**Review of Executive Structure** *(with notes from discussion groups)*

After 5 years of living into our new structure, the Nominations Team was given the task at the Spring General Meeting in 2023 to review concerns that have been expressed about the way the current Executive is elected, functions and engages with other bodies of the Regional Council. This was also emphasized in the Strategic Plan adopted this fall.

The issues that have been raised include the following:

* The Executive is too big (19 representatives plus staff who serve as non-voting corresponding members)
* The Executive is composed primarily of people who are not elected by the members of the Regional Council
  + 8 of the 19 are elected by the Regional Council membership (three of which are President, President-Elect and Past President)
  + 9 representatives are named by Leadership Teams and other bodies and accepted with the full report of the Nominations Team at the Spring Meeting
  + the Treasurer is a non-elected position without a term
  + and the Regional Executive Minister is an employee without a term
* Leadership Team membership is independently established and is not subject to elections. They each find their own ways to bring in members. They propose their representatives to the Executive which are formally approved at the Spring General Meeting.
* Our structure facilitates the nomination of people who are already well-connected within the Regional Council.
* Diversity at the Executive is difficult for the Nominations Committee to achieve when preparing their list since they have no ability to determine who will occupy 11 of the 19 positions.
* Some decisions take too much time to go through the process of a Leadership Team and then the Executive. There would be benefits to having Commissions who can take final decisions rather than a two-step process.

The benefits of the current model that have been expressed:

* There are strong connections between the Leadership Teams and other bodies with the Executive because the Leadership Teams and other bodies are the ones who name people to represent them at the Executive.
* Having more voices at the table can help bring different perspectives to the discussions.
* Allowing other bodies to name people to the Executive provides them with direct authority, and can be less ‘top-down’ in the relationship between the Team and the Executive, even though they are not chosen by the full court.
* Representation on the Executive with separate legal entities like La Table and Finance & Extension Board would be complicated under other models.

The Nominations Team has looked at other Regional Council structures and models. Three possible have been discussed to date, and an entirely new model may yet emerge. We seek your feedback and conversation on these preliminary ideas.

**GENERAL COMMENTS FROM DISCUSSION GROUPS**

* + - The executive structure should contribute to a more accessible relationship with all the local faith communities. On that note, monthly meetings precedes bi-monthly meetings.
    - The structure should reflect not only clarity in structure and communication but also diversity in the composition of executive members.
    - What is at stake, concerning the structure, is the question how to achieve and maintain a healthy balance between the regional council executive and the local communities of faith.
    - The similarities and differences among the 3 models should be fleshed out!
    - The relationship and history with la Table should be fleshed out!
    - What is the goal for less people and how do this be implemented?
    - Why treasurers should vote? They don’t need to vote! They are taking professional role instead of voting.
    - We need experienced people. What is the problem with the 19 people? What if someone’s sick and thus unable to fulfill the mandate? Is there a backup?
    - How to prepare and encourage continuity in guidance, experience, and efficiency?
    - How do we have people with experience to encourage new people?
    - A suggested model for the President roles, because it is too bad to have no turnovers for people who want to offer their leadership.
  + President-Elect (1 yr)—then President (2 yrs)—after that Past President (1 yr)—and finally “sub-executives”—a group constituted by former executive ministers.
  + The four-year cycle of President roles enables training from the experienced to the new.
  + The Past-President should make sure new people have the skills to do their jobs.
  + “sub-executives” work as an emergency backup.
  + This model enhances consistency and continuity. Intimacy builds up trust. Intimacy empowers, inspires, and motivates.
* We need reinforced communications (in channel and effect):
  + Regular updates
  + Executives work as sounding board for local communities of faith
  + Clarity and transparency in decision-making process
* Will the models cancel reinforced communications stated in the previous point? Consults to local communities of faith shouldn’t be cancelled!
* Nominations team should find enough people to fulfill the goal!
* It is immense pressure for new-comers to vote without knowing people they vote for. We thus need bios and each person’s explanation to their plans/goals.
* The nomination process:
  + Nominations team should accept people’s self-nomination with references.
  + Nominations team should also accept ex officio members as a pool of excellent people.

**Model 1 (Representation from Executive into Leadership Teams)**

* A group of 10 people are elected annually at the Regional Council Spring Meeting.
* From within this group of 10, people are chosen to sit on Leadership Teams and other bodies to be the connecting point/reporting back.
* The President is chosen from amongst the 10 to serve for that year. A vote amongst the members of the Executive is held each year. There is no President-Elect position and no Past President requirement
* The terms would be staggered over three years (3 elected the first year, 3 the second year and 4 the third year)
* The Treasurer would be a corresponding member (non-voting)

**COMMENTS FROM DISCUSSION GROUPS**

**PROS**

* Having a smaller group may be more effective
* Everyone’s elected, including the President
* Stagger style helps with sustainability.
* Likely result in more diversity
* Need a strong nominating committee
* Easier to find 10 than 19

