

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Policy

This policy applies to initial appointments and term re-appointments for all Metropolitan United Church committees, sub-committees, or task groups/committees (hereinafter referred to as “Committees”) appointed by the Board of Elders.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles for recruiting, selecting, supporting and recognizing persons who serve as members of Metropolitan’s committees are:

1. **Informed by the Spirit** – Draws on practices of Christian spiritual formation; facilitates individual and committee, sub-committee or task group discernment;
2. **Accountable to the Board of Elders** – Accepts the responsibility to carry out the nominations process for the Board of Elders according to the mandate and established principles;
3. **Open and Transparent** – Clear, detailed and timely information on opportunities, selection criteria and process, and appointments documented and disseminated through multiple communication channels;
4. **Inclusive** – Aspires to balance voices, perspectives and interests while proactively seeking to address inequities;
5. **Flexible** – Able to accommodate the variety of work, diversity of interests, and routine to unique circumstances; and
6. **Continuously Improving** – Through regular feedback and evaluation is able to make changes and adjustments to practices and processes based on key findings.

General Application and Exemptions

1. If a Committee or a position on a Committee requires an exemption to the standard practices and processes provided in this Policy ...
 - a. on the grounds of scope and/or expertise, or
 - b. on the grounds that the standard practice does not enable the appointment to occur within the necessary timeframe ...and an alternative process has not been previously mandated by the Board of Elders, a Committee may request the Board of Elders to authorize an adapted process which reflects the principles for elected and appointed members.
2. When considering a request for an exemption, the Senior Minister consults with the Chair of the mandating Committee and the Chair of the Board of Elders and reports any approved exemptions to the Board of Elders.
3. An approved adapted process, which is expected to be recurring, must be included in the Terms of Reference of the Committee.

Eligibility

1. Any member or adherent of Metropolitan United Church, except staff members of Metropolitan United Church, is eligible to serve as an elected or appointed member of a Committee.
2. In addition to the identified competencies, a Committee member has several of the following qualifications:
 - a. active participation in Metropolitan United Church
 - b. familiarity with the polity of the United Church of Canada (*The Manual, p.29*)
 - c. predisposition to collaboration and teamwork

- d. sensitivity to diversity issues
 - e. leadership in any work of the church
 - f. passionate commitment to the mission of Metropolitan
 - g. willingness to discern God's yearnings for this work.
3. The Chair of a Committee is a full member of Metropolitan United Church.
 4. In addition to the identified competencies, the Chair of a Committee has several of the following qualifications:
 - a. a skilled facilitator of small groups, and dialogue between and among members
 - b. a discerning listener who invites members to make their optimal contribution
 - c. a builder of shared conceptual frameworks among individuals rooted in different contexts, perspectives and disciplines
 - d. an articulate and passionate advocate for the vision and theology of Metropolitan.
 5. The term of appointment of a member of ...
 - a. a Committee is from one meeting of the Committee to the next meeting of the Committee, unless otherwise specified in the Terms of Reference. This person may be reappointed once at the invitation of the Board of Elders;
 - b. a Sub-Committee is three years or the term specified in its Terms of Reference. This person may be reappointed once at the invitation of the Board of Elders; and
 - c. a Task Group is until the conclusion of the task group to a maximum of three years, or the period of time specified in its Terms of Reference.

Recruitment Process

1. All appointments to Committees, sub-committees and task groups are made by the Board of Elders on the recommendation of the members of the congregation (B 7.8.3)* and the Senior Minister.
2. Opportunities for appointments normally are advertised with appointments being made at the Annual General Meeting of the Congregation. Appointments to a new Committee follow the same schedule except that an urgent or fast-breaking situation may require that appointments be made by the Board of Elders.
3. The only mandated Committee is the Ministry and Personnel Committee (B 7.8.5).
4. The mandating Committee provides the Senior Minister and the Chair of the Board of Elders with a written description of the preferred composition of the Committee, the competencies (skills, knowledge, attitude and experience) required by the chair and members, an estimate of the time commitment required, and the rationale for any cascading appointments attached to any position.
4. The mandating Committee provides the Senior Minister and the Chair of the Board of Elders with a Committee profile which describes:
 - a. Current situation – why the Committee is formed and the context for its work
 - b. Mandate – what the Committee is asked to do, to whom it is accountable and the expected time commitment
 - c. Composition – the skills, knowledge and experience needed around the table
 - d. Appointment process – the selection criteria, who makes the selection, the timeframes for each step in the process.
5. The Committee profile is distributed to the Board of Elders and then posted on the Metropolitan website. It may also be distributed by mail, e-mail or fax as appropriate.
6. Nominations may be made by individuals, pastoral charges, presbyteries, Conferences, theological schools and educational centres, and special ministries. Individuals may also self-nominate.
7. Persons nominated submit an expression of interest in the form of a letter to the Senior Minister or Chair of the Board of Elders. The letter should include:

