

Minutes of the Conference Call Board Meeting—May 1, 2014
Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers and Partners Association

Present: Jim Eller, Doug Gallager, Dick Gilbert, Paul L'Herrou, Liz McMaster, Margi Nasemann, Marcia Olsen, Judy Welles, John Weston

CENTERING – John shared a reading by William James
CHECK IN: personal updates

REPORTS: additions to written reports, which follow these minutes.

President – Dick Gilbert

Dick has obtained a new container for our banner, which he'll have at GA.

Vice-President – Jim Eller

For the luncheon at GA Jim has received 15 reservations; 15 have declined. The deadline for reservations is June 10th.

Secretary – Marcia Olsen

The minutes of the 4/13/14 conference call were approved with a few typo corrections.

Treasurer – Paul L'Herrou

Paul reviewed the current Financial Report (see reports). He has tested a couple donations through PayPal. The percentage that PayPal charges depends on the amount; large amounts have a smaller percentage cost. Donations given through PayPal go into our account with PayPal, with Paul receiving an email to inform him of the contribution. He can transfer those funds to our account upon request. The information sent to him is name and email, but no address. It was suggested that perhaps there could be a way for the contributor to add a little more for the PayPal fee (like a Shipping and Handling fee); **Paul will look into that.**

Caring Network Coordinator – Margi Nasemann

Several of the Area Coordinators have expressed frustration about not hearing from people in their areas after contacting them. Margi will call each Coordinator to encourage them in their work. She is looking for someone to replace Shirley Ranck in the Bay Area Coastal (California). Marcia suggested that perhaps the Bay Area Coastal and Bay Area Inland groups could be combined. (That would make it large but the current areas do not really follow geography.)

At-Large – Liz McMaster

Liz shared how she has been dealing with a member; help has been requested of others.

At-Large – John Weston

IRS and the Housing Allowance: no further info

Awards

We discussed when we should give the UURMaPA Unsung Hero and Creative Sageing awards. At GA? At a conference? Be flexible, depending on the circumstances, such as if the recipient would be attending GA or a conference. We decided to table further discussion until the June call, to see who has registered for GA (and possibly Attleboro). We'd also like to find more ways to publicize the awards, such as in the UUMA News or *UU World*.

John reminded us that the Board gives the Unsung Hero award. Be thinking of retired colleagues or partners to nominate. John will send Marcia copy to post to the Announce-List later in May. *Elderberries* includes an invitation for nominations in the current issue.

Conferences

Robbie Walsh will give his Odyssey at the Attleboro Conference.

The Florida conference in February 2015 is the Board's responsibility. We brainstormed ideas for the program; **the Program Committee (Jim, Margi Judy, John) will meet by conference call soon.** Dick suggested that Board members could take on the various program aspects, such as leading worship services.

Newsletter – Judy Welles

The current newsletter proof is ready and she will check it later today. She expressed concern that this 20-page issue (up from 16 pages) costs more; are we still within budget? **She will discuss this with Paul.** Liz asked what percentage of households are receiving it electronically; **Marcia will send those figures to the Board.**

Judy said that bulk mailing requires 200 pieces. Marcia had thought it was 250. Since we mail more than 200 to our own U.S. members, prior to the summer issue **Marcia will change the District Exec mailing to electronic** and see if the UUA could send out the email on accessing *Elderberries*.

At-Large – Doug Gallager – Good Offices

There is a conference call on 5/13; the goal is to have Good Offices people selected by September.

Judy heard about a situation where the partner of a retired minister has continued to be active in the congregation, causing some problems. This is an issue that needs to be brought up with ministers planning to retire. Jim commented that partners are not under the auspices of the UUMA or UUA, so they want UURMaPA to handle such situations, but by then it is too late for education. Dick's workshop on planning for retirement was given at GA 2013 but will not be this year.