**CONS**

* There’s a lack of diversity, which should be mentioned and carefully carried out.
* There is not enough experience people and we need more. It is a bad idea to eliminate the President-Elect and limit all the members to 10 people.
* The responsibilities, particularly the decision-making, seems too huge for only 10 people.
* The term for President is too short—it should be at least THREE years!
* Too few for work involved
* If more than 10 leadership teams would have to double up
* Might not get good match with leadership team
* Might also limit diversity
* Difficult to get quorum if 2 or 3 are missing

**QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

* We'd have to find a way to ensure representation (1 person from the Table, 1 young person, 1 indigenous), but this representation should not be provided by a single person.)
* It requires trust granted to the Nomination Team
* All members are volunteer-based.
* Are the Exec minister and Treasurer part of the 10 or is it 10 + 2?
* Would the legal responsibilities of the chair remain the same?
* Is it reasonable to trust the Executive to elect our chair?
* Model 1 should be established in the clarity of Model 2.

**Model 2 (Representation for Subject Matters Formally Nominated)**

* Executive is a group of 13 members, almost all elected by Regional Council (except for Treasurer, La Table rep and Regional Executive Minister)
* Subject Matter Leads are elected as part of the nominations process
* Subject Matter Leads are focused on areas of work rather than by Leadership Team
* Four Subject Matter Leads elected: Policy/Strategy, Supporting Ministry, Finance and Property, Human Resources
  + Policy/Strategy = Strategy Oversight and Implementation, Policy Development, Emerging Ministry Support, Event Planning
  + Supporting Ministry = Community of Faith Support and Visitation, Justice, Right Relations, Youth ministry, Cluster development, hub ministries
  + Finance and Property Commission = Strategic Funding, Property Strategy, Treasury and Investment, Finance, Granting and Enabling Joint Committee
  + Human Resources Commission = Pastoral Relations, Supervision, Liaisons, Training, LLWL
* President (nominated and elected), Past President, Treasurer, La Table Rep and Executive Minister are Executive members
* Five Members at Large elected at Regional Council meetings.

**COMMENTS FROM DISCUSSION GROUPS**

**PROS**

* It's a good idea for La Table to have a representative.
* Having commissions can facilitate the work.
* The structure design gives the best clarity in representation.
* 13 members in number increases “circulation” and enables “getting new blood.”
* The past President becomes very important to make sure there’s a continuity in terms of strategy and carrying on the plans.
* Needs robust Nominating committee
* Would require leadership teams to exercise authority

**CONS**

* A one-year term is not enough. We prefer 3-year terms.
* It still undermines the efficiency merited from the experience people!
* If someone gets in fresh, there is no continuity guaranteed!
* The structure does not reflect guidance.
* A lot of work for Subject matter leads who also need excellent communication skills
* Would result in being very staff driven
* Too much authority for commissions.
* Note that La Table is actually a national body.

**QUESTIONS / COMMENTS**

* Numbers seem to add to 14 (4 + 5 + Pres + pastP + Treas + Exec min + La Table)
* How are the subject matter leads nominated? Any connection to leadership teams?
* Would the leadership teams maintain independence?
* Could one person do 2 roles?
* Would Treasurer have a vote?

**Model 3 (Shared Commission/Executive)**

* Executive is a body of 12 members composed of 6 people representing commissions, 6 people who are members at large
* Members at large would meet every month and be joined by the 6 members of commissions every second month
* The six commissions would be:
* Finance and Extension Board (GELT would be a team of F&E)
* La Table des ministères en français
* Living into Right Relations
* First Third Ministries
* Justice and Community
* Pastoral Relations
* The responsibilities of the Members at Large would be:
* Connect and empower the Nominations Team
* Connect and empower the Planning Team
* Connect and empower the Strategic Planning Team
* Connect and empower Regional Council staff
* President role is chosen from within and amongst the members of the Executive on an annual basis.

**COMMENTS FROM DISCUSSION GROUPS**

**PROS**

* Saves meeting time
* Liberates leadership teams from having to ask for authority

**CONS**

* We're not sure about the effectiveness of six people meeting every month and twelve people meeting every two months.
* Lose Checks and balances
* F&E has too much independent power
* La table is a national body and cannot be a commission of the RC
* Pastoral Relations needs check and balance of Executive approval
* The pressure of workload and achievement is unsustainable for the President who is chosen ANNUALLY!
* The job description of treasurer requires a more nuanced interpretation.
* Meeting bi-monthly is not CONSISTENT enough to transmit information, because they don’t meet 12 months!

**QUESTIONS / COMMENTS**

* La Table is different from any other commission. It is a national commission, not a commission of the Nakonha:ka Regional Council. The way it's currently described suggests that La Table is a commission of the RC. We also need to make sure that the representative from La Table is a member of the RC and not.
* It's better to specify the mandate - 3-year terms or staggered renewals.
* Renewable mandates once... after which you have to take a break before running again.
* What is the level of authority for a commission?
* Why not half the commissions at each meeting?
* How are the commissions accountable?
* Who does the RC elect?
* Do we elect the commission members?
* Who does something like the Spirit camp report to?