

Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council
Meeting of the Executive
Thursday, October 12, 2023 – 9 a.m.

Living Call Statement of the Regional Council

The Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council seeks to support and strengthen the ministries of its Communities of Faith as well as the ministry of all God's people, staff and lay leadership within those communities.

As we seek to carry out this ministry, we will be intentional about how we fully include all in Christ's love and service. This means that in our work as a Regional Council we will actively seek equity for, and participation from, the full diversity of God's Creation; seeking racial justice, identifying and undermining colonialism, celebrating all sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, valuing linguistic and cultural diversity, seeking to include all who face challenges with their mental and physical health or social and economic circumstances.

We will carry out our ministry with people in all seasons of life as we honour our relationship with Indigenous Peoples and nurture ecological justice. We will work to effectively and respectfully communicate with one another so that no one is left behind.

IN ATTENDANCE

Susan (Sue) Hutton, DLM	President
Susan DeHaan, DLM	President-Elect
Bronwen Harman	Past-President
Jim Allen	Member
Gayle Barks	Member
Rev. Dr. Teresa Burnett-Cole	Member
Rev. Brian Cornelius	Corresponding Member – Treasurer for the Regional Council
Nancy Hazen	Member
Rev. Erin McIntyre	Member
Catherine Ryan	Member
Linda Suddaby	Member
Rev. Éric Hébert-Daly	Active Member, Executive Minister
Rev. Whit Strong	Corresponding Member, Pastoral Relations Minister

REGRETS/ABSENT

Rev. Cindy Casey	Member
Liz Church	Member
Rev. Ryan Kim	Member
Rev. Dr. Peter Bartlett	Corresponding Member - Minister Supporting Visioning with Communities of Faith, Clusters and Social Justice and Outreach Networks Faith, Clusters and Networks
Dana Ducette	Corresponding Member - Minister for Youth and Young Adults
Anita Jansman	Corresponding Member - Communications and Administration Assistant
Joel Miller	Program Assistant to Executive Minister, Recording Secretary

ORDER OF THE DAY

Sharon Buttrey

Corresponding Member, GIS Strategist in the General Council
office

Rev. Paul Dillman

Corresponding Member, Riverside United Church (Ottawa)

* This meeting focused on: Granting the Pastoral Relations Commission new powers; General Council updates; General Meeting protocols in regards to fair-trade items and displays tables; Communities of Faith (growth of); and Voluntary Associate Ministers; Strategic Planning updates – Setting our Sights report and new data mapping project: Fertile Seeds – (Order of the day at 10 AM); and Finances.

Circle time for sharing and recognizing God's presence during the month – All were invited to share.

Call to Order – Susan Hutton, President

Land Acknowledgement & Opening Devotions – Cathy Ryan lit a Christ candle to mark the beginning of this rime of acknowledging the land and opening devotions. Cathy shared the story of how her local church donated money to the local public school to help with acquiring resources in Indigenous studies. This prompted the school to write its own land acknowledgement, which Cathy use as this meetings' land acknowledgment. Cathy shared an excerpt from the book entitled “God Wil Carry You Through” written by Max Lucado, in particular referencing the words “God is the Potter and we are the clay; God is the Shepherd and we are the sheep.” Cathy reflected on the story of Joseph in the Book of Genesis and his relationship with God and Pharoah; highlighting the many times Joseph received guidance to understand God's visions of the future. Cathy shared two examples from her own life where she witnessed God's vision for the future, and how amazing the experience was. When the Regional Council faces uncertainties about the Church's future, it too can always take comfort that God is ever-present, and has a plan for our lives; each individual can spend time with God in prayer to listen for guidance to understand God's vision. Cathy closed this time of devotion reading Hebrews 11:1-2 “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ² Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. ³ By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible” (NRSVUE) and Genesis 50:20 “²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.” In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.” (NRSVUE). With God's help, and through our Faith, God is still in control.

Appointment of an Equity Monitor for this Meeting

2023-10-12_001 MOTION (T. Burnett-Cole/B. Harman) That the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council Executive appoints Jim Allen as Equity Monitor for this meeting. **CARRIED**

Minutes of September 14, 2023

2023-10-12_002 MOTION (G. Barks/J. Allen) that the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council Executive accepts the Minutes of September 14, 2023 as corrected. **CARRIED**

It was decided through consensus that Pastoral Relations would provide a synopsis of pastoral relations, so that colleagues and members of the Regional Council could know of ministry personnel coming and going within the regional council; this would be made available in the Regional Council newsletter in a timely basis.

