

**MINUTES OF THE OFFICIAL BOARD
OF SYDENHAM-HERITAGE UNITED CHURCH
On Thursday, September 14, 2022**

Present: Sharon Davidson, Maureen Hall-Gilmore, Norma Janzen, BJ Leighton, Terry Matheson, Larry Pickard, Jacquie Scatcherd, Rev. Paul Shepherd, Verna Timpener, Lorne White, Yvonne Wright

Absent: Andrew Advincula,

Sharon called the meeting to order. Welcomed back the Board after the summer break.

Land Acknowledgement offered by Sharon

Devotion “What Do We Hold in Our Cup?” offered by Yvonne

Congregational Health

1. Paul expressed concern about the lack of reactivation/energy for reactivation in the church. He praised the Fix-it Club, the crafters group and the bike and drum groups. The summer services underscored for him the inactivity of the other United Churches in Brantford. He doesn't know why SHUC doesn't have ten activities happening in the church each week. People need to bring their passions forward to offer activities within the church.
2. Maureen expressed concern for one particular individual who has been impacted over the past few months by ongoing isolation in many facets of life. This links to the need to reactivate the church so there are greater opportunities for social and spiritual connections. A follow up to this individual will be done by Paul and ongoing support by Pastoral Care. This is not an issue for one person but for many.
3. Physical abilities have impacted some individuals not being able to get into our building. Chair lift and wheelchair lift are not adequate to permit all who might like to attend worship/activities to access the building dependent on the accommodation they require. If the building is to be truly welcoming we need to ensure there are no physical barriers.

Motion to accept the agenda with the following amendments moved by Norma Janzen and seconded by Verna Timpener. Carried.

- **Strategic planning to become #12**
- **New business to become #13**
- **Closing prayer to become #14**
- **Adjournment to become #16**

Motion to accept the minutes of June 8, 2022 with the following correction moved by Norma Janzen and seconded by Verna Timpener. Carried.

- **Under Photo Book, fourth point should read ‘Verna will bring further information to the September meeting’ rather than ‘Norma will bring further information to the September meeting’**

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Motion to accept the minutes of July 21, 2022 moved by Lorne White and seconded by Maureen Hall-Gilmore. Carried.

Business Arising from the Minutes

- 1) Strategic planning – contained in agenda
- 2) Committee report highlights - contained in the agenda
- 3) Masking protocol – the current statement by the Board appears to continue to be effective. The Board will continue with the current position, masking is optional and to continue to be respectful to each persons choice
- 4) Letter of Resignation – received from Ron Stinson. Ron expressed his belief that his role as Finance Lead is not warranted given the coverage and responsibilities of the Treasurer
 - Resignation is received with regret
 - Discussion about the role within our Governance Model
 - Finance Lead is intended to differ and exceed the Treasurer role
 - Involvement in development of rental agreements, participation of annual budget development, liaison with other committees viewed as crucial
 - Understand the need to ensure people don't become exhausted – one of the underpinnings of the Governance Model
 - Identified need to expand the Finance Committee membership which will permit refilling the Finance Lead position
 - Sharon will prepare letter of Thanks to Ron for his service on the Board.

Ministerial Report

- Healing Circles for Grieving attracted 50% from SHUC and 50% from outside
- Drum Circle continues to be held in Victoria Park – offers an opportunity to connect with community, with homeless community
- Bike Ride October 8th
- There is ongoing accessibility challenges for some to physically enter the building
- Brought the accessibility issue to the Coffee Club and suggested holding coffee group outside of Church to create greater accessibility, Coffee Club refused to move to another location such as Lynden Park Mall
- Toronto United Church Council Kindred Works is ready to make a presentation to SHUC following their review of how to reuse the building – September 28th at 10am zoom meeting for one hour
- Following this presentation a committee will be struck to consider proposal
- Paul will announce presentation from the pulpit
- Grand River Council on Aging is looking for a representative from SHUC
- Artwork donation has come to Paul, he shared a picture of the fabric hanging and its story of healing, the Board accepts the donation with thanks and a request that the story be provided in the format wished by artist so it can be understood and appreciated, to be placed in the Fellowship Room
- 2023 PRIDE event in Mohawk Park and Canada Day Celebration – do we want to be in attendance/represented as a congregation

Correspondence

BJ shared a letter of resignation from Linda Brown our Custodian. Linda will be retiring from SHUC at the end of November 2022. She has served as our custodian since 1999. A celebration of her service will be planned and planning will begin to hire her replacement.

