



*Westwood
Unitarian
Congregation*

Handbook for Committee Chairs

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info@westwoodunitarian.ca

www.westwoodunitarian.ca

Committee Name: _____

Chair/Contact Person: _____

Board Liaison: _____

Budget: \$ _____

\$ _____

\$ _____

\$ _____

Important Dates at a Glance

- **July 1:** beginning of church fiscal year
- **November 15:** terms of reference updates due (to administrator)
- **January 15:** budget requests due (to treasurer)
- **March 1:** beginning of Stewardship month
- **March 31:** Endowment Fund grant requests due (to EF trustees)
- **April 15:** annual reports due (to administrator)
- **May (last Sunday):** Annual General Meeting
- **June (first weekend):** board retreat
- **June 15:** expense reimbursement claims due (to administrator)

This handbook was prepared by the administrator, Suzanne Grant, for the Board of Trustees, and approved June 2, 2010

Organizational Structure

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the effective management of the affairs of Westwood Unitarian Society. Management of this not-for-profit organization involves¹:

- ensuring that the objectives of the organization are properly carried out;
- setting long-range objectives and strategic plans for the organization;
- being responsible for all aspects of the organization's operations;
- ensuring the organization's financial stability and overall performance; and
- supervising staff

The Board of Trustees divides its responsibilities among the board as a whole, staff, committees, and other working groups to carry out Westwood's programs according to its governing principles and policies.

Terms of Reference

A committee's purpose, membership, and responsibilities are defined by its terms of reference. It is recommended that committees review their terms of reference annually in the fall, and that updates be submitted to the administrator by November 15 so that they may be approved at the December meeting of the Board of Trustees. Terms of reference are kept on file by the administrator and are posted on Westwood's online organizational guide.

Budgeting

The annual budget is planned by the Board of Trustees and voted on by the congregation at the Annual General Meeting on the last Sunday of May. In planning your committee's budget requests please consider a reasonable plan of how that money will be used within the next year. Money left at the end of the fiscal year does not carry forward to the next year (with the exception of fundraising). Budget requests must be submitted to the Treasurer by January 15 so that an overall budget plan may be discussed at the February meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Annual Reports

Committees are required to submit an annual report describing their activities and achievements over the past year and any plans for future work. Annual reports must be submitted to the administrator by April 15 to be included in the packages sent out for the Annual General Meeting.

Expense Reimbursement

Expenses incurred on behalf of a committee, and within the committee's budget, may be submitted to the administrator for reimbursement. Expense reimbursement forms are available on Westwood's website in the "Forms" section ("Communicate" menu → "Documents & Forms") and hard copies are posted on the bulletin board outside the office. All expenses for which reimbursement is requested should be authorized by the committee. The completed form with receipts attached should be put in the administrator's mailbox in the church office.

¹ Adapted from the *Primer for Directors of Not-for-Profit Corporations: Rights, Duties, and Practises*. Published by Industry Canada 2002.

Committees are requested to be fiscally responsible and to minimize expenses wherever possible. It is the committee's responsibility to monitor the spending of your budget. If in doubt, you may contact the administrator who keeps track of these records officially. The fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30. *Please submit all receipts by June 15 to ensure that your expenses are charged to the correct church year. Receipts from June 15-30 must be submitted no later than July 15 to obtain reimbursement.*

Fundraising

Adequate records must be kept for all monies collected from fundraising – date collected, amount, purpose for the money, etc – and all money and documentation must be submitted to the administrator. It is good practice for two people to count and verify the money collected. Money collection forms can be found in the green binder labelled “Offertory Reports” in the church office.

Board Liaisons¹

All committees are assigned a liaison from the Board of Trustees in July for the upcoming church year. The board liaison will introduce him/herself to the committee. The board liaison is intended to function as a facilitator of communication between the committee and the Board. The board liaison is not considered to be a member of the committee, but committees are encouraged to invite board liaisons to participate in committee meetings and communications in the same way as regular members.

Council of Chairs Meetings

The board will schedule at least one Council of Chairs meeting a year, in which representatives from all of Westwood's committees, staff, and other working groups may have an opportunity to connect and communicate.

Actions Requiring Board Approval

If any of the following actions are taken, they must be presented for approval at a regular board meeting.

1. Creation of or revisions to committee terms of reference
2. Formulating policy for the committee or recommended policy for the congregation
3. Financial requests outside of the regular budgeting process

Reporting

Every regular board meeting agenda includes time to hear about any updates from committees. The committee may choose to have their board liaison present an update or action item at the board meeting or may send a representative from the committee to do so. There is no requirement for regular reporting other than the annual report, but the Board may request interim reports or final reports of projects at their discretion.

