



Governance Task Force Unitarian Church of Montréal Report to congregation June 7, 2010

The following is a summary of the presentation given by Andrew Blakeslee, Petrina Lee Poy, Alison Hall and Diane Rollert at the June 7, 2010 AGM. It also incorporates information that was shared in the Town Hall on May 16.

Governance... Why is UCM engaged in this process?

The subject has been on the table off and on for over ten years.

Identified needs and issues include:

- Need for ways to engage more people actively in governance process
- Open ways for newer folks to find in a way in
- Finding time to discuss the things that are most important
- Engaging the whole congregation in open questions around our mission
- Creating room for innovation and increased empowerment
- Better planning for Stewardship, and for the future
- Better integration of staff
- Synergy instead of working in isolation need for room for creativity and new ideas
- Improved communication
- Division of labour to be more effective and focused
- Create a place for developing meaningful ways of accountability and evaluation

In 2008 a Task Force was given this mandate, approved at the 2008 AGM.

The governance task force is responsible for stewarding the process of reflection, consultation and decision-making necessary to generate a new governance structure that will better meet the evolving needs of our congregation.

Current Strengths at UCM:

Commitment

Fellowship

Very thoughtful and caring

Lots of people engaged

Lots of volunteer hours

Groups working well independently

Shortcomings of governance structure:

- Places at the table (no places at table for groups not represented at the board)
- Limited long-term planning
- Staff not integrated
- Limited opportunity for synergy
- Wearing 2 hats exhausts (portfolio chairs run committees and serve on board)
- Too many meetings (ex. Exec members attend min. 20/year)

Your feedback to the March 24 proposal:

Positives:

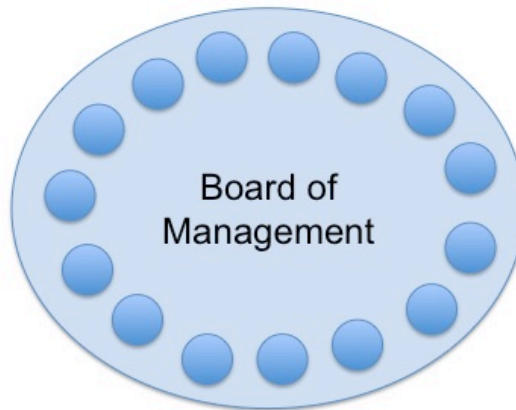
- Town Halls
- Open to change
- Place at the table
- Staff included
- Accessible governance

Concerns:

- Clusters too complicated
- Staff burden
- Enough volunteers?
- Too corporate
- Not corporate enough

Current structure:

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Minister
- Warden
- Past President
- Associational Affairs Chair
- Building & Grounds
- Communications
- Congregational Programs
- Membership
- Religious Education
- Social Concerns & Environmental Concerns
- Worship



STAFF

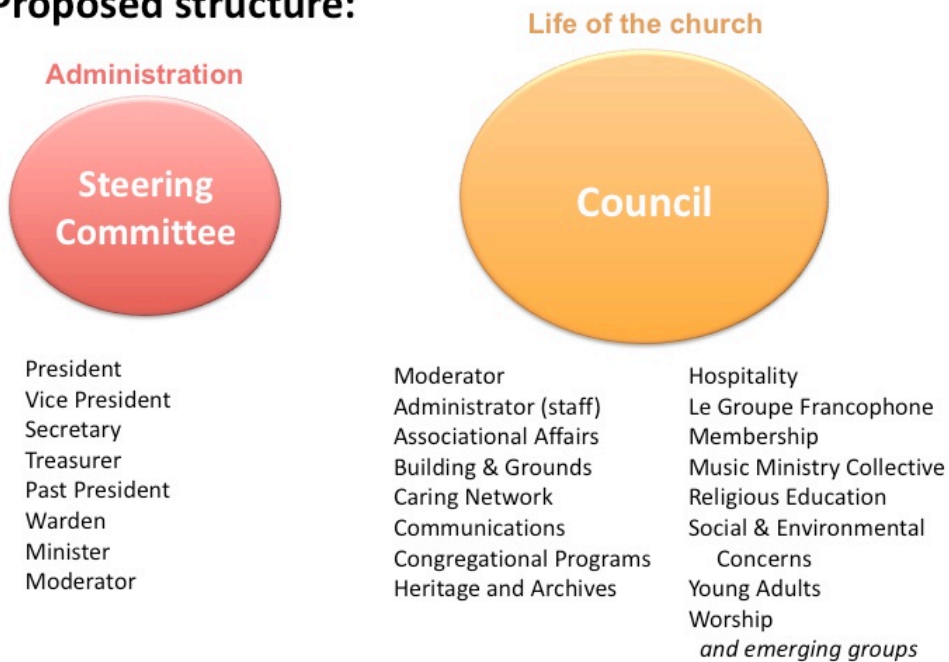
- Orphans:**
- Caring Network
 - Hospitality
 - Music Ministry Collective
 - Young Adults
 - Francophone Group
 - ...and others*