Business Arising from Minutes

- New mailing address: First United Church, 347 Richmond Road, Ottawa, Ontario, K2A 0E7.

Agenda

2023-10-12_003 MOTION (L. Suddaby/S. DeHaan) that the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council Executive accepts the agenda as circulated. **CARRIED**

***Order of the Day at 10 AM – Setting our Sights Reporting; New data mapping project: Fertile Seeds** (invited guests Rev. Paul Dillman and Sharon Buttrey)

Correspondence

- a) September 28, 2023, Susan Jackson, Information & Statistics Coordinator, re 2022 statistics (*for information*);
- b) September 24, 2023, Rev. Blair Paterson, re change in pastoral relations (*referred to Pastoral Relations Commission*);
- c) October 4, 2023, Erik Mathiesen, Chief Financial Officer, The United Church of Canada re Assessments (*for information*);

Correspondence out

- d) September 15, 2023, letter sent to Martin Settle, Board Chair First United Church, from Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly, Executive Minister, re request to use First United Church as the official mailing address of the Regional Council (*for information*);

Business

1. Pastoral Relations Commission – Next meeting is October 17th

a) Pastoral Relation Commission Authority to License Administering the Sacraments to Diaconal Ministers and Designated Lay Minister

2023-10-12_004 MOTION (T. Burnett-Cole/C. Ryan) that the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council Executive grant the Pastoral Relations Commission the authority to license Diaconal Ministers and Designated Lay Minister to perform the Sacraments within the bounds of their respective pastoral charges after completing the requisite courses with respect to the Sacraments. **CARRIED**

It was highlighted that courses are offered regularly. Rev. Whit Strong, Pastoral Relations Minister can be contacted for more information.

2. General Council Update (Finances, Salary Increases, DLM Status) – Rev. Teresa Burnett-Cole highlighted details from the most recent General Council meeting. In particular, the cost of living allowing increase (COLA) will be set at 2% for General Council and Regional Council staff and 6.3% for ministry personnel within pastoral charges. There is going to be a new calculation method for COLA going forward and will be based on the work of a task group that has been set up to review total compensation. General Council also came to the decision that the status of Designated Lay Minister is going to be phased out (no longer offered) and current DLMs are being encouraged to move towards testamur and ordination. More information can be found in the General Council proposal *GS 57 Ministry Leadership to Meet the Needs of The Church in the 2020s, Part B Designated Lay Ministry*. Another item coming out of the General Council is *TICIF 01 Principles-Based Justice Work V2*, the result of a proposal made at GC 43. These sets of principles will be decided on at a future meeting. Ministry Personnel are being encouraged to be sensitive the Israel-Palestine dynamic.

3. (Order of the Day at 10 AM) Strategic Plan Update – Rev. Paul Dillman and Sharon Buttrey **2023-10-12_005 MOTION** (T. Burnett-Cole/E McIntyre) that the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council Executive make Rev. Paul Dillman and Sharon Buttrey corresponding members. **CARRIED**

- a) **New data mapping project: Fertile Soil** – Sharon Buttrey, GIS strategist in the General Council office (sbuttrey@united-church.ca), shared that a project is being proposed to take place within this regional council to map data in order to determine potential areas for growth within the Church. The hope for the project is to use data that is available from a wide range of sources and develop tools that could then assist growth animators, personnel within the Church, and the larger Church as a whole in determining possible growth avenues it can focus on.

2023-10-12_006 MOTION (T. Burnett-Cole/E. McIntyre) that the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council Executive agree that the regional council will be part of the pilot projects called *Fertile Soil* as presented by Sharon Buttrey, GIS Strategist in the General Council office. **CARRIED**

It was highlighted that the other Northern Spirits Regional Council (Alberta) is also taking part in the *Fertile Soil* project.

- b) **Setting our Sights Report** – Rev. Paul Dillman, Riverside United Church (Ottawa), provided an update on the Regional Council strategic plan and expressed that a full outline will be presented at the November 4th Fall General Meeting, and hopefully adopted. The consultation process was successful with approximately 120 participants as we as 20 completing the online survey. The Setting our Sights group will be proposing 18 activity streams as part of the strategic plan (some of this will be continuing work, and others, new directions). One of those activity streams is participating in the Fertile Soil pilot project. The next consultation will take place on October 30th (zoom meeting). It was highlighted that there are budget and staffing implications arising out of the strategic plan.