¹ For more information on board liaison roles, refer to Board Policy #12.

Succession Planning

Committees are encouraged to actively recruit and orient new members and to support existing members in transitions to new leadership roles. Maintaining and passing on good records of committee activities are important steps in facilitating the succession process, along with other measures of interpersonal support. The committee must inform the Board if a leadership transition will be taking place and may request help from the Board in recruiting new leadership if needed.

Booking Space at Westwood

Westwood's administrator maintains an online calendar of all events happening in the building. Bookings for meeting space at Westwood must be made through the administrator. Committee chairs are welcome to viewing access of the calendar by request to the administrator.

Mailboxes

Some committees have a designated mailbox in the office. There is also a congregational mailbox in the office which is an alphabetic accordion file.

Building Keys

If needed for committee activities, building keys can be signed out from the administrator with a \$20 deposit.

Email Aliases

Many of Westwood's working and social groups have email aliases such as committee@westwoodunitarian.ca (see next page). To check on the status of your committee's email alias or to update its recipients, please contact the website volunteer (web@westwoodunitarian.ca) or the administrator.

Helpful People

If you have any questions in your new leadership role, your outgoing committee chair, board liaison, or other committee members can guide you. The minister, administrator, and director of children's religious education are also excellent sources of information.

Promoting Your Work and Events

Consider writing an article for the newsletter and/or website or a short note for the Sunday announcements describing the success of events your committee has hosted, or advertising upcoming events, or reflecting on the meaning of your group's work, or just getting the word out about what you do. It is a great way to strengthen the value people see in the church, attract newcomers, acknowledge volunteers, and highlight the great work we all do in our church community. The newsletter deadline is the **15th of the month** (send to newsletter@westwoodunitarian.ca), and Sunday announcements are due by **9:00 am on Friday** (send to info@westwoodunitarian.ca). Information for the website can be submitted to web@westwoodunitarian.ca.

Westwood's Working Groups and Email Aliases¹

Minister

Minister..... anne@...

Board of Trustees board@...

President..... president@...

Vice-President..... vp@...

Treasurer..... treasurer@...

Secretary..... secretary@...

Staff

Administrator info@...

Director of Children's Religious Education kids@...

Committees/Groups

Adult Religious Education adults@...

Building & Grounds..... buildingandgrounds@...

Care & Connections careandconnections@...

Chalice Circles chalicecircles@...

Children & Youth Religious Education (CYRE)

- Children's program kids@...

- Youth program..... youth@...

Choir choir@...

Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM)..... cosm@...

Communications..... communications@...

- Newsletter..... newsletter@...

- Website web@...

Denominational Affairs

Earth-Centred Spirituality Group..... earthcentred@...

Endowment Fund

Financial Review

Hospitality..... hospitality@...

Lay Chaplaincy..... lccommittee@...

- Lay Chaplain..... laychaplain@...

Library library@...

Long-Range Planning

Membership (Pathways to Spiritual Community) pathways@...

Nomination

Simplicity Circle simplicitycircle@...

Social Justice sjc@...

Spinning the Web Dinners..... spinningtheweb@...

Stewardship..... stewardship@...

UUGuys..... uuguys@...

Welcoming Congregation queer@...

Worship..... worship@...

- Winter solstice wintersolstice@...

- Winter solstice publicity..... solsticepublicity@...

- Music scheduling musicschedule@...

¹ All email aliases end with @westwoodunitarian.ca

Resources

- Westwood's website: www.westwoodunitarian.ca
Email submissions to web@westwoodunitarian.ca
- Westwood's Online Organizational Guide (on Westwood's website)
Bylaws, terms of reference, board policies and more
- Documents filed/maintained by administrator (partial list):
 - List of Committees and Contacts
 - Committee Terms of Reference
 - Westwood Procedures
 - Forms
 - Budgets
 - Annual Reports
 - Board Meeting Minutes
 - Annual General Meeting Minutes
 - Special Congregational Meeting Minutes

These documents are available to all members by request. This is a partial list...if you are looking for other information not listed here, please check with the administrator.

- Building Use Calendar
Committee chairs are welcome to viewing access of the calendar by request to the administrator.
- Westwood's Newsletter
Email submissions to newsletter@westwoodunitarian.ca by the 15th of the month.
- Canadian Unitarian Council: www.cuc.ca
- Unitarian Universalist Association: www.uua.org
- Unitarian Church of Edmonton: www.uce.ca
- Unitarian Chaplain at University of Alberta: Rev. Audrey Brooks (780-489-8842)