- a. the opportunity in which they are interested
 - b. some personal background information including information on involvement in Metropolitan
 - c. why the position is of interest and why they feel called to do this work
 - d. spiritual gifts they would bring and what they would hope to learn, and
 - e. the names of two people with whom the nominee has had a discernment conversation and who support the appointment.
8. Expressions of interest are acknowledged and nominators and nominees are thanked in a timely fashion.
 9. An initial screening is done of all expressions of interest received. Additional information may be sought on persons who meet the screening criteria.
 10. Routine security screening procedures are applicable if the person would come into contact with at-risk or vulnerable people through serving as a member of the Committee.
 11. Metropolitan United Church is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information in compliance with applicable federal and provincial legislation including the [Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act](#) (PIPEDA) (Canada 2000, c.5). Personal information provided in the recruitment process is used only for that process and is not to be sold, leased or disclosed to a third party.

Committee, Sub-Committee or Task Group Chairs

1. Normally a Committee, sub-committee or task group Chair is appointed from within the current membership of the Committee:
 - a. by the Board of Elders for a Committee accountable to the Board of Elders on the recommendation of the Board of Elders, or
 - b. by the mandating Committee for a sub-committee or task group accountable to a Committee. This parent Committee may consider a recommendation from the committee itself, or invite applications, or invite the Board of Elders to make the decision.
2. When there is a vacancy in a Committee Chair position, normally all current members are invited to nominate a current member or to offer to serve as Chair.
3. If no candidate for Chair is available from within the current membership, the general recruitment process is followed. A mandating committee can name one of the existing members of its sub-committee as Chair, but it cannot bring in a brand new person.

Selection Procedures

1. An initial screening of nominees is undertaken to determine if they meet the selection criteria and to gather any additional relevant information.
2. Using spiritual discernment practices, the Senior Minister and Chair of the Board of Elders:
 - a. review the mandating Committee request, the expressions of interest and any screening reports,
 - b. consider the diversity of the Committee with respect to gender, race, ethnicity, age, geography, and vocations, placing special emphasis on those who have been historically excluded from positions of influence and authority, and
 - c. recommend appointments to the Board of Elders.
3. The Board of Elders makes the appointments (B 7.8.3).
4. Appointment letters are sent to members confirming their appointment, the length of their term, and providing related information about the Committee.
5. With the agreement of the member, appointments are posted on Metropolitan's website.

Member Support

1. Members receive an orientation tailored to their assignment and in keeping with basic adult education principles.
2. Each Committee relays specific information on the Committee, sub-committee or task group to new members.
3. Mentors are available to assist chairs and members as required.
4. Resource staff persons or designates provide support to Committee members in carrying out their responsibilities.
5. Members are encouraged to receive and provide continuous feedback on their participation.
6. Formal assessments of Committee and work progress are completed annually.
7. A variety of resources and educational opportunities may be available to assist in leader formation.

Recognition

1. Members who have completed their terms are interviewed, invited to reflect on their experience and sense of call to serve Metropolitan in other ways.
2. The contributions of Committee members are reported to the Board of Elders.
3. Outgoing members receive a formal letter or other expression of appreciation from the Senior Minister.

Definitions

Adherent	A person who contributes regularly to the life and work of the congregation but is not a member or full member. Many people establish long-standing, committee relationships with congregations without formally becoming “full members.” These people are often valued participants in the life of congregations as “adherents.” The governing body – the Board of Elders at Metropolitan – is responsible for deciding who is an adherent (B.3.4.2).
Full Member	A person becomes a full member of the congregation with the approval of the <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Board of Elders, orb. Congregation, if the congregation decides to take on this responsibility (B.3.3.1).
Member	Child of a full member, and a child who has been baptized but has not yet become a full member of the congregation (B.3.2).
Membership	This happens in the church at the congregational level. That is, to be a lay member of the United Church, one must be a member of a congregation of the United Church (B.1.1).
Mandating Committee	The “parent committee” to whom the committee in question is accountable. The one that has supervisory responsibility for a committee. For example, the Finance Team is the mandating committee of the Memorial Fund Committee; M&P Committee is accountable to the Board of Elders.

Related Metropolitan Documents

- Conflict of Interest
- Relevant Committee Terms of Reference

Related Documents/External Resources

- [Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act](#) (PIPEDA) (Canada 2000, c.5)
- United Church of Canada’s [The Manual 2013](#)
- United Church of Canada’s 1.08 Committee Membership document

* Such references are found in *The Manual 2013*

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP	
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