Judy suggested that perhaps an article for UUMPs (current ministers and partners' group) might help; **Judy will ask Chris Backus about writing something** to explain why it matters that partners also stay away following retirement. She also suggested that Keith Kron, in training interim ministers could suggest that if they encounter such a problem they should contact us or others for help (such as Good Offices). As John said, this needs to be an annual discussion, and all groups need to address these issues. We might include something in the UUMA News, and Dick can be sure to invite partners to participate in his workshop when he gives it.

ORIENTATION of new Board members for June conference call.

Dick will invite Judy Gibson and Joel Weaver to the June Conference Call.

It was suggested that we might each say a bit about what our job entails. **Marcia will be sending them documents and will suggest they review the Job Descriptions in the Operating Procedures.**

OTHER BUSINESS

Video-Conferencing: Judy reported that the support group she's in uses Google Group for conference calls. Each participant needs to have a gmail account and goes to Google Hangout to dial in, etc. **Jim will practice with each of us, to learn the technology.**

Board liaisons to our off-Board volunteer leadership positions, such as webmaster, membership coordinator, obit-writers, historian. Tabled until June. (“Membership Coordinator” is what Marcia has named the job she will continue after leaving the Board; it encompasses maintaining the database, directory, and Announce-List, preparing mailings, etc. She will talk with Judy Gibson about handling the obituaries and enable her to post to the Announce-List.)

Calendar: Dick will indicate that the presentation of Awards is flexible.

Pending Issues: Marcia urged everyone to check previous minutes to review the action commitments they have made. She suggested that if they reference items in their report, even if to say that they didn’t get to that item yet, then there will be no “pending” items (which could also be included as “old business” from previous calls). We’re pretty well caught up through March.

Next conference-call meeting is **Thursday, June 5, 2014, 4:00-5:30pm ET**

Respectfully submitted,
Marcia Olsen, Secretary

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**REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR 4/3/4014 CONFERENCE CALL**

**President: Dick Gilbert**

1. Sent two letters of condolence.
2. Sent three “welcome to retirement” packets with letter, “Retirement Guide” and the latest “UURMAPA Directory.”
3. Continuing work on retirement seminar for St. Lawrence chapter, as well as a generic seminar. Trial run will be at Collegial Conversations.
4. We have been accepted to do a Collegial Conversation at GA UUMA Professional Days and to hand out our basic brochure
5. Planning to purchase a more permanent container for our UURMAPA banner which we carry during the parade of banners at opening GA ceremony.
6. Working on agenda/ceremony for UURMaPA Lunch at GA.
7. Working with Judy re. a Rite of Retirement. Nothing new to report.
8. The usual voluminous correspondence with you and many others.
9. Updated calendar – latest version is attached.
10. Contacted Richard Nugent about adding our name as an *amicus curiae* in the ongoing litigation on the clergy housing allowance. Our name was added.
11. Submitted *Elderberries* column.

**Vice-President: Jim Eller**

GA: 46 email invitations have gone out to newly retiring ministers and their partners. Invitations have also gone out to Sarah Lammert, Richard Nugent, and Linda Rose. The spring *Elderberries* issue will have the invitation for our general membership. We usually have about 30-35 in attendance, but given the geography, I expect we will see some increase in participation.

I have signed up to attend the Good Offices training as our UURMaPa representative, as fill in for Doug in this capacity.

We are on for the UUMA professional days conversations. Dick is set to lead this workshop, and I am planning to participate.

We have been invited as usual to attend the UU Department of Ministry GA luncheon for surviving family members of diseased UU ministerial colleagues. I expect Dick and I will both attend, in that it does not conflict with our UURMaPa luncheon or the Service of the Living Tradition rehearsal, as far as I know.