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15-member board with many groups not represented.

Proposed structure:

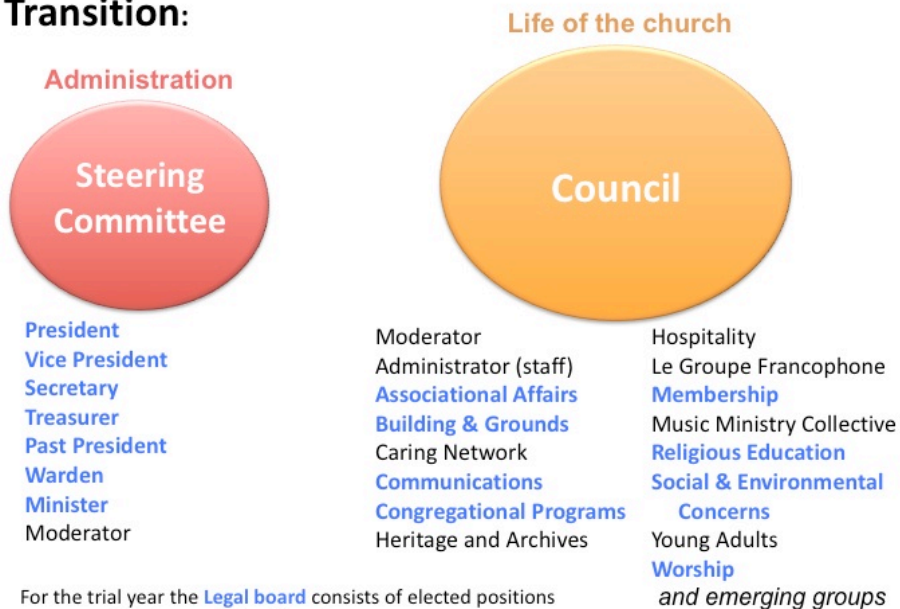


Revised model proposes two bodies: Steering Committee and Council

A division of labour – to increase our focus on governance (Steering Committee) and to also allow for more synergy between groups involved in the daily life of the congregation (Council)

During the trial period, a transition structure would be used to comply with the current by-laws, whereby the elected positions, as stipulated in the By-laws would constitute the legal board (see diagram below).

Transition:



Steering Committee

The recommended composition is 8 members: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Past President, Warden, Minister, Moderator
 In a way, this is an expanded version of the executive in our current structure

Having Past President included, provides continuity and enables us to elect a new president who may not have served previously on the board

Having a Warden provides institutional memory

Only new position is Moderator. We will explain this position further a bit later on.

Responsibilities:

- long term planning based on mission
- communicate with and get input from congregation
- develop policy that grants authority to committees and empowers them to work in fulfilling our mission
- set objectives and measure results
- liaison with council
- From time to time will create task forces or ad hoc groups to respond to specific issues
- Shares vision with council and the congregation

Administration



Responsibilities:

- Long-term planning
- Communication with congregation
- Develop policy
- Set objectives and measure results
- Share vision with Council and congregation

Meets 10 times/year

A Stewardship Committee and a Personnel Committee

would report directly to Steering Committee.

