

MENNONITE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA
Board Meeting, CMU, Winnipeg, Manitoba
January 23, 2026
DRAFT

Present: 21

Aileen Friesen, Plett Historical Research Foundation
Alf Redekopp, Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario
Ben Nobbs-Thiessen, Chair of Mennonite Studies, University of Winnipeg
Bruce Guenther, Mennonite Historical Society of Canada Executive member
Carina Gallardo, Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies
Conrad Stoesz, Mennonite Church Canada
Dave Neufeldt, Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta
David Klippenstein, Guest
Ed Krahn, Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society
Jake Buhler, Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan
Jennifer Martens, Mennonite Heritage Museum and Mennonite Historical Society of BC
Jeremy Wiebe, Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, Treasurer
John Reddekopp, Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan
Katie Harder, Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta
Laureen Harder-Gissing, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada and Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario
Linda Klassen, Mennonite Historical Society of BC,
Lucille Marr, Société d'histoire mennonite du Québec
Robert Goertzen, Mennonite Heritage Village
Rob Tiessen, Guest
Sara Dyck, Mennonite Church Canada
Troy Osborne, Institute of Anabaptist and Mennonite Studies

1. **Welcome** – Conrad Stoesz opened the meeting. People attending were asked to sign in with name, email and organization they are representing.

2. **Approval of agenda** – the agenda was approved.

3. **Minutes**: Linda Klassen read the minutes of January 16, 2025.

MOTION to accept the minutes as presented: Linda Klassen, S: Ben Nobbs-Thiessen **CARRIED.**

4. **Business arising** – there was no new business.

5. **Approval of committee Roster**:

a. A People of Diversity Committee (book project): Ben Nobbs-Thiessen (chair), Jeremy Wiebe, Laureen Harder-Gissing, Brian Froese, Lucille Marr, Conrad Stoesz, Bruce Guenther.

b. Archives Committee: Laureen Harder-Gissing (chair) MHSO, Zacharie Leclair SHMQ, Conrad Stoesz, MHA, Carina Gallardo, CMBS, Jake Buhler, MHSS, Rob Tiessen, MHSA, Linda Klassen, MHSBC.

c. Divergent Voices of Canadian Mennonites: Ben Nobbs-Thiessen (chair) Brian Froese, Lucille Marr, Leonard Doell, Laureen Harder-Gissing, Jeremy Wiebe, Bruce Guenther, Ruth Plett.

d. MAID Management Committee: Conrad Stoesz (chair) Laureen Harder-Gissing, Alf Redekopp, Hannah Keeney, John Thiesen.

e. MHSC GAMEO Committee: Laureen Harder-Gissing (chair), Aileen Friesen, Bert Friesen, Richard Thiessen and Alf Redekopp.

f. Russlaender Documentary Committee: Aileen Friesen, Conrad Stoesz, Richard Thiessen, Jeremy Wiebe, David Y. Neufeld (Ontario).

g. Website Committee: Andrew Klassen Brown (chair), Jeremy Wiebe.

h. Mennonite Diversity Committee: Aileen Friesen, Brian Froese, Jeremy Wiebe, David Y. Neufeld. Bruce Gunther. Aileen announced that she is resigning as chair. Ed Krahn has offered to co-chair the committee. The current committee will meet and decide how to move forward. They will need to check out their mandate. The final slate of officers will be announced tomorrow.

MOTION to accept the slate as presented: Alf Redekop S: Dave Neufeldt **CARRIED**.

6. **MHSC Award of Excellence** – Bert Friesen was nominated by MMHS. The executive supports the nomination and recommends that he receive the award. **MOTION**: Ben Nobbs-Thiessen S: Lucille Marr. **CARRIED**.

7. **Suggestions** – The Committee and members are invited to bring items where a decision and/or extra discussion would be beneficial to the board. Laureen suggested a visioning discussion tomorrow. She encouraged the group to think about possibilities. The question: The Society meets in 2036, what do we look like? What have we done? What are we thinking about doing?

8. **Financial review** – Jeremy Wiebe. The Statement of Financial position: the balance sheet reports an operating fund balance of \$22,986 in unrestricted funds. The unrestricted funds are for general society activities. The Russlaender Documentary Committee shows a balance of \$14,573. DVCM receives funds from MCC and uses the money for DVCM activities such as conferences and the APOD book. The accounts receivable line shows amounts invoiced to October 31, 2025. These are mostly outstanding member fees and GST. Most of these were received after October 31, 2025.

The Russlaender Documentary Committee balance of \$14,573 is still to be spent. It's made up of a designated gift of \$10,000, a \$4,000 GST refund and several smaller donations. The sum of \$2,000 will be made available to each of the six provinces represented by MHSC for eligible expenses related to screening events, including travel expenses for speakers, venue rental, catering and promotions. Organizing screening events is up to local organizations. Make the event your own. Screenings are open to the public with free admission. The Commemorate Canada grant stipulates that public events must be free of charge. Receiving donations is fine. Societies must submit receipts to the MHSC treasurer in order to be reimbursed. The film will not be available for sale, but it will be posted to CTMS's Youtube channel. A condition of the grant is that the project described to them is wrapped up by March, 31, 2026. It must be widely and publicly available on the internet. Posters and social media ads will be in both English and French.

Q: Who is the owner of film?

A: Centre for Transnational Mennonite Studies and Mennonite Historical Society of Canada.

9. **Nominating Committee Report** – The committee reported that all executive positions remain the same as last year.

10. **MHSC meeting Schedule** – Next year's AGM will be held in Abbotsford, BC. The 2028 meeting will be in Winnipeg and 2029 in Montreal.

11. **Other** – A discussion of MCC's book, *Mennonite Central Committee in Canada: A History*, by Esther Epp-Tiessen, 2013. CMU has asked our permission to digitize this book. Esther Epp has given her permission.

MOTION: that we give CMU permission to digitize the book: Ben Nobbs-Thiessen S: Lucille Marr
CARRIED.

12. **Travel policy** – Jeremy Wiebe updated us on the revised travel policy. The general practice has been to bill the sending societies half of the travel costs for their attending members. The executive often includes at least two members who don't represent any other society. The long-standing practice has been that these plus the president's costs are fully covered. Usually there are two people who represent an organization and must travel anyway. The executive recommends that all officers are fully covered by MHSC. This would not have a large impact on our budget. These are guidelines. This also frees up an organization to send another member.

Comment: since this involves money, it should be voted on.

The revision reads:

In the interest of facilitating travel by board members and officers to the Society's Annual Meeting, at the discretion of the executive, reimbursement will be provided to board members for expenses incurred for travel to the meeting. Eligible expenses include the cost of transportation (including luggage fees), meals, and lodging.

MOTION: To approve the revised guidelines as presented: Ben Nobbs-Thiessen S: Robert Goertzen
CARRIED

13. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted
by Linda Klassen