

**Northern Spirit Executive Minutes
March 9, 2022 via Zoom**

- Present** Gord Waldie (Chairperson), Donna Kline (Treasurer), Mary Annan, Marilyn Carroll, Peter Chynoweth, Margaret-Anne Hall, Leslie Penny.
- A quorum was present.
- Corresponding Members** There were no corresponding members in attendance.
- Regrets** Allistair MacKay.
- Staff Present** Shannon McCarthy (Executive Minister), Earl Reaburn (Pastoral Relations Minister), Heather Dootoff (Finance Administrator), Julie Graham (Justice and Communications Minister), Kathy Jackson (Office Administrator), Jamie Mckay (Executive Assistant & Recording Secretary).
- Call to Order** Gord Waldie opened the meeting at 9:30 AM (MDT).
- Opening Worship and Check-in** Gord Waldie gave a reflection and led a prayer.
- Agenda Review** We reviewed the agenda.
- 041 – 2021/2022** **It was agreed by consensus:
That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive accepts the agenda, as distributed.**
- Correspondence**
- Approval of Minutes** There were no minutes to review.
- FINANCE** Heather Dootoff reported.
- Barrhead* We need to decide on how money from Barrhead will be allocated and will discuss further at the next meeting.
- Capital Assistance loan – Wetaskiwin* First United church is applying for a capital assistance loan to pay the up-front costs of their Solar PV Project and commercial dishwasher replacement. They are applying for grant funding through Faithful Footprints and Embracing the Spirit.
- We agree and support this project.
- 042 – 2021/2022** **It was agreed by consensus:
That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive supports the application from First United Church in Wetaskiwin for a capital assistance loan to replace their commercial dishwasher and install solar panels.**

Investments transferred from AB Student Bursary Fund Society

Donna Kline submitted two proposals and provided information for discussion (Appendix A).

043 – 2021/2022

It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive agrees to add the following to the Northern Spirit Finance Guidelines, 5. Investments:

5.1.3 Mutual funds supported by The United Church of Canada which avoid high-level risk, high volatility, and low-quality rated securities, and provide a balanced portfolio. Investment in mutual funds is limited to 2/3 of long-term investments by value.

044 – 2021/2022

It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive agrees to retain the investment in the Canoe Asset Allocation Portfolio Class Series D Fund provided this investment represents less than 2/3 of the total long-term investments of the regional council.

PASTORAL RELATIONS

Earl Reaburn reported.

Pastoral Relations Commission

In February, the Pastoral Relations Commission hosted three evening workshops on pastoral relations, which were well attended.

Lay Leadership Support Committee

The Lay Leadership Support Committee is planning to host workshops for ministry personnel committees. The committee is also working identifying people in congregations who have particular interests and skills, and ways to bring them together.

Ministry Personnel Support Committee

The Ministry Personnel Support Committee will distribute bursaries from the student bursary fund with \$1,400 to the candidates for ordered ministry, and \$1,200 to the candidates for admission.

The committee has also developed contract tree for our pension or retired ministry personnel.

Communities of Faith Support Committee

The Communities of Faith Support Committee has recommended that Morinville Pastoral Charge and Namao Pastoral charge into one pastoral charge.

045 – 2021/2022

It was agreed by consensus:

That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive accepts the recommendation of the Lay Leadership Support Committee to amalgamate Morinville Pastoral Charge and Namao Pastoral Charge, named Namao (Morinville) Pastoral Charge, effective immediately.

REPORTS

Executive Minister's Report

Shannon McCarthy reported.

GC44

We held a gathering of commissioners from all three regional councils. The first listening session for General Council 44 is tonight.

Ashmont United Church

We had a discussion on the sale of Ashmont United Church and their commitment to Camp Whitney.

046 – 2021/2022

**It was agreed by consensus:
That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive recognizes the decision by Ashmont United Church to give their church as part of our reconciliation and agrees to give Camp Whitney \$10,000 to honour the intent of Ashmont United Church to support Camp Whitney through proceeds of the sale of their building.**

Incorporated Ministries

047 – 2021/2022

**It was agreed by consensus:
That Northern Spirit Regional Council Executive takes the following action(s):**

a) Kirk United Church Centre

...pursuant to the Incorporated Ministries Policy of The United Church of Canada approve the Kirk United Church Centre 2021-2022 Board of Directors

**Darlene Bakker
Deanna Boyde
Gail Greenwood
Jacqueline Hunt
Wilson MacLennan
Susan Waldie
Larry Wright**

This is based on the draft AGM minutes of June 17, 2021, the 2021 board member approval form, contact list provided and receipt of other required documentation per The United Church of Canada Incorporated Ministries Policy.