Stewardship

- Needs to be created
- direct relationship with the treasurer
- would include the Investment committee and canvass team

2 committees would report directly to Steering Committee



Personnel

- not chaired by president (too much of a learning curve each time)
- Responsible for evaluations, contracts, in a timely manner

- 3-member committee
- Not chaired by President
- Responsible for evaluations, contracts handled in a timely manner

- Needs to be created
- Direct relationship with the treasurer
- Would include the Investment committee and Canvass team

Council

Composition:

Portfolio Chairs: Associational Affairs, Building & Grounds, Communications, Congregational Programs, Membership, Religious Education, Social & Environmental Concerns, Worship

Group representatives: (ex. Caring Network, Hospitality, Music Ministry Collective, YAG, Le Groupe francophone, etc.)

Administrator

Moderator (from Steering Committee)

The purpose of the council is to provide a forum for sharing information and ideas.

It would provide a place for synergy between activities and programs as well as continuity and cooperation.

Form working groups as needed among the participants.

Responsibilities:

- Share information
- Collaborate together
- Form clusters or working groups as needed
- Opportunities for training and support
- Share vision (where we're going, are we living up to our mission) with the Steering Committee and with the congregation

Administrator is present to improve communication regarding scheduling, building use and expenditures (ex. Procedures for purchases for example)

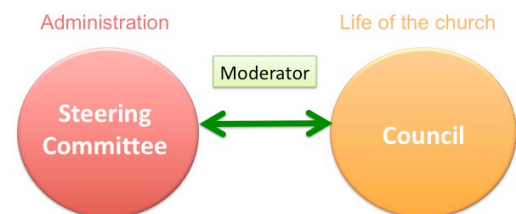
The staff likes what we've proposed and will work the meetings into their schedule.

Moderator

Convenes and facilitates the council meetings

- Liaison between steering and council – the formal link
- Shares financial report and Steering Committee report at Council meetings to keep everyone in the loop

(We're recommending that during the Trial year – Minister and/or President attend council meetings to observe)



Moderator's role:

- Convenes and facilitates council meeting
- Ensures an effective and efficient meeting
- Liaison between Steering Committee and Council

Working within our current By-laws for a trial year

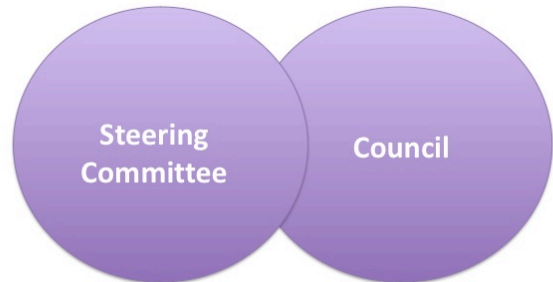
A joint meeting of the elected members of the Steering Committee and the Council would constitute the Legal Board for the trial year.

As specified in the by-laws they would have to meet to decide on:

Preparation and approval of the Annual Budget for presentation to the congregation,
Any significant deviations from the budget
Change investments, however investment strategy is specifically outlined in the by-laws [article XI]

In current by-laws there are decisions that can be made by the Executive committee alone. [Article XI]

Steering and Council would arrange to meet together to discuss budget and other shared issues.



Timeline:

Straw vote today (non-binding vote to gauge level of support for trial year)

Vote at AGM on June 7, 2010 on whether to proceed with trial year

If approved, Trial year would start June 2010

March 2011 – evaluate

June 2011 – Trial year #2 ?

January 2012 – Evaluations, modifications as required

March 2012 – Prepare for by-law changes

June 2012 – AGM – vote on by-law changes

May 16 Straw Vote:

At the Annual General Meeting on June 7, 2010 the Governance Task Force would like to present a motion to proceed with a 1-year trial* of the adapted structure presented today. Would you support this motion? YES NO

**Evaluations will be held during the trial year. If deemed necessary by the board and/or the congregation, the trial could extend to a second year before formally adopting an adapted structure and any by-law changes.*

[Vote was held by secret ballot. Results: 41 ballots cast. 39 in favour, 2 in favour but start later]