

Governing Council

Governing Council is the body of volunteers elected by the Congregation to ensure that the Mission /Call expressed by the congregation is fulfilled in diverse and effective ways , and that the operations of Fairlawn Avenue United Church are carried out responsibly and in support of that Mission. The full Governing Council meets approximately four times per year,

Acting on behalf of the Congregation, the Governing Council:

- Continue to monitor and/or guide to ensure that the work of the church is rooted in the strategic plans and priorities set periodically by the Community of Faith based on need and resources. This may include times where the Council needs to provide direction to the work of lay volunteers and staff teams to bring to life the purpose and desired outcomes of the congregation;
- As a Governing Council team, work to break down silos between outreach/action, affirm initiatives, worship/spirituality and community/believing in order to work together to ensure that the three Council areas are mutually informing and supportive.
- Develops and approves policies for the Operations and management of the church;
- Receives and approves quarterly financial reports from the Finance and Stewardship Council;
- Supports overall communication strategy over the course of the year, including the preparation of the Annual Report to the congregation on the life and work of the congregation, including the annual financial report, and recommends the annual budget. Such recommendations are typically put forward in the context of an Annual General Meeting; and
- Makes decisions on the hiring, discipline and termination of non-ministerial staff including approval of job descriptions, terms of employment and compensation on the recommendation of the Human Resources and Relationship Committee.
- All GC members must Understand and acknowledge the fiduciary responsibility of a GC member to be the wise stewardship of overall church resources (*financial, building, people*), including:
 - **Duty of Care:**
 - *Take care of the Church by ensuring prudent use of all assets, including facility, staff, volunteers, congregants, and good will and maintaining a safe, accessible environment, taking steps to protect individuals receiving services and those who deliver those services;*
 - *Ensure that the Operations Committee, solely or through staff, comply with applicable laws and regulations;*
 - *Maintain strict confidentiality of member information and matters related to GC business related to staff, budget, and members.*
 - **Duty of Loyalty:**
 - *Ensure that the Church's activities and transactions are, first and foremost, consistent with and advancing the Church mission; Recognize and disclose conflicts of interest; Make decisions that are in the best interest of the Church; not in the best interest of any one individual or ministry initiative.*



Proposed Governing Council Composition and Operation:

The Governing Council's responsibilities shall include both the spiritual and temporal concerns of the congregation.

The Governing Council **shall** have those members elected by the congregation -at a minimum- a Chair, the ministerial staff of the church (nonvoting), the secretary of the Governing Council, the appointed representative of the Trustees, the representative to the Region, the Treasurer, the Chair of HRR, and **may also** include Chair Property Committee, chairpersons of the Explore Spirituality, Embrace Action and Experience Belonging Councils or their designates, and the Members at Large.

The Governing Council shall meet at least four times in each year, and at such times as may be required by the call of the Chair. The meetings of the Governing Council shall be presided over by the Chair, or the Chair's appointee.

The Governing Council, either directly or through delegated bodies of the Governing Council, shall fulfill its functions, bearing in mind the functions specified in B.7.4 of the Manual. (See **Appendix 1: The Manual – Congregational Governing Body** below for ease of reference)

The Governing Council shall determine the policy and projects to be followed by Fairlawn Avenue United Church and shall assign or approve responsibility for action on these policies or projects to specific committees.

At the beginning of each year a budget shall be approved for each Council, committee, or team (based on its plan of action) and its responsibilities must be carried out within that budget. If the delegated body should find that it cannot carry out its responsibilities within that budget, it must go back to the Governing Council. If any committee finds that it must make some major change in its policies or projects, it must go back to the Governing Council, for endorsement.

The Governing Council should ensure good governance practices are followed, new compliance matters are assessed and addressed when deemed necessary and that Governing Council development is achieved. The latter should include new Governing Council member training.

The Governing Council shall appoint signing officers.

The quorum for any meeting of the Governing Council shall be a majority of the members. A chairperson of a standing delegated body may name a voting substitute to attend meetings of the Governing Council when that chairperson cannot attend.

The Governing Council may appoint ad hoc bodies required to deal with emergent issues or to carry out special projects.