2022 Annual Gathering

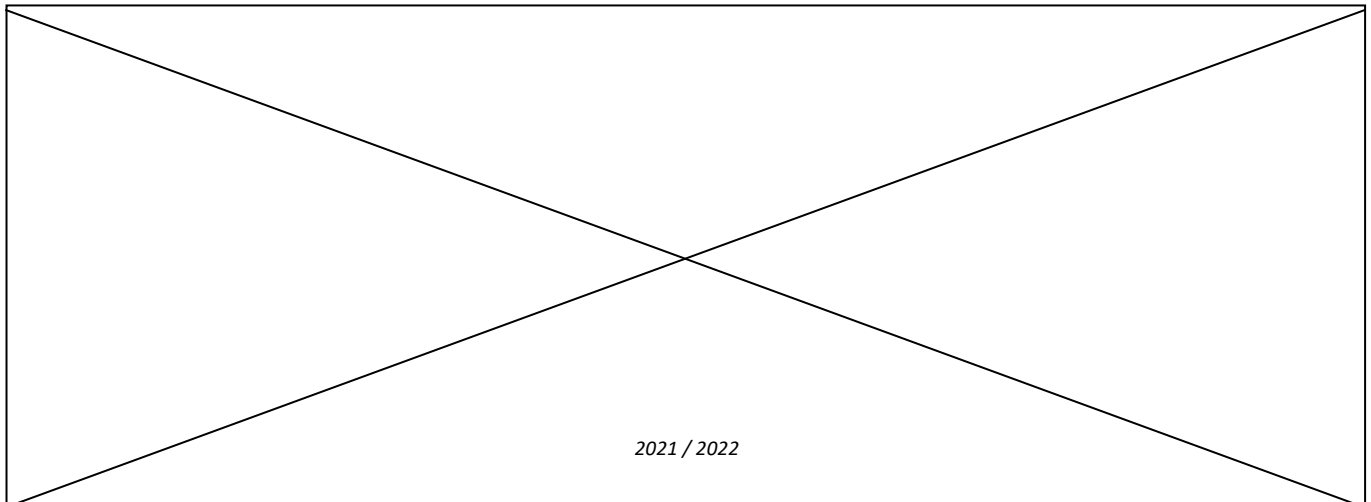
Currently, there is no business that we normally take care of at an annual meeting. Our intention is to hold a gathering to give an update on General Council, regional council committees, and to connect with each other.

Leslie Penny will contact Deborah Hoekstra about continuing on as chair of the planning committee.

- Celebration of Ministry** We discussed a date and location for a Celebration of Ministry. Considering the live-streaming capacity needed, Gord Waldie will contact Blaine Gregg at Spirit of Hope United Church as a possible location.
- Nominations** There was nothing to report from Nominations.
- Anti-Racism Proposal** We moved the follow up on the Anti-Racism proposal to a future meeting.
- Next Meeting** The Executive agreed to meet on the second Wednesday of each month from 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM via Zoom with the next regular meeting date:
 - April 13, 2022
- Closing Prayer** Gord Waldie led us in a closing prayer.
- Adjournment** Gord Waldie adjourned the meeting at 12:05 PM (MDT).


Gord Waldie, Chairperson


Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister



Northern Spirit Regional Council

Issue: Investments transferred from Alberta & Northwest Conference Student Bursary Fund Society.

At the beginning of April, 2021, Northwest Conference Student Bursary Fund Society wound up and forwarded its assets to Northern Spirit. The assets were approximately \$164,000 comprised of

Cash	\$ 35,000
GIC	17,000
Canoe Asset Allocation Portfolio Class Series D	<u>112,000</u>
Total	<u>164,000</u>

Our Finance Guidelines state:

5. Investments

5.1 Reserves not expected to be needed for at least one year will be invested in any of the following instruments. The choice will be made by the Financial Administrator in consultation with the Treasurer, based on the best available rates at the time of the investment.

5.1.1 Debentures or securities issued or guaranteed by the Government of Canada or of any province of Canada (e.g. treasury bills or similar instruments).