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Related note: our thank you gathering for Rev. Bill MacKinnon needs to be rescheduled (delay was due to covid restrictions in place as his contract finished) – date to be set at next meeting

Thank you letter from Janet and Bob Bell

Heritage Non Designation letter from the City – passed to Property for review

Mission and Development Council of Erie Presbytery invitation for September 21, 2022 this council holds money that was to be used for mission projects in what was formerly the Erie Presbytery. Paul and Sharon will attend and bring back information to the Board.

Comments on June Retreat & Symbolic Representation

- Thank you to Terry for wonderful notes reflecting the discussion
- **Symbolic Representation** – a visual reminder of what we spent the day talking about
- Heart with a cross in the centre
- Spectrum of colour to represent diversity
- Blue represents the river we live on
- Tree – deep roots through transition and change
- Arrows – communication in and out
- Hands & Sun – warmth emanating
- Mat – all are welcome – bringing people back and new people in
- Sharon will bring in a canvas of this to next meeting
- **Key focus that emerged was need for Strategic Planning**
- How will we do meetings of the Board?
- There is a weariness of attending Board meetings
- Key pieces of committee reports need to be highlighted for decision making, motions
- One hour at each meeting must be spent focused on strategic planning
- Only 20 minutes should be devoted to committee matters
- Adjournment time must be set and held firm
- Six areas to be focused upon at Strategic Direction/Planning
 1. Finance
 2. Growing Membership
 3. Communication
 4. Engagement
 5. Congregational Health
 6. Accessibility
- As co-chairs Sharon and Maureen will identify a Strategic Planning item for discussion at each meeting

Fundraising Discussion

- Fundraising idea list circulated by Maureen
- Goal – to bring people in, to bring people back, and to bring in dollars to address growing debt
- Turkey Dinner – November 12th – hold date
- UCW Bazaar – November 26th
- Brant County Health Unit Kitchen License needs to be renewed, its important to have several people licensed to avoid any one person needing to be present each time an event is being prepared in the kitchen

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- We need to start with what we have always done and are known for in the community and then try new things
- Can we connect ‘Sunday with the Saints’ (from idea list) to the Turkey Dinner?
- Consider how we can promote use of the sanctuary for fundraising
- We need to map dates in 2023 during October meeting
- We need to not ask Outreach/Stewardship to shoulder all fundraising responsibilities

Action

1. Sharon and Maureen will set topics for discussion for each meeting
2. Brant County Health Unit kitchen licenses to be renewed – participants to be identified

Committee Reports

Treasurer’s Report

- Current deficit is \$86,000.00
- We have 59 active givers at this time
- Reluctantly need to request additional money from Trustees to ensure we meet the expenses for October

Motion that the Trustees be authorized to transfer \$20,000.00 to the Operating Budget if requested by Treasurer moved by Norma Janzen and seconded by Larry Pickard. Carried.

Trustee Report

- Amount of money transferred during 2022 to Operating Budget from Trustees Account was \$90,000 as of July 21, 2022
- With the motion just passed to support the Operating Budget only \$19, 575 remains in High Interest Savings Accounts and cash. Should additional money be required we will be withdrawing from the Equities and Mutual Funds – and it will take more time to complete the transfer to the Operating Budget
- The market value of our investments on September 13th was \$582,847.00
- The ongoing volatility of the stock market has reduced the value of investments

Property

- Board has requested Property contact the engineer to continue to explore elevator installation following the Kindred Works Presentation – Accessibility must be in place by 2025
- Building will celebrate its centennial in 2023

Spiritual

- Christmas falls on Sunday this year, Worship Committee recommends Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services
- Many thanks for the ongoing energy and care of the Pastoral Care Committee

New Business

BBQ Purchase

- Concern expressed about this purchase
- While we understand that the old BBQ was not safe and this happened between meetings and in week before the Welcome Back BBQ, there was not Board support to purchase a new one, the process to request Board endorsement before purchase occurred was not followed
- Options such as borrowing one, amending the menu, could have been considered for immediate need and then long term solution considered by Board

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- When we step out of process such as this situation, it places a burden on the Board to repay the person who spent the dollars at a time of significant financial stress and if repayment can't occur due to finance challenges creates potential of damaged relationships
- An appeal has gone from the pulpit, if this doesn't meet the repayment required there is not a motion to support repayment

Next Meeting: October 12, 2022

Devotion: Larry Pickard

Closing Thought – despite our challenges, this meeting feels more hopeful

Closing Prayer offered by Paul

Sharon Davidson, Co-Chairperson

Maureen Hall-Gilmore, Co-Chairperson

Jacquie Scatcherd, Secretary