The United Church of Canada
November 6-8, 2008
Mountain View Room, Burnaby, BC

PRESENT Jim Angus, Jacob Black-Lock, Marion Carr, Dan Chambers, Cari Copeman-Haynes, Fred Duck, Carole Finch, Albert Fowler, Gary Gaudin, Doug Goodwin (Executive Secretary), Linda Gunn, Wally Hargrave, Alie Jonker, Dal McCrindle, Teri Meyer, Mark Paetkau, Emma Prestwich, Hilde Seal, Brian Tsai, John van Omme

REGRETS Heather Burton, Jim White

STAFF PRESENT Christine Ackermann (Recording Secretary)

AUTHORITY In the name of Jesus Christ, and by the authority of the 2008 General Meeting of BC Conference, the President, the Rev. Hilde Seal, declared the regular meeting of the Conference Executive duly opened for the purpose of conducting the business properly before it. A quorum was present.

WELCOME The President welcomed the Executive members to the meeting. She noted several members are attending the meeting for the first time: Dan Chambers, Linda Gunn, Wally Hargrave, Mark Paetkau, Brian Tsai, and John van Omme.

WORSHIP The President led in worship and community building.

GOVERNANCE TRAINING Doug Goodwin led the court in looking at the basic principles of the Policy Governance system.

AGENDA ***M/S/C*** *(Goodwin/McCrindle)*
that *the agenda as presented be adopted.*

CORRESPONDING PRIVILEGES ***M/S/C*** *(Goodwin/Finch)*
that *corresponding privileges be extended to Christine Ackermann.*

MINUTES ***M/S/C*** *(Goodwin/Copeman-Haynes)*
that *the minutes of the March 13-15, 2008 BC Conference Executive meeting be accepted.*

ADJOURN The meeting adjourned for the night.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2008

WORSHIP Al Fowler, Gary Gaudin and Alie Jonker led the meeting in worship.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT Doug Goodwin presented a Correspondence Report (Appendix I, page ____) that was based upon the Correspondence Procedure adopted by the Executive.

M/S/C *(Goodwin/Hargrave)*
that *the Correspondence Report be received and its recommendations adopted.*

OUTCOMES Hilde Seal led the Executive in identifying intended outcomes for the Executive meeting:

1. get to know new people on the Executive

2. end the meeting with useful end statements
3. better understand life outside the Lower Mainland
4. pass the budget
5. have a clear sense of the highest present priorities of the Conference
6. clarity/discussion around Conference Executive membership
7. make a final decision on how we select commissioners to General Council
8. praise God together (fun, eat, play, show joy)

THREE YEAR WORK PLAN

Doug Goodwin presented his "Three Year Work Plan" report (Appendix II, page __). The Work Plan presented Objectives for consideration by the Executive that would be steps toward the Goals adopted by the Executive at its March 2008 meeting. It also outlined a work plan with target deadlines for achieving the Objectives.

Significant discussion took place on the continuing desire to have the whole Conference better understand the Policy Governance system and for the Conference to use language that is comfortable and familiar to people. Despite eight years of use people are still unfamiliar with how they might best influence governance decisions.

Doug reported that his approach to education on Policy Governance is not to try to impose it anywhere but to help people be clear how it works and what advantages it offers governing bodies.

Doug noted that the highlight of the Objectives for him is in responding to the new goals which focus on providing increased personnel work. He suggested that Conference is moving from a body that is simply a "resource" for personnel work to one which is much more proactive and accountable for personnel work. The Objectives are leading to the development of a team of Conference Personnel Ministers as human resources professionals. This is a direction that deserves conversation at the Conference General Meeting.

M/S/C *(van Omme/Duck)*
that *the Goals and Objectives outlined in the Three Year Work Plan be accepted by the Executive and used in the assessment of organizational success (usually when assessing Accountability reports of the Executive Secretary).*

M/S/C *(van Omme/Duck)*
that *the Three Year Work Plan report be accepted for information.*

POLICY REVIEW

The President led a process in which the Executive examined the Mission and other Ends policies.

Doug noted that at future meetings he will still report against the general Ends policies as well as against the newer goals that the Executive has adopted.

The present Mission statement and other Ends policies were affirmed as providing good direction for the work of Conference. The present emphasis on ministry personnel and providing personnel services fits well with the existing policies.

It was recognized that continuing deep conversations with Conference members is needed to ensure Executive policies truly reflect the current life-situation of congregations and ministries. It was also noted that the Conference policies do not really "grab the heart" of members and cannot really be used as inspirational documents.

LUNCH

The meeting adjourned for lunch with the Conference office staff.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY MONITORING

The Executive Secretary, Doug Goodwin presented his printed report, "Executive Secretary Monitoring" (Appendix III, page). The report is based on the policy "Conference Executive – Staff Relationship: Monitoring Executive Secretary Performance." The report highlighted activities and decisions of the Executive Secretary in response to direct commitments made at previous Executive meetings, and also reported against all Ends policies and scheduled Executive Limitation policies: Financial Condition, Protection of Assets, Executive Secretary General Constraint, and Personnel.

Previous Commitments

Doug reported that he has fulfilled commitments from the previous meeting including the creation of a Three-Year Work Plan, the production of a statement clarifying the role of supervision of staff in the United Church, and another statement clarifying parts of the role of the Conference President.

Christine committed to sending Derek Evan's power point presentation from last March's meeting to the Executive members via email.

Interim Minister

Doug reported that the Rev. Helen Hobbs was redesignated as an Interim Minister on June 24, 2008.

Administer the Sacraments

Doug reported that a License to Administer the Sacraments was granted to Rhonda Pigott (Cranbrook United Church) on October 23, 2008.

Ends

Doug Goodwin reported on Conference work that had taken place since the last Executive meeting that reflected the Conference Executive's Ends policies.

Healthy Congregations and Ministries: Doug reported numerous items related to "healthy congregations," including:

- the hiring of Conference Ministers for Victoria Presbytery and Comox-Nanaimo Presbytery, and the expectation of soon filling the vacancies in Kootenay and Kamloops-Okanagan Presbyteries;
- several issues related to Camp Fircom having been resolved since the last meeting, including a land swap with the Ford family, the resolution of a road trespass, and the discharge of a $60,000 mortgage held by the General Council on the camp properties;
- the progress of the Camp Future Project, including the hiring of a property developer, business planner, and an architect;
- the incorporation of the United Church Health Services;
- the possession of East Burnaby United Church property after the closure of the congregation;
- the report that the three legal issues Conference was involved with in March 2008 have since been resolved.

Effective Leadership:

- pursuing a more personnel-focused approach in work with the development of a "Personnel Team" of Conference Presbytery Ministers led by the Conference Personnel Minister;
- working with the General Council office and VST on the creation of a leadership training program for native ministries;
- the continuing development of a Leadership Certificate program.

Faithful Public Witness:

- the promotion and communication about events and issues in this area;
- the little energy available for more broadly based ventures. Doug suggested that

this calls for a re-examination of what constitutes "faithful public witness" within the Conference structure and mission.

Financial Condition

Doug reported compliance in all areas of the Financial Condition policy.

Protection of Assets

Doug reported compliance in most areas of the Protection of Assets policy. He reported that he was not in compliance with section #8 due to the trade of properties on Gambier Island benefiting Camp Fircom.

The Executive members discussed this contravention and expressed their displeasure of the process (not knowing a land sale happened), but pleasure with the results of the land sale. It was decided to adopt a new limitations policy that would ensure the Executive Secretary advises the Conference Executive as soon as he enters into substantive negotiation discussions about any property. It was decided that Cari Copeman-Haynes and Doug Goodwin would meet during the dinner break to work on the wording of the new limitations policy.

M/S/C *(McCrindle/Hargrave)*
that *the Conference Executive approve of the decision of the Executive Secretary in the exchange of Camp Fircom property with the Ford family.*

The Gambier Island property (valued at $850,000) sold by the Property Development Council to the Ford family – Joan Ford, Denys Ford, Marguerite Ford – is:

Parcel Identifier 009-393-358
Lot B District Lot 836 Plan 21550

The property purchased from the Ford family (valued at $2,5000,000) is:

Parcel Identifier: 009-402-683
Lot 41 District Lot 1588 Plan 10549

The Ford's also received a charitable receipt for the difference in the value of the two properties.

General Constraint

Doug reported compliance in all areas of the Executive Secretary General Constraint policy, except as noted in the Protection of Assets policy report above.

Personnel

Doug reported compliance in all areas of the Personnel policy.

Naramata Board Members

Doug reported that the By-Laws of the Naramata Centre Society stipulate that their Board membership needs to be approved by the Executive and the names of Board members be recorded in the BC Conference Executive minutes.

M/S/C *(Goodwin/Meyer)*
that *the List of Directors 2008 for the Naramata Centre be approved and included in the minutes of this meeting as an appendix* (Appendix IV, page).

Acceptance of Report

M/S/C *(Jonker/Prestwich)*
that *the Executive Secretary Monitoring report be accepted.*

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2007

Doug Goodwin distributed printed audit statements for BC Conference and for the Property Development Council. He explained that the audit took a great deal of time this past year with the statements arriving only on November 6. He offered explanations for the lengthy process, explaining that the auditors were not to blame for the delay. Discussion followed.

Mark Paetkau, on behalf of the Executive Audit Committee, reported that the

Committee had the opportunity to review the draft statements and meet by telephone conference call with the auditors the previous week. The Committee does not feel it needs to meet again, but does feel that there can be future improvements in the presentation of financial information with respects to fund accounting and monthly reporting.

Mark noted that the Finance Council would be happy to receive questions from the Executive members about the financial statements at any time.

Doug noted that the PDC statements could be received by the Conference Executive but not accepted until the group actually met as the Council.

M/S/C *(Paetkau/Jonker)*
that *the BC Conference Executive accept the BC Conference Audit Report and Financial Statements 2007* (Appendix V, page).

M/S/C *(Copeman-Haynes/Finch)*
that *the BC Conference Executive receive the Property Development Council Audit Report and Financial Statements 2007* (Appendix VII, page 08-).

APPOINTMENT OF FINANCIAL AUDITOR 2008

Doug Goodwin reported that the original plan of the Finance Council was to put the services of an auditor out to tender in 2008. The lengthy time it took to complete the audit, however, and the need to move fairly soon into preparation for the audit of the 2008 financials have meant that the Council recommends that the present auditors be used for at least one more year.

M/S/C *(Copeman-Haynes/van Omme)*
that *the BC Conference Executive appoint the firm of Ernst and Young Chartered Accountants as auditors of the BC Conference 2008 financial records.*

FINANCIAL AUDIT COMMITTEE

M/S/C *(van Omme/Gaudin)*
that *Alie Jonker be a member of the Executive Audit Review Committee with the President and Chair of Finance Council.*

BUDGET 2009

Doug presented the Budget 2009 report (Appendix VI, page) containing his Budget monitoring report and an operating budget for 2009.

Doug referred the group to page 5 of his report which lists new budgeting assumptions that need to be tested by the Executive. Discussion followed.

The Executive agreed with the first two new budget assumptions presented by Doug:

- that it is appropriate to charge the Property Development Council for the calculated costs of doing the work of the Council in holding, managing, and selling properties;
- that it is appropriate to charge income from the Camp Future fund for the costs of managing the Camp Future Project.

The third assumption, "that it is appropriate to charge income from the Camp Future fund for the cost of new work intended to achieve the Conference Executive goals," was discussed at length.

Doug noted that the proposed assumption is based on the Camp Future plan from the start of the Project that some of the monies from the sale of camp properties would be used for mission work other than camps. The amount drawn upon was calculated to cover the salaries of staff in Comox-Nanaimo and Victoria Presbyteries, and the additional costs of increased staff time in Kamloops-Okanagan and Kootenay

Presbyteries. The monies drawn upon would not touch the capital of the fund and would use approximately 25% of the anticipated 2009 income of the Fund. It was recognized that since both Comox-Nanaimo and Victoria Presbyteries were receiving money from Conference previously it would be inaccurate to claim that these two salaries were in whole "new money" allocated for the Presbyteries.

It was agreed that the criteria for the Camp Future's Mission Endowment Fund needs to be developed as soon as possible to ensure the proposed use of the fund income would be understood in a wider context.

The question was posed as to whether this withdrawal of funds would continue in perpetuity. Doug responded that this is intended to be a short term response to the present volatile investment climate and would be evaluated each year.

The Executive discussed the advantages and disadvantages of using of the Budget Stabilization Fund instead of the Camp Future Mission Endowment Fund to provide the $102,151 for the cost of new work intended to achieve the Conference Executive goals. It was noted that, on the positive side, this would mean a new income source from the Mission Fund income would not be needed, but, on the negative side, it would draw down general Conference assets.

It was generally (although not unanimously) agreed to accept the third new budgeting assumption.

M/S/C *(Copeman-Haynes/Gaudin)*
that *we receive a proposal from the Executive Secretary at the next meeting about the criteria for the use of the Camp Future's Mission Endowment Fund.*

M/S/C *(Goodwin/Paetkau)*
that *the Budgeting Policy monitoring report be accepted.*

M/S/C *(Goodwin/Paetkau)*
that *the budget for 2009 as outlined in the Budget 2009 report be adopted.*

PROTECTION OF ASSETS (CONTINUED)

Cari Copeman-Haynes reported that she and Doug Goodwin developed wording for a new Executive Secretary Limitation regarding the sale of properties.

M/S/C *(Copeman-Haynes/Hargraves)*
that *a section be added to #8 of the Protection of Assets as follows: "8a. enter into substantive negotiation regarding the acquisition, encumbrance or disposal of real property held by the Property Development Council without informing the Property Development Council."*

DINNER

The meeting adjourned for dinner.

GENERAL MEETING 2009

Hilde Seal and Doug Goodwin updated the meeting on plans for the General Meeting of Conference being held in May 2009 at the Langley Sportsplex in Langley, BC.

Doug reported that the cost of renting a venue to hold the General Meeting in the table group format has become at least $20,000 more expensive in the Lower Mainland than in previous years. Discussion followed on the option of switching to a theatre style format. No decisions were made, but the Executive agreed that it was necessary to continue this discussion keeping in mind that a primary goal of having table groups was to encourage youth and children participation.

Doug raised the topic of the frequency of the meetings and presented the option of

meeting once every three years and in the other years hold "district workshops" or some other smaller scale events. Discussion followed. No decision was made, but the Executive agreed to bring the discussion to the floor of the General Meeting. It was further suggested that we consider the option of web conferencing.

CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE MEMBERSHIP

The report from March 2006 entitled "Reflections on Conference Executive Membership" (Appendix VII, page) was reviewed.

Executive members are to ask the Presbyteries before May 2009 to have at least one conversation about this topic and then hear back from people on the floor of Conference about their discussions. The Executive agreed to proceed with the proposed decisions and presbytery discussions with an adjusted timeline. Likely the timeline would end with the General Meeting in 2011.

GENERAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Marion Carr reported on the highlights of the General Council Executive meetings, including:

- an update on the centralized payroll system;
- the progress of implementing the Designated Lay Ministry program;
- Home Missions cuts;
- isolation in ministry;
- a review of the admissions progress for ministers from other denominations.

Marion was asked about the status of Sacrament Elders in remote regions and she confirmed that this practice is now in place.

Doug reported that some staff members of BC Conference will be working at the 40th General Council in Kelowna.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned for the night.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2008

WORSHIP

Dan Chambers led the meeting in worship.

OTHER BUSINESS

Hilde requested feedback on which group of owners the Executive should be listening to next. Suggestions included:

- Retired ministers, ordered and lay (perhaps to connect "almost" retirees with new ministers)
- Each other – Executive members
- Ethnic congregations
- Trustees of buildings, properties

The Executive discussed what it means to listen to the ownership and how listening is critical to the life of the Conference Executive.

It was suggested that we could treat the General Meeting more as a family reunion than as a business meeting. Perhaps if the frequency of the meeting is changed to once every three years, a "family reunion" gathering could happen in the years that do not have a General Meeting.

It was noted that if the members of the Executive were elected from the floor of the General Meeting it would give more weight to listening to the owners being accompanied by actions.

Jim Angus thanked the Executive members for its trip to Prince Rupert in April 2007.

It was valued and important that the Executive heard the First Nations stories and voices. Jim suggested that a review of the structure in the United Church is needed in order to better incorporate First Nations culture.

Doug was asked what BC Conference is doing with the Native Ministries:

- BC Conference has a half-time staff person in Clare Hill, working with the Native Ministries Houses and running the Right Relations program;
- Conference Minister, Michael Hare, works in Prince Rupert Presbytery and First Nations Communities, helping with technical issues and financial matters;
- Conversations were started with the National church about establishing a lay pastoral degree program for Native Ministries and now Gaye Sharpe is working on the creation of a program at VST;
- Doug, Clare and Michael Hare attended Don McKay's feast;
- Doug attends Native Ministries Council meetings once per year;
- A new proposal has been received from Native Ministries for a counselor to work with First Nations communities.

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS TASK FORCE

Doug reported that the First Nations Chiefs in Assembly are establishing a Task Force to investigate the deaths of children in Indian Residential Schools. The Native Ministries Counsel Executive has asked BC Conference to offer its support for this venture.

M/S/C *(Goodwin/Angus)*
that *the BC Conference Executive express its support for the initiative of the First Nations Chiefs in Assembly in establishing a Task Force to investigate deaths in Indian Residential Schools; and that we commit to assisting the Task Force as appropriate, including ensuring our archival and other historic records are open to the Task Force for investigation.*

OUTDOOR MINISTRY LETTER

Doug reported that a letter addressed to the President has been received via email from the Outdoor Ministry Committee of BC Conference. The letter expresses the committee's desire for the Conference to reconsider the Camp Future Project. Discussion followed.

The Executive agreed that the President should send a response indicating the letter has been received and thank the committee for their interest, participation and continued concern with camping ministries.

M/S/C *(Hargrave/Paetkau)*
that *the letter from the Outdoor Ministry Committee of BC Conference be received by the Conference Executive.*

CAMP FUTURE PROJECT UPDATE

Doug Goodwin updated the Executive on the progress being made in the Camp Future Project.

Conference has hired an architect, property developer, and business planner to work on the Camp Future Project. He noted that capital costs are increasing significantly. Conversations with Comox-Nanaimo and Kootenay Presbyteries are still in progress about the future of a camping ministry in those Presbyteries. Kamloops United Church is also in conversation with Conference about Camp Grafton. The Executive discussed the progress on this project.

ELECTION OF

The report "Election of General Council Commissioners" (Appendix VIII, page)was

COMMISSIONERS PROCESS

considered. Doug pointed out that in response to concerns about Presbytery attendance at General Council meetings he recommends a final phrase to the document. The Executive discussed this addition.

M/S/C *(van Omme/Gaudin)*
that *the following phrase be added to the process of "Election of General Council Commissioners" document: "5. In order to seek to ensure each Presbytery has at least one Commissioner attending the General Council, the President shall be empowered to name an alternate Commissioner from the list of nominees (not necessarily one of the named Alternates) in a situation where an elected Commissioner has had to withdraw, leaving no one from that Presbytery as a Commissioner."*

"BEQUESTS AND UNSOLICITED DONATIONS" POLICY

The draft policy "Bequests and Unsolicited Donations" prepared by the Finance Council was considered.

M/S/C *(Goodwin/Black-Lock)*
that *the policy "Bequests and Unsolicited Donations" be adopted as an Executive Secretary Limitation policy.*

OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

The Executive reviewed its "Outcomes" established at the beginning of the meeting to evaluate the success of the meeting. The Executive agreed that the outcomes were addressed and accomplished adequately.

FUTURE MEETING

M/S/C *(Goodwin/Chambers)*
that *the Fall 2009 meeting of the BC Conference Executive be November 5-7, 2009.*

APPRECIATIONS

The President offered appreciation on behalf of the Conference Executive to various groups and individuals for their work for this meeting.

WORSHIP

The President led in closing eucharistic worship.

ADJOURNMENT

The President adjourned the meeting at 12:30pm.

NEXT MEETINGS

March 12-14, 2009
November 5-7, 2009

GENERAL MEETING

80th General Meeting of BC Conference
May 21-24, 2009
Langley Sportsplex, Langley, BC

BC Conference Executive

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Rev. Hilde Seal, President

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Rev. G. Douglas Goodwin, Executive Secretary