5.1.2 Debentures or securities issued or guaranteed by a chartered bank or credit union (e.g. guaranteed investment certificates or term deposits).

5.2 Uncommitted cash (not expected to be needed for at least 90 days) and reserves expected to be needed in less than one year but more than 90 days may, at the discretion of the Financial Administrator and the Treasurer, be invested in high interest savings accounts or money market funds which are covered by the Canadian Investor Protection Fund.

Funds invested in the Canoe Asset Allocation Portfolio Class Series D are **not** protected by the Canadian Investor Protection Fund.

Discussion

The United Church of Canada developed an investment strategy for its own funds and works with Fiera Capital Corporation, part of the Desjardin Group. In 2018 Fiera Capital Corporation entered into an agreement with Canoe wherein it became the trustee, manager and portfolio manager of all Fiera's retail funds and those funds changed their name to Canoe. UCC has encouraged congregations to invest in ways that preserve capital and protect the funds invested from inflation.

From the time we took over the Bursary fund in March 2021 to December 31, 2021, the investment increased to approximately \$135,000, an increase of \$23,000 for 9 months. Since the funds were originally purchased by the Bursary Fund, the investment has

increased by \$38,000. This is **not** what should be expected in 2022. as 2021 was an unusual year which saw spectacular returns in the market.

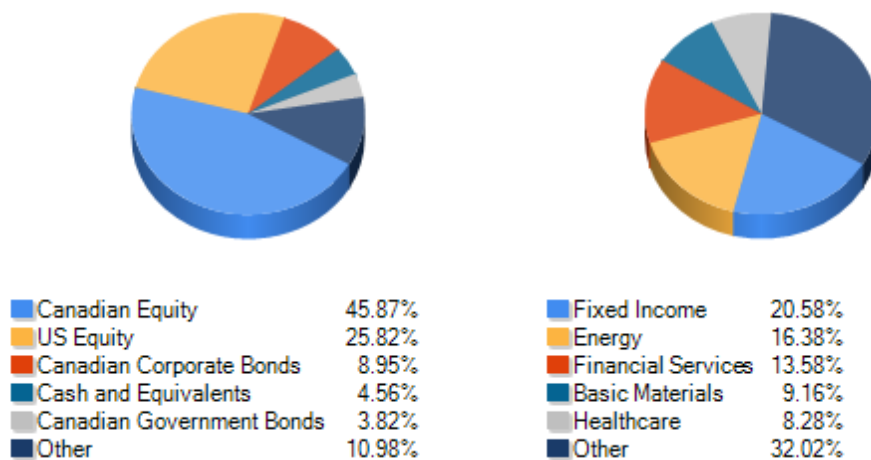
The Management fees charged by the Canoe Asset Allocation Portfolio Class Series D are 1.25% less a rebate (other series are 2.1%). For 2021, management fees of 300.88 were charged. For 2022, Canoe will again rebate .63% as the management fees charged as these funds were part of amounts transferred from Fiera.

At the moment, with the situation in the Ukraine, the markets are very volatile. However, as of March 8, the investment is still worth \$136,854.

We asked a third-party investment manager to review the fund and they indicated it was medium low risk fund and very well managed.

This Fund aims to provide long-term growth and capital preservation using a balanced investment approach. It invests primarily in a mix of Canadian equity securities, fixed income securities and money market instruments. The Fund may also invest in gold, gold certificates, silver certificates and certain gold/silver ETFs.

This chart sets out what investments are within the Fund for which 97% are in North America.



Recommendation:

We recommend the Council retain the investment in the Canoe Asset Allocation Portfolio Class Series D Fund provided this investment represents less than 2/3 of the total long-term investments of the Council.

Due to the situation in the Ukraine, we recommend that no additional investment be made until:

1. The Council determines its optimum asset allocation range. (We believe our risk should be medium low to medium.)
2. The markets stabilize.

Further, we recommend the Investment Guideline be amended to read.

5. Investments

5.1 Reserves not expected to be needed for at least one year will be invested in any of the following instruments. The choice will be made by the Financial Administrator in consultation with the Treasurer, based on the best available rates at the time of the investment for debt securities and asset allocation for mutual funds.

5.1.1 Debentures or securities issued or guaranteed by the Government of Canada or of any province of Canada (e.g. treasury bills or similar instruments).

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