

MC Sask Council Minutes ~ Wednesday, December 5, 6:00 PM ~ MCC Centre, Saskatoon

Present: Rod Suderman, Berny Wiens, Pauline Steinmann, Sharon Schultz, Terry Stefaniuk, Andrea Enns-Gooding, Ryan Siemens, Kirsten Hamm-Epp

Regrets: Myrna Wiebe, Gordon Peters

Attachments: October 10, 2018 Council Minutes; Executive Minister Report; Finance Reports.

1. Welcome: Terry
2. Opening: Ryan, where do we see MC Sask in 5/10 years? How does the work we are doing now lead us into that vision, in 100 words or less?
 - i. Good feedback received, with common threads. This will sent around separately from the minutes, to be utilized as the opening at our next meeting.
3. Adoption of Agenda
 - i. **Adopted as amended, by consensus.**
4. Adoption of Minutes: October 10, 2018
 - i. **Adopted as presented, by consensus.**
5. Business Arising
 - i. In addition to (instead of) regional worship services, we should encourage pulpit exchanges as well.
 - i. Works well with the next 'Deepening' theme, with each other.
 - ii. Suggested target for regional worship services, before summer 2019.
 - i. Blending urban and rural congregations (large and small) could be quite meaningful.
 - ii. Travelling song fests – fill the rural churches!
 - iii. Possible idea: MC Canada Joint Council is meeting in Sask Jan. 25-27, have a Song Fest, either at MCC Centre or MRMC.
 1. Invitation to youth (RJC) to come and join (not perform).
6. Reports:
 - i. Moderator: Terry Stefaniuk (oral report)
 - i. "Plea" at Fall Leadership Assembly was heard loud and clear, many speaking invitations have now been received!
 1. Concern raised of Terry burning out, doing a lot of great things, but doing a lot! Encouragement to ask for help/support.
 - ii. Met with Vice Moderator of Nursing Home Complex (Ernie Epp), and Nursing Home Executive Director (Joan Lemauviel). Slightly confusing as to purpose of meeting, but it seemed to go well.
 - iii. Shekinah: unfortunate delays on formalities with forthcoming cheque re. mortgage, Shekinah staff and board are aware. Money is coming to MC Sask office first, should be to Shekinah by Dec. 15/2018.
 - ii. Finance: reports sent ahead of time
 - i. Looking to the end of the year, we seem to be trending OK for the end of the year, but staff should keep a close eye and send appeals if needed.
 - ii. Request for two documents moving forward:
 1. Short form YTD actual, with YTD budget, and full CYE budget.
 2. Long form YTD actual, with YTD budget, and full CYE budget.
 - iii. 2019 Short-Form Budget
 1. Terry will send Gordon Council's questions, we need a more detailed budget and answers before approval can be given.

2. Recommendation for Gordon and Marianne to meet and go through numbers in details, and have a Council meeting in January with significant time dedicated to budget.
- iii. Executive Minister: Ryan Siemens (attached)
 - i. Update re Tom Yoder Neufeld, he is confirmed and delighted to come and join us in fall of 2019.
 - ii. Invitation to YFBC service trip to Mexico:
 1. Would be good to continue building relationships.
 2. Big time commitment.
 3. This might be a better fit with Kirsten's job description.
 - a. Raises larger concerns regarding staff workloads overall.
 4. Response:
 - a. While we want to recognize and honour the invitation, looking at staff time, health, and professional development, this is not an invitation Ryan should accept.
 - i. Response to Mark should also include question of whether Kirsten could attend on behalf of MC Sask.
 - iii. Professional Development Request:
 1. Would this be above budget? Should funds be reallocated from elsewhere in the budget or does relational funding make more sense?
 2. **MOTION 20181205-01:** to approve Ryan's professional development request to take the Conflict Management and Congregational Leadership Certificate Program over the next two years, utilizing continuing education funding, relational funding, and other avenues as appropriate, with MC Sask committing to covering the full costs. Berny/Pauline. **Carried.**
 - iv. Regional Church Minister: Kirsten Hamm-Epp (oral report)
 - i. Youth/YA Ministry:
 1. Young adult ministry on U of S campus, YA Facebook group has been started – largely informational, one event/semester.
 2. Invited to memorial service for Tree of Life Synagogue, participating in Memorial Service for Those Lost to Violence with other U of S Faith Leaders at St. Thomas More.
 3. Youth ministry group changes: Hailey Funk hired at Wildwood Mennonite (part-time), Terri Lynn Friesen stepping away on parental leave in spring 2019.
 4. Shake: Prairie Youth Gathering in 2019
 - a. Will request a small amount from 2019 MC Sask budget.
 - b. Planning is going well.
 5. Connecting with RJC:
 - a. Proposal/request from RJC to consider spending one afternoon a week on campus, as a 'resident youth pastor'
 - b. Building a team, bringing in local pastors as well; both/and.
 - ii. Congregational Engagement
 1. Work with other Regional Church staff continues, main focus currently is defining Witness Support Teams
 2. Congregational Ministry Conversations have started slowly, but are going very well.
 - iii. Donor Relations
 1. A Calendar-Year-End fundraising campaign has been developed, with plans for a full year strategy in the New Year.