4. General Meetings/Education Planning –

- a) **Display-Table Policy** – It has been suggested that a policy be created in order to set clear guidelines for who can bring items to sell, have access to display tables, and what costs are covered (if any) by the Regional Council for folks coming from outside the Regional Council. It was suggested to have the General Meetings/Education Planning make recommendation to the Executive, in consultation with the Finance Leadership.
- b) **Policy re use of fair-trade items during general meetings -**
2023-10-12_007 MOTION (B. Harman/S. DeHaan) that the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council Executive agree to a policy that at regional council events held in the future, shall use Fair Trade products. **CARRIED**

Break – a 10 mins break was held

5. **Finance Report** – Rev. Brian Cornelius, Regional Council Treasurer highlighted items in his report.
- see report attached as **Appendix A**
There was consensus that proposing a \$50,000 deficit was the best path forward for 2024, as we live into the strategic plan.
6. **Growing New Communities of Faith** – Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly highlighted that there are new ministries emerging, and encouraged members to consider how the Regional Council could help, i.e., solicit expressions of interests from existing communities of faith wanting to help, identify geographically places that could be beneficial, intentionally foster diasporic relations within The United Church (i.e., partnership agreements) – it was highlighted that economic parody can produce challenges. Ideally, what could develop, is two ministries under one umbrella – this could promote less of a burden on emerging ministries who could see structures as overwhelming obstacles when starting-up. It was highlighted that existing structures, although helpful, may also culturally create obstacles. The question was asked about how Kindred Works

could be involved; i.e., asking for space to be carved out for emerging ministries when administering property. Eric invited recommendations of possible locations for potential partnerships to be communicated to him.

7. **Voluntary Associate Minister (2023-24)** – Rev. Eric Hebert-Daly
2023-10-12_008 MOTION (T. Burnett-Cole/E. McIntyre) that the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council Executive receive for information the following names to be added to the list of names of Voluntary Associate Ministers (retired ministry personnel not appointed, or engaged in ministry not recognized as ‘community of faith’) for July 1, 2023- June 30, 2024:

First name	Last Name	Community of Faith
Dianne	Cardin	Barrhaven United Church
Dan	Hayward	Wall Street United Church
Laurie	McKnight	Trinity United Church
Anne	Montgomery	Glen Cairn United Church
Arlyce	Schiebout	St. Paul’s United Church (Perth)
Whit	Strong	Glen Cairn United Church

CARRIED

8. **Regional Council Staffing** – This part of the meeting was conducted *in camera*.
9. **Sharing our Prayers** <https://www.prayercycles.ca/easternontariooutaouais> - Susan Hutton reminded us that prayer request for our communities of faith are being shared at the mentioned website.

Report from the Equity Support Person – Jim Allen shared that the meeting progressed well; nothing in particular to address at this time.

Opening worship for next meeting – Bronwen Harman

Equity Support Person for next Meeting – Rev. Teresa Burnett-Cole,

Closing Prayer – Rev. Teresa Burnett-Cole referred to children’s book called “Changes”; discussions from this meeting brought this about. Teresa closed this time of the meeting with prayer.

Adjournment

2023-10-12_009 MOTION (T. Burnett-Cole) that the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council Executive adjourn this meeting at 11:55 AM. **CARRIED**

Next meeting date: November 9, 2023 Zoom (9 AM – noon)
December 14, 2023 (9 AM – noon)
January 11, 2024 (9 AM – noon)

EOORC Executive Duty Roster

	Opening Devotions / Land Acknowledgement	Equity Monitor	Closing Prayer
<i>Summer</i>			
<i>9 November 2023</i>	Bronwen Harman	Teresa Burnett-Cole	Gayle Barks
<i>14 December 2023</i>	Susan DeHaan	Erin McIntyre	Liz Church
<i>11 January 2024</i>	Linda Suddaby	Cindy Casey	Nancy Hazen Teresa Burnett- Cole
<i>8 February 2024</i>	Ryan Kim	Liz Church	Bronwen Harman
<i>14 March 2024</i>	Jim Allen	Gayle Barks	Susan DeHaan
<i>11 April 2024</i>	Erin McIntyre	Linda Suddaby	Susan Hutton
<i>9 May 2024</i>	Susan Hutton	Bronwen Harman	Jim Allen
<i>13 June 2024</i>	Gayle Barks	Ryan Kim	

Appendices

Appendix A

Finance Report

Pages 7-8

Appendix A

Finance Report

The Finance Committee met on Thursday October 5th to consider the 2024 budget and the 2024 Mission Support grants.

Please note, we are still using the word mission so that our financial statement correlates with previous years, but we are open to change and maybe even propose that MISSION&MINISTRY become Spirituality, Justice, & Discipleship. If we make a change, then a note in the financial statements would be added in order to meet our fiduciary responsibilities as we continue to report into the future.

2024 Budget

The Finance Committee is not presenting a proposed 2024 budget at this meeting, but is looking to the executive for some general direction in order to present a 2024 budget for the consideration of the members of the Regional Council at the November 4th meeting of the Regional Council.

A. Reasons for not having a budget yet

i) Given the Setting Our Sights process is still unfolding and aware that this process may impact budget priorities, we want to create space for this report to influence budget proposals and decisions.

ii) We need time to absorb and process the implications of the General Council Executive decision to reduce the Mission and Service Fund grant by 25% or \$80,000. This is especially so as we contemplate the impact on Mission Support grants. Earlier this year, anticipating this reduction, the Finance Committee had "review" conversations with all of the organizations receiving Mission Support, and so we have a mechanism to make recommendations on funding decisions, but need some more discerning time before presenting those recommendations

Important information to share with you.

i) Projections for 2023 indicate we will have a deficit of \$38,500 (22,500 Governance and 16,000 Mission&Ministry). The good news is that this is less than the \$68,000 budgeted deficit. These numbers will change (likely higher) but usually we are within 10,000 of our projections.

- ii) An initial status quo budget for 2024 that accounts for
- a) salary increases of 2%,
 - b) revenue reduction in Mission and Service, and
 - c) modifications based on spending patterns that indicate many expenditure reduction but also some required increases

"reveals" a minimum deficit of 95,000 in 2024. ***This is the challenge facing the financial reality of the Regional Council.***

iii) If the 2023 projections prove to be accurate, our unrestricted reserves will reduce from 230,500 to about 192,000 (169,000 governance and 23,000 Mission&Ministry)

B. General Directions Needed by Executive to formulate a budget proposal, ***a budget that looks at creative solutions and offers flexibility as we implement directions from the Setting our Sights project.***

i) The Finance Committee is recommending that we increase the amount allocated from investments from 4% to 4.5%. This change is already included in the initial status quo document and follows a previous policy decision made by the Executive. We hope the remaining months of investment might increase the income somewhat, but that is not guaranteed so we are using cautionary figures.

ii) We propose that we establish a budget with a \$50,000 total deficit as our 2024 target....with a view to continue moving towards a balanced budget by further reducing our deficit in 2025 and adopt a balanced budget by 2026. We believe that a reserve of around \$100,000 is necessary for the proper financial functioning of the Regional Council.

iii) We will offer specific suggestions for expenditure reductions, but these will not be sufficient to achieve the goal of maintaining a \$50,000 deficit.

iv) Because it is important to provide flexibility during a time of adopting Setting Our Sights priorities, we recognize that most specific decisions cannot be made quickly. More data and discernment is needed. Therefore as "a technique" in budgeting, we are providing sufficient funds for staffing and program priorities and governance requirements, while adding a "line item" identified as Executive or Administrative Budget Adjustments where over the course of functioning in 2024, the Executive Minister, supported by the Executive and Finance Committee, makes recommendations to realize further savings of \$40,000.

C. Process for Budget Presentation at November Meeting.

i) The Finance Committee is slated to meet on Thursday October 19th to finalize a budget proposal, a proposal based on your directions, based on what is learned in the Setting Our Sights process, and based on further research needed.

ii) We propose that, rather than send out a proposed budget in advance of the meeting, that a paper copy be provided to all those attending the meeting when they arrive (or just before the budget presentation) so that verbal explanation can accompany the number revelation. We do not want a "focus on deficit" to taint the Setting Our Sights conversation. Given the complexities, and obvious sensitivities, it is important that we unfold this process in an ethical and caring way. We do not anticipate this will be hugely controversial, but will likely require a little more time than the 15 minutes slotted for the budget presentation.

iii) Prior to the meeting, the Finance Committee will research carefully proposed changes and, if appropriate, will give a "heads up" to any sector facing a significant reduction in budget support so they are not "blind-sided". We will also look at ways of providing some transitional support.

This report is respectfully submitted by Brian Cornelius on behalf of the Finance Committee