
MINUTES OF
THE EXECUTIVE OF BC CONFERENCE
The United Church of Canada
May 23-25, 2013
Mountain View Room, Burnaby, BC

PRESENT	Alyssa Anderson, Dave Anderson, Graham Brownmiller, Jenny Carter (President), Al Fowler, Ian Fraser, Doug Goodwin (Executive Secretary), Robyn Green, Linda Gunn, Jake Highfield, Ray Jones, Karen Medland, Nancy O’Higgins, Jay Olson, Mark Paetkau, Jeff Seaton, Phil Spencer, Cheryl Swedburg, Jim White
REGRETS	Alvin Dixon, Murray Gordon
STAFF PRESENT	Jacob Black-Lock, Doug Goodwin, Scott Reynolds
GUESTS	Katie Purych, Vic Wiebe (Comprehensive Review Committee)
AUTHORITY	In the name of Jesus Christ, and by the authority of the 2012 General Meeting of BC Conference, the President, the Rev. Jenny Carter, 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, noting that Cheryl Swedburg had been selected by Kootenay Presbytery to replace Shelly Stickle-Miles as an elected member of the Executive. She then introduced Jacob Black-Lock in his role as governance trainer and Phil Spencer in his role as theological reflector. She also introduced Vic Wiebe from the General Council’s Comprehensive Review Task Group.
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW	Vic Wiebe introduced the work of the Comprehensive Review Task Group and gave a brief description of each of the members of this group. He asked the Executive to split into small groups to discuss some issues focused primarily on church structure and processes. In the larger group discussion, the Executive suggested that the focus of the Comprehensive Review should be vision and purpose.
DINNER	The meeting adjourned for dinner.
WORSHIP	The President led in worship and community building. Members briefly introduced themselves to the group and shared a recent experience of hope or joy.
AGENDA	<i>M/S/C (Goodwin/Jones)</i> <i>that the agenda as presented be adopted (Appendix I, page 2013-__).</i>
CORRESPONDING PRIVILEGES	<i>M/S/C (Goodwin/Medland)</i> <i>that corresponding privileges be extended to Jacob Black-Lock, Katie Purych, and Vic Wiebe.</i>
ONGOING PARTICIPATION OF IAN FRASER	Ian Fraser was recently hired as the Camping Coordinator for BC Conference, which may put him in a conflict of interest during some Executive discussions. The Kamloops-Okanagan leadership circle has discussed the issue and feels that Ian can continue in his role as the Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery member. The Conference

Executive agreed that Ian could continue to serve on the Executive with declarations of conflict offered when appropriate.

The Executive asked Doug to come to the next meeting with a suggested amendment to the Conference Executive Members' Code of Conduct policy which could make a distinction between contractual agreements for a fixed period and full employment.

**GOVERNANCE
TRAINING**

Jacob Black-Lock led a discussion on the Policy Governance system, focusing on achieving better communication with Owners. The Executive also noted that evaluation of themselves and their policies is an area that could be improved.

OUTCOMES

The President led the Executive in identifying intended outcomes for the meeting:

- Progress on the Public Witness Policy
- Discussion about the Jardine Bequest
- Learning how to listen to the Ownership and how the Executive can better respond to what is being heard
- Update on ProVision Funds and the Effective Leadership initiative

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned for the night at 9:10 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2013

WORSHIP

Karen Medland led the meeting in worship based on Nehemiah 2:17-20.

MINUTES

*M/S/C (Goodwin/O'Higgins)
that the minutes of the March 14-16, 2013 BC Conference Executive meeting be accepted.*

**CORRESPONDENCE
REPORT**

There was no correspondence received in time for this meeting. One letter that was received just a few days before the meeting will nevertheless be read later in the meeting because of its relevance to one of the topics up for discussion.

**THEOLOGICAL
REFLECTION**

Phil Spencer gave a theological reflection, combining aspects of Nehemiah with the work that had been done on the previous evening, emphasizing the importance of having a yearning to know the truth.

**PUBLIC WITNESS –
POLICY
DEVELOPMENT**

The Executive was reminded that Ends policies answer three fundamental questions: "What good? For whom? At what cost?" They were also reminded that at the last meeting the group decided that the answer to "for whom" in relation to Public Witness was "United Church participants" and that the answer to "what good" was "providing access to resources, advice, support, and networking at a basic level on matters pertaining to the life and work of the church in the world."

The Executive then discussed the language of "Public Witness." The general sentiment was that "Public Witness" is not particularly helpful language, and that the language of "Right Relationship" better reflects the current values of BC Conference. The language of "Right Relationship" suggests working with differences rather than dividing up over differences on difficult issues.

At the last meeting, the values of "Public Witness" were articulated in "Section E – United Church Participants". Since the language of "Public Witness" has been problematic, it was suggested that "Section D –Public Witness" be removed.

*M/S/C (Brownmiller/Olson)
that "D. Public Witness" be removed from the Ends Policies.*

It was agreed that work needs to be done soon on the lay leadership policies in Section C.2. Jenny Carter, Jim White, and Alyssa Anderson agree to work on this and report back with some suggestions at the September meeting.

**OWNERSHIP
CONSULTATIONS**

Jake Highfield and Jacob Black-Lock gave a short presentation about Youth and Young Adult Ministry in B.C. Conference. Discussion followed about the Executive's plans to listen to the young people of the United Church at their November meeting. It will be important for the Executive to be intentional about its listening role and purpose for the meeting. The Executive agreed to attend as much of November 8 and 9 as possible which will mean staying until at least dinner on Saturday.

LUNCH

The meeting adjourned for lunch.

JARDINE BEQUEST

Phil Spencer opened with a short theological reflection, calling on the Executive to remember that there are both incredible blessings and significant pitfalls when a group receives a large amount of money.

Doug Goodwin gave a report on the Jardine Bequest (Appendix II, page 2013-___). He reminded the Executive that the Conference has now achieved its ten-year financial vision early because of this gift. What that means for future planning is one of the questions facing the Executive, but one that will take more time to consider. Doug then spoke about how the money might best be used for the next few years given the priorities that had already been identified by Conference.

M/S/C (Spencer/Swedburg)

that the following two principles be used to guide the use of the income from the Jardine Bequest until the adoption of a new financial plan or until another decision of the Conference Executive:

- 1. that through the voluntary reduction of the General Council grant the whole United Church should benefit from the Conference's wealth;*
- 2. that we use the bulk of the bequest on the Ends and priorities already established by the Executive.*

The Executive was reminded that at its March meeting it decided to offer a \$150,000 reduction in the 2014 and subsequent General Council grants, an offer later accepted by the General Council. Doug Goodwin reported that at the recent General Council Executive meeting he offered an additional \$35,000 reduction in light of the unanticipated increase in the cut in General Council grants to Conferences. It was agreed that Doug Goodwin's offer of a further \$35,000 reduction in the annual Conference grant was appropriate given the context in which it was made.

M/S/C (Brownmiller/Jones)

that the additional offer to the General Council of a further \$35,000 reduction in annual Conference grants be approved.

**LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT**

Doug presented a Leadership Development report (Appendix III, page 2013-___). The Executive noted that there are some Presbyteries which are focusing upon training and relying upon increased lay leadership.

Doug reminded the Executive that the main provisions of the plan were developed before the Jardine bequest was known but that the bequest gives the Conference the ability to undertake it in a more robust manner.

It was recommended that a significant evaluation be done of the work before the end of the suggested trial period.

In response to a question about budgeting, Doug indicated that in the area of Leadership Development, at least initially, the Jardine Bequest would be used to pay for new work while any previous, related work would continue to be funded from previously existing sources.

M/S/C (Seaton/O’Higgins)

that the Leadership Development vision outlined in the “Leadership Development” report be accepted for a three-year trial using up to \$350,000 annually from the Jardine Bequest.

**AUDITED
FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS**

Mark Paetkau presented the audit reports and gave a brief summary of the financial condition of the Conference. He reminded the Executive that this audit was the first done by the firm of Rolfe Benson. He indicated that the Conference Executive Audit Committee had met with Rolfe Benson and the management team and were satisfied with the statements.

M/S/C (Paetkau/Fowler)

that the audited Consolidated Financial Statements of BC Conference 2012 be accepted.

M/S/C (Paetkau/Olson)

that the audited Financial Statements of the Property Development Council 2012 be received.

**EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY
MONITORING:
ENDS**

Doug Goodwin reported on the six major categories in the BC Conference Ends policy: Presbyteries, Non-Congregational Ministries, Church Leadership, Public Witness, United Church Participants, and Cost. He stated that, because these policies represent a shift in focus, it is likely that he will be reporting non-compliance in most areas for the short to medium term but will be updating the Executive on the progress made in each of these areas.

Presbyteries Doug reported on work related to ProVision Funds, the Conference Personnel Team, and the Property Resource Team. He noted that the Conference ProVision Fund is working to establish Terms of Reference and should be ready to begin accepting applications this summer.

Non-Congregational Ministries Doug reported on work in relation to Corporations, Conference Camping Ministry, and other ministries (Youth and Young Adults, Ethnic and Intercultural Ministries, Native Ministries, and Campus Ministries). He noted that Ian Fraser has been hired as Camping Coordinator to help build effective business and governance models; that the Conference recently hosted an event entitled “Ministry in a Diverse Society” to help congregations look carefully at intercultural ministries; and that the General Council and BC Conference are in the middle of their evaluation of the Mobile Counsellor program.

Church Leadership Doug reported on work in relation to the General Council “Effective Leadership” initiative and the BC Conference “Leadership Development” initiative. He reported that the Conference is now actively looking for a full-time Conference Minister for the Lower Mainland to help with the new Conference responsibilities that will result from the “Effective Leadership” initiative. He also reported that the Conference plans to hire a half-time person to help facilitate this transition. In addition, Brenda Fawkes

has been hired as a term employee to finish work on developing and implementing the Candidacy Pathway process.

Doug also made reference to the specific plan that has been developed for the BC Conference “Leadership Development” initiative, which will be funded by monies from the Jardine Bequest (see above).

Public Witness Doug noted that the Public Witness section was just removed from the Ends policy. Nevertheless, Doug reported on BC Conference’s involvement in the ongoing “Ecumenical Advocates” group, which gathers monthly to support the Truth and Reconciliation national gathering to be held in Vancouver in September 2013. In order to support this work, the Conference is providing resources to support Kathy Hogman in promoting Truth and Reconciliation events and encouraging informed participation at provincial gatherings.

United Church Participants Doug reported that the clause added at the last meeting, that “participants have access to resources, advice, support, and networking at a basic level on matters pertaining to the life and work of the church within the world,” has not yet received a great deal of attention, but that he understands this clause to refer to the Conference supporting the work of individuals and other courts of the church rather than developing new programs itself.

Cost Doug reported compliance with this area. However, he suggested that given the new financial position of the Conference the Executive should soon discuss its vision for the Conference’s financial resources.

The Executive noted that there is some urgency to set a timetable for this discussion as owners will want to know that the Executive is responding to new assets appropriately. They agreed that it was good to have a short-term plan in place, and further agreed that deciding on a first step toward a long-term plan was important. The Executive decided to bring in a consultant with experience working with this kind of resource to work with them at the meeting scheduled for March 2014. Doug and Jenny Carter committed to finding a suitable consultant.

Acceptance of Report *M/S/C (Fraser/Paetkau)*
that the Executive Secretary Monitoring: Ends Report be accepted.

In Camera The Executive then met *in camera* without the Executive Secretary. Upon his return, the Executive thanked to Doug for his work. They asked Doug to make all reports available at least two weeks in advance of each meeting.

GENERAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE Graham Brownmiller reported on the work of the General Council Executive. At its last meeting, the GC Executive enacted significant cuts in staffing and grants. Graham also reported: that the Executive authorized a study on membership in the United Church; that there was further discussion on how to live out the decision from GC41 regarding Israel/Palestine; and that they had received an invitation from the United Church of Christ in the United States to enter into full communion.

SETTLEMENT REPORT *M/S/C (Brownmiller/Seaton)*
that the Settlement Report be received.

MINISTERIAL STANDING *M/S/C (Olson/Spencer)*
that the Ministerial Standing Report be accepted.

DINNER The meeting adjourned for dinner.

PROPERTY

New Conference Office Doug reported that the lease for the present Conference office at Fair Haven in Burnaby expires in March 2018. He presented several principles for consideration that would guide the Conference in its planning for a new Conference Office:

Principles for Planning a New Conference Office

Management is authorized to plan for and enter into agreements for a new Conference office. The following guidelines shall be observed:

1. The office shall be designed with a view to future needs and not present use alone;
2. The office shall be designed and equipped to support a modern business environment;
3. The office shall be located in the Lower Mainland; it shall be as accessible as possible, near rapid transit and transportation hubs, with nearby accommodation and other services and parking;
4. The cost of building and maintaining the office shall, as much as possible, be borne through development ventures or other cost-neutral agreements;
 - a. Any costs associated with the new office, its development or maintenance, shall be affordable within the present means of the Conference without compromising the Conference's work and mission.
5. Strong consideration will be given to developing the office in such a way as to benefit the life and witness of the whole church and/or a local congregation or ministry.

M/S/C (White/Green)

that the Principles for Planning a New Conference Office be approved.

Property Development Work Doug reported that the work of the Property Resource Team is progressing rapidly with a number of major decisions soon to be made. He suggested several principles for consideration that could be used to guide the work of the Property Development Team:

Principles to Guide Property Development Work

1. That management is authorized to receive properties into the PDC, either in trust or not, if they are transferred at \$1 purchase price;
2. That management is authorized to negotiate and enter into agreements with third parties for the disposal or development of the properties it holds as long as they are compatible with any trust agreements;
3. That management can negotiate and enter into agreements regarding the disposal of the assets from the sale or development of properties it holds;
4. That any plan to borrow money or encumber properties for development or other purposes must first be approved in principle by the Property Development Council before agreements are made;
5. That final decisions regarding the sale or development of properties and the

use of their assets shall belong to the Property Development Council, which shall not without good cause reject the agreements made by management.

6. That in all planning, negotiations and agreements management shall:
 - a. Ensure all trust agreements are honoured;
 - b. Ensure agreement by any congregations and presbyteries legally connected to such sales or development;
 - c. Ensure both mission/ministry values and financial values are recognized and honoured;
 - d. Seek to provide benefit to congregations and areas where property values do not provide the financial basis to provide benefit in a significant way.

Discussion followed about the importance of mission and how the Conference must not lose track of the goal of healthy, vibrant congregations while doing property development. As such, section 6.c. was amended to read “Ensure that financial values do not supersede mission/ministry values.”

M/S/C (Fraser/Medland)

that the Principles to Guide Property Development Work be approved as amended.

GRAFTON REPORT

The President reminded the meeting of the history of this matter: Conference Proposal 2012-01 from Kamloops United Church and Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery concerning Camp Grafton was received at the General Meeting of BC Conference May 31- June 3, 2012. After considering the Proposal, the Conference referred the matter to the Conference Executive. The Conference President established a three-person team of Executive members in July of 2012 to consider the Proposal and report to the Executive.

The team of Jenny Carter, Karen Medland, and Ian Fraser presented a Report to the Conference Executive regarding Camp Grafton (Appendix IV, page 2013- __) which concluded that the Camp Grafton Society had not been treated unfairly or disrespectfully and that no injustice had occurred.

A letter written by the former chair of Kamloops United Church, which was received shortly before this meeting was then read aloud. The Executive then affirmed the findings of the report and expressed thanks to the review panel.

M/S/C (Paetkau/Spencer)

that the Report to Conference Executive regarding Camp Grafton be received, that a cover letter and a copy of the report be sent to the relevant stakeholders, and that no further action be taken on Conference Proposal 2012-01.

THREE-YEAR ORGANIZATIONAL AUDIT

Mark Paetkau reported that he is in conversation with a person from outside the church who could do a good job on the organizational audit. If they do not come to an agreement he will search for other potential reviewers.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned for the night at 8:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 25, 2013

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY MONITORING: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS	Doug Goodwin presented his printed report, “Executive Secretary Monitoring: Executive Limitations” (Appendix V, page 2013-__). The report is based on the policy “Conference Executive – Staff Relationship: Monitoring Executive Secretary Performance.” The report highlighted activities of the Executive Secretary in response to commitments made at previous Executive meetings and routine ministry personnel matters, and updated the Executive on items for which they wished to keep in close touch.
Discontinued Service List	Paul K. W. Taylor was placed on the Discontinued Service List (Voluntary) on March 22, 2013.
Administer the Sacraments	<p>On April 26, 2013, a License to Administer the Sacraments was granted to Russil Penhale, Sacrament Elder, within St. Andrew’s United Church, Quesnel, BC, for one year or until a member of the Order of Ministry or a Designated Lay Minister has been appointed or settled in the Charge.</p> <p>On April 26, 2013, a License to Administer the Sacraments was granted to Lynn LeBlanc, Sacrament Elder, within St. Andrew’s United Church, Quesnel, BC, for one year or until a member of the Order of Ministry or a Designated Lay Minister has been appointed or settled in the Charge.</p> <p>On April 30, 2013, a License to Administer the Sacraments was granted to Cheryl Perry, Designated Lay Minister at First United Church, Kelowna, BC, for the duration of her appointment.</p>
Emergency Succession	Doug reported that Keith Howard has been named as the second person who is able to exercise Executive Secretary responsibilities in an emergency situation. The other person is Treena Duncan.
Staff Turn-Over	<p>Doug reported that although there were more staff changes in 2012 than in previous years, it follows a year with no changes and does not seem out of step with the amount of variance seen over the past ten years. He further expressed that it would be helpful to be clear what concerns the Executive might have about staff changes in order to either refine the Personnel Executive Limitation policy or to report in a more focused manner in the future. He noted that with all the changes in the work of Conference more staff movement could be expected in the future.</p> <p>The Executive expressed concern that stability in the organization might be lost if there were too many changes. Some members had also heard stories or direct concerns about the office environment.</p> <p>It was decided to ask the organizational auditor to pay particular attention to this area.</p>
Performance Reviews	Doug reported that with the last two late reviews presently underway he is now on schedule with performance reviews.
Policy Governance Training	Doug reported that a chapter on policy governance was distributed by e-mail to Executive Members. The Executive expressed appreciation for this and encouraged Doug to distribute one new chapter or article at least once before each meeting.
Staffing	Scott Reynolds finishes at the Conference office in early June. Katie Purych will take over fulltime from Scott as the Assistant to the Executive Secretary, starting June 1.

The Native Ministries and the two Conference Minister jobs in Prince Rupert and Cariboo Presbyteries are being left intentionally vacant until the completion of the review presently underway. Wally Hargrave has been hired to provide worship and pastoral support while this review is being completed. Ian Fraser has been contracted for just over one year to coordinate our Conference Camping ministry, replacing Terry Harrison. As noted earlier, Brenda Fawkes has also been hired as a term employee to finish work on the Candidacy Pathway process.

WCC Doug reported that he has begun consultation work with the organizers of the World Council of Churches Assembly scheduled for late October and early November 2013 in Busan, Korea. He will be attending a planning meeting in Geneva from June 19-21.

Formal Hearing Doug reported that a formal hearing panel was established for Victoria Presbytery on January 28, 2013. On May 23, 2013 he amended the terms of reference for the panel so the hearings could be commenced before August 1, 2013.

Acceptance of Report *M/S/C (Gunn/Green)*
that the Executive Secretary Monitoring: Executive Limitations Report be accepted.

POLICY REVIEW

Treatment of Beneficiaries At the March meeting of the Executive Doug was asked to look at the fourth clause of the Treatment of Beneficiaries policy. Doug consulted with General Council legal counsel who recommended deleting the phrase “or allowed” since it was redundant (what is “allowed” or “not allowed” is in privacy legislation and practice already) and, therefore, potentially misleading.

M/S/C (Highfield/Olson)
that the phrase “or allowed” be removed from the Clause 4 of the Treatment of Beneficiaries policy so that it will now read: “Disclose personal information without the consent of those persons to organizations or persons outside of the United Church of Canada except when mandated to do so by law.”

Conference Executive Disciplines and Practices Earlier in this meeting the Executive Secretary was asked to get all of his reports to the Executive at least two weeks before the start of any subsequent meeting of the Executive. This is a request that should be formalized with a change in policy.

M/S/C (Gunn/Highfield)
that the phrase “one week” be changed to “two weeks” in Clause 4.b. of the Conference Executive Disciplines and Practices policy so that it will now read: “Meeting agendas, appropriate correspondence, and supporting documentation will be distributed for receipt and consideration by all members at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.”

Grants and Loans Mark Paetkau reported that the Finance Council has concluded that the policy for grants will probably differ from the policy for loans, but that more work will need to be done before any change in policy can be suggested.

PROVISION FUNDS Doug reported that several ProVision funds are distributing or will soon be distributing monies. The Conference ProVision fund, which is going to be available to Presbyteries without their own ProVision fund, is still establishing criteria and determining how it will be managed; it will come to the Executive for information when it is completed. There is currently some discussion about how to coordinate this fund with the present Van Dusen Fund.

GOVERNANCE POLICY PROCESS MONITORING (EVALUATION)

Conference Executive Accountability	The Executive noted that listening to the ownership is an area that still needs improvement. It remains difficult to know how to bring information heard from the owners back to the Executive. Providing a formal plan both for listening and feedback in meetings would be very helpful.
Conference Executive Resources for Governance	It was noted that this policy does not have anything to say about how members are appointed or elected. Doug explained that this makes sense since the Executive does not choose its own members. In the “Practices and Procedures” section of the Governance Policies, however, there is a section on “Conference Executive Membership” that details what skills would be most helpful for people on the Executive. The Executive asked that this be communicated to Presbyteries when they are selecting new members of the Executive.
Conference Executive President-Elect Role	It was noted that the President-Elect often comes into this role unaware of his/her responsibility in the area of “Listening to the Owners.” The Executive asked that a way be found to ensure this is more widely known, especially at the General Meeting.
OUTCOMES	The outcomes identified at the beginning of the meeting were reviewed. Most of the outcomes were achieved satisfactorily. More work still needs to be done on listening to the ownership. The Executive also wished to be kept up-to-date on the Effective Leadership initiative as it develops.
PRIORITIES FOR UPCOMING MEETINGS	<p>The Executive identified several priorities for the next Executive meeting scheduled for September 2013. The following top priorities were identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth and Reconciliation Commission Gathering • Plans for the November meeting at the Evolve Conference <p>The following additional agenda items were also identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lay Leadership Policy Update • Executive Secretary Monitoring • Northern Ministries Update • Effective Leadership Update
APPRECIATIONS	Jenny Carter thanked the staff and the Executive for their work.
WORSHIP	Phil Spencer offered a reflection on Acts 15 and emphasized the importance of right relationship, even and especially in the context of debate. Jenny Carter led the meeting in Eucharistic worship.
NOVEMBER MEETING 2014	<i>M/S/C (Goodwin/Jones)</i> <i>that the November 2014 meeting of Conference Executive be scheduled for November 6-8, 2014 in the Mountain View Room of Fair Haven United Church Homes in Burnaby, BC.</i>
ADJOURN	The President adjourned the meeting at 12:20 p.m.

NEXT MEETINGS Conference Executive: September 17, 2013 (by telephone conference call)
November 7-9, 2013 (at Naramata Centre)
March 13-15, 2014 (including the PDC Annual Meeting)
November 6-8, 2014



BC Conference Executive

Rev. Jenny Carter, President

Rev. G. Douglas Goodwin, Executive Secretary