2. Postcards were developed and distributed to every mailbox, basic intro to MC Sask; next step is posters with similar information.
- iv. Note that as we look at professional development, we need to make sure we are working together, and not turning into silos.

Reports approved by consensus.

7. Information:

- i. Personnel Committee: Ric Driediger (PLC rep on personnel) has and is conducting interviews with staff in relation to updated job descriptions. Next steps will involve drafting of documents and review of the Memorandums of Understandings for all staff.
- ii. Vacancies to fill:
 - i. Nominating Committee: Anna Rehan has agreed to step in.
 - ii. **MOTION 20181205-02:** to appoint Anna Rehan to the Nominating Committee. Sharon/Rod. **Carried.**

8. New Business:

- i. Upcoming MC Canada Gathering; July 28-July 1, 2019 in Abbotsford
 - i. MC Sask has 14 delegates total: six from Council, eight additional.
 1. Council delegates: Andrea, Sharon, Rod (maybe), Pauline (likely), Berny (could, but happy to let another go), Gordon, and Terry.
 - a. Ryan and Kirsten can be MC Sask delegates, don't need to be.
 - b. Guidance from Leadership Assembly to have good representation, how that is done remains a question.
 - c. We don't want money to hold people back.
 - i. Have congregations help with costs.
 - d. Council already gives us good representation.
 2. Funding: Can congregations help cover the cost? This could be part of the ask when requesting delegate suggestions.
 - ii. Ryan and Kirsten will send around possible formula options for choosing by email, names decided at Jan. meeting.
- ii. Feedback on Leadership Assembly
 - i. Productive and successful day – very worthwhile!
 - ii. Good valuing of people's time.
 - iii. Reports with questions added helpful focus.
 - iv. Afternoon Session: lots of buzz around tables, didn't always translate to feedback, but good table conversations is a success.
 - v. Bigger space, less residual/background noise would be helpful.
 - vi. Sharing in the morning was really good; we have lost some of that at the ADS with breakout sessions.
 1. Nice to hear about the work and respond, and not just read about it.
 - vii. Engaging youth: how do we help them engage with this part of the church and how they might plug into it?
 1. How can we help congregations give youth the background they need to positively participate?
- iii. Update on Women's Ministry Rep Position
 - i. Concerns raised from Mel Harms, current rep, regarding current state of position and difficulties plugging in with MC Sask.
 - ii. Possibility of adding position to Ministries Commission.
 1. We do want Mel to feel supported.

- 2. How would adding the position to Ministries change the role?
- iii. Still a societal need to support women, especially the younger working professionals.
- iv. How many women's groups do we currently have? What do they want/ need from this position?
 - 1. Should the time be taken to get in touch with groups and ask?
- v. SWM closed largely due to lack of support for structure, not necessarily because of lack of desire to meet.
- vi. Lots of organic (things) going on; who shares the stories and information?
- vii. Share stories with Mel, ask her to send them around, share Council's thoughts, see what she thinks.
- viii. Lots of enthusiasm; what does she want us to help her do?
- ix. Do we need the position?
 - 1. Not Council's job to create work for her.
 - 2. Primarily an event planner, does it get renamed as such.
 - a. Wouldn't need to be connected to Ministries
- x. Kirsten will advise Mel of Council discussion; Council is open to however Mel would like to move forward.

9. Other Items:

- i. Question from Bylaws Committee:
 - i. Current Council and Executive terms of office are three, two-year terms, all other positions are three, three-year terms. Is Council comfortable making Council terms the same?
 - 1. Yes.

10. Future Meeting Dates and Times:

- i. Jan. 9/2019 at the MCC Centre at 6pm
- ii. Ryan and Kirsten will check with Gordon and Marianne and confirm.

Executive Minister Report for Council
Wednesday, December 5, 2018

Since our Last Meeting:

- 1) Congregations Visited for Worship and Meetings
 - a. October 14, attended worship and brought greetings to Osler Mennonite Church on their 90th Anniversary.
 - b. October 25 & 26, Rachel Miller Jacobs led the MC Sask Continuing Education Course at Bethany Manor. We had 25 participants. She connected well with us.
 - c. October 27, MC Sask Equipping Day at Warman Mennonite Church. We had between 65-70 participants and the evaluations have been positive. I am currently in conversation with Tom Yoder Neufeld to lead next year's Continuing Education Course and be our "main attraction" at Equipping Day.
 - d. October 28, helped close Emmaus Mennonite Church in providing the morning meditation, communion and closing litany.
 - e. November 4, preached at Grace Mennonite Church, PA.
 - f. November 8, met with the council of Fields of Hope Mennonite Churches. I was invited by the Pastor and Congregational Chair to attend the meeting out of concerns raised by the both. From this meeting, it was determined that I will conduct a Congregational and Pastoral Review, December 10 & 11, 2018.
 - g. November 24, Kirsten and I led the Fall Leadership Assembly at Langham Mennonite Fellowship. We had good participation from congregational representatives and our programs/commission.
 - h. ESG continues to have ongoing conference calls. Sean East, accountant from MCEC, will be doing a full examination of MC Canada finances and practices. The transition continues. Our most recent meetings were November 28.
 - i. November 28-Dec 1, MC USA/MC Canada Binational Gathering in Los Angeles. This year's Annual event was significantly different from other years. Ched Myers and Elaine Enns led this group through a retreat, focusing on being the Reconciled Body of Christ in an Age of Polarization. Our hope moving forward is this is more of a retreat than only a "business" meeting. Next year's will most likely take place in Banff, AB. I continue to be a part of the planning, representing "MC Canada".

2) Looking Ahead

- a. On Saturday, Terry made the plea he wasn't getting any speaking engagements and I can relate. They have slowed down, at the same time, I welcome the reprieve. With that said, I am always open to invitations. In December, I will be sharing at Craig Neufeld's final service at Rosthern Mennonite Church. At this point, I only have two Sundays scheduled in the New Year, and they are in MCM churches!
- b. On Wednesday, January 9, I will be meeting with the Council of Eyebrow Mennonite Church to hear their concerns about MC Sask.
- c. January 16 & 17, ESG in Kitchener/Waterloo. On Jan 18, I will be participating in a workshop hosted by MCEC, called *The Denomination in a #Churchtoo World*. [Click Here to learn more](#). Mary Fortune of the FaithTrust Institute will be the presenter. She is the leading voice/scholar/practitioner on these concerns. MCEC is covering the registration costs for MC Canada leaders.
- d. January 25, ESG in Saskatoon.
- e. January 26 & 27, MC Canada Joint Council in Saskatoon. Office staff is helping with the local logistics of this gathering. The meetings will take place here. On Saturday, January 26, at 7pm, there will be an opportunity for

“Constituency Engagement”. It would be good to have council members at this event. We need to figure out a way to make this event “engaging”!

- f. I will be attending CMU’s ReNew, Feb 12 & 13. MC Sask is a sponsoring member of this event.

3) Other Items for Discussion

- a. Last year, Mark Wurtz invited me to participate in the Mennonite Youth Farm Bible Camp’s service trip to Mexico, however, timing didn’t permit me to go. Mark has asked again. The cost for an individual to participate on this trip is around \$1500, however, MC Sask is being asked to simply cover my transportation cost, a round trip flight to San Diego. To shorten the trip, I would not be driving with the group. This year’s trip is April 20-26.
- b. Professional Development Request: In the three and half years I have been serving MCSask, I feel like we have been working together to build on a vision/mission for the years ahead. Obviously, the work continues. In thinking in what I need to be better equipped to serve for the next 5-7 years, (assuming you’ll keep me around that long) I’ve been exploring the [Conflict Management and Congregational Leadership Certificate Program](#). I believe this program would strengthen my capacity to do what I am already doing. In particular, helping congregations have difficult conversations (Wymark, Glenbush, Eyebrow in Jan), work with young leadership (coaching is a part of the program) and help us see conflict as an opportunity to lead to greater growth and fulfilment of our vision. The program is two years in length, I’ve already taken one course last September, and would like to be granted time over the next two years to continue working on this. For 2019, the workshops I’d take are Made in the Image of God: Engaging Prejudice, Power & Privilege March 19 & 20, (\$275 registration + flight/car), Understanding Conflict Foundations 1 & 2, May 6-9 (\$1300 plus flight/car), and Creating Peaceable Congregations (\$275 + flight/car). I’d then take three workshops in 2020. I would use my current Cont. Education Fund and apply for funds through Company of 1000 for both years. I’m seeking council approval.