**Secretary: Marcia Olsen**

1. I have gone back through the 2012 and 2013 Minutes, inserting Reports after the Minutes so they are one document for each month (2014 is already that way). Duane will post the Minutes each month, once they are approved. I am also reviewing files so I will send Judy Gibson only those she really needs.
2. The password has been removed from the newsletter on our website and the Announcement of the release of the Spring issue of *Elderberries* will include a direct link for easy retrieval. A database with mailing information has been sent to Minuteman for the printed newsletters.
3. I will talk with Judy Gibson about who will handle the obituaries. I would like her to be the other person who can post to the Announce-List, although I will continue to maintain the list. Then she can post obituaries from Jay or Chris, or other announcements from the Board.
4. Pending: review what information to send to Joel and Judy, such as bylaws and operating procedures, etc. and send those soon.

Non-“secretarial”:

5. Seabeck Conference May 13-15: we have 18 signed up and paid: 16 UURMaPA members plus 2 caregivers who will be with us for meals. It looks like we may stay in the black financially on this one since we’re not paying a presenter. We’ll follow a “covenant group” format for the Wednesday morning program on “How Do We Experience Beauty in Our Lives”, and Andy and Chris Backus have planned a hands-on project for Wednesday afternoon. Shirley Ranck will give her Odyssey that evening. We have three worship services planned; participants are Sylvia Falconer, Chris and Andy Backus, and Ev Morris (and others). Duane and Judy are bringing our Social Hour goodies. Barbara Burke is serving as Registrar. And we’re hoping for great May weather!
6. Membership: I handle updates as I receive them. I sent Jim Eller a list of new members since last June to invite folks to the GA luncheon. I had Duane post an updated Directory

on 4/24. The next one will be around June 1<sup>st</sup> and I will update the Board page to show the new members.

**Treasurer: Paul L’Herrou**

The spring appeal letter work was completed and all letters have gone out. A large number of new contributions have arrived and continue to arrive in response to the spring appeal letter and I have begun to process the checks.

I had a few communications in regard to scholarships for the Seabeck Conference participants.

I worked with Duane Fickeisen to open a PayPal account for UURMaPA and Duane has installed a contribution button on our website. If you go to the UURMaPA homepage, you will find the words “How you can help:” and one of the options below is “Give Financially”. When you click on those words, you are taken to a PayPal button labeled “Make a Donation.” On Sunday I made my spring contribution and I am awaiting the transaction to complete the circle, so I can see if it is readily identifiable when it arrives in our bank account and also see how big a bite PayPal takes out.

I have now received a quote of \$381 for liability insurance for the Florida conference – an unwelcome additional expense

When I first set up our Endowment account in the UUA Common Endowment Fund, I understood that we would only receive quarterly reports. When I did not receive a report at the end of March, I discovered that I had not taken the last step to register so that I could go online each month to get our monthly report. I have now done so and have retrieved the reports for the first three months. We began with an investment of \$20,000. In January we dropped to \$19,637.24. The market rallied in February and our value climbed to \$20,292.29. Performance in March was essentially static, giving us a month end value of \$20,284.85.

**Financial Report as of April 30, 2014**

**Checking Account**

|                                                |              |             |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| March ending balance                           |              | \$ 9,145.11 |
| Income: Member donations                       | 2,565.00     |             |
| Expense: Appeal Letter- Staples – print labels | 33.32        |             |
| - Minuteman Press                              | 158.38       |             |
| - USPS stamps                                  | 138.90       |             |
| General Assembly – Jim Eller reservations      | 717.00       |             |
| Caring Network – Iska Cole                     | <u>62.08</u> |             |
| Total Expenses: _                              | 1,109.68     |             |
| April ending balance                           |              | \$10,600.43 |

**Money Market Account**

|                      |              |
|----------------------|--------------|
| March ending balance | \$ 40,236.38 |
| Interest earned      | <u>6.61</u>  |
| April ending balance | \$ 40,242.99 |

**Caring Network Coordinator: Margi Nasemann**

Contacted Shirley Ranck about her retiring from the job of Area Coordinator of the Bay Area Costal District and asked her to recommend another person in her area.

Contacted Maureen Thitchener about her retiring from the job of area coordinator from the St. Lawrence District. Contacted John Weston and asked him to suggest names for Area coordinator for the St. Lawrence District.

Contacted by mail Tom Chulak and Mary and Peter Gross about filling Area Coordinator positions in the St. Lawrence District and the Bay Area Costal District respectively.

Received emails about a retired minister's situation and recommended that Glen Snowden be contacted about possible financial help from the UU Society for Ministerial Relief fund. (Glen will contact her).

Had conversations with three Area Coordinators (Rhett Baird, Dorothy Meek, and Glen Snowden) and left messages for Judith Downing and Meredith Andersen.

My plan is to call all of the Area Coordinators and thank them for their continuing work in their area as well as telling them about the luncheon at GA

### **Newsletter Editor: Judy Welles**

The spring issue is at the printer, though if last time was any indication, I predict that it won't go out in the mail until May 7 or so. I will ask Duane to send the link to Marcia so that she can send out notice on UURMaPA-Announce on Thursday or Friday, May 1 or 2.

Once again, this issue is 20 pages long (as was the Fall 2013 issue). I was surprised at the amount of information that was submitted, and I added a Book Page (we have a lot of published authors among us) and a one-time (or maybe occasional) feature pairing a column by a brand-new minister looking ahead with one by a retired minister looking back.

I would prefer 16-page issues, as I think this is just an awful lot of information. Probably I'll be producing both sizes throughout the year. I'm not worried about going over budget this year, as we budgeted very generously for the newsletter, but I would like to keep costs down in general. I should be able to let you know in June the relative costs of a 16-page and a 20-page issue.

No further news from Greg Bear bout the logo. I gave notice in the Editor's column that we would have a new logo, and extended the invitation for anyone to complete the questionnaire that Greg sent to us. I warned Greg about this and suggested that he not wait for more submissions, but just get started on it anyway. If you have not submitted your questionnaire to him, please do it immediately!

### **At-Large Member – John Weston**

*Urgent items are italicized*

#### **Board Business**

Calendar matter: *when shall we bestow the Unsung UURMaPAn award*—at GA, or at the October meeting?

Amicus brief: UURMaPA joined with the UUA, the UUMA, and a diverse batch of religious bodies in appealing the lower court's finding against the constitutionality of the housing allowance.

### Unsung UURMaPAn Award

There have been expressions of interest about several possible nominees. *This is about who has served UURMaPA and its members: who comes to mind?* Looking over past Attleboro conferences, a couple more people come to mind for their contributions.

### Conferences

**Spring 2014** Northwest Conference, May 13-15 in Seabeck, organized by Marcia Olsen and Chris Lily Backus. Registration numbers 18.

**Autumn 2014** Northeast Conference, September 30-October 2 in Attleboro, organized by Carol Taylor and Joel Weaver. See the announcement in the forthcoming *Elderberries*.

The Board will meet Sept. 28-30.

**Winter 2015** Southeast Conference, February 24-26 at San Pedro Retreat Center in Orlando FL. The Board will meet February 23-24. Arrangements is staffed (Marni Harmony), Registrar is staffed (Harry Green), Program (Judy Welles, Margi Nasemann, Jim Eller, and I) is staffed but hasn't met yet. *We solicit your ideas about theme and presenters.*

### Items Discussed at the Council on Church Staff Finance

- On behalf of ministers and church staff, needs a "dashboard" to readily track aid funds over the years. I'm working on it; it's slow going.
- The Council recognizes that aid and gratuity funds available to ministers, ministers in need, retired ministers, and their partners, are not widely available to other church employees. We hope to start a conversation on this issue.

### At-Large Member: Liz McMaster

I contacted 3 Area Coordinators to inform them of new retirees in their areas.

I spoke with Paul about an email from one minister-member. Then I contacted Richard Nugent, who advised me to contact Glen Snowden. I sent Richard the email and he said he'd get back to me if he had any thoughts about it. I contacted Glen. We tried to talk by phone, but missed each other a couple of times. I left a message for him, saying I didn't know anything more than what was in her email. (I sent the email to him as well as Richard).

### At-Large Member: Douglas Gallager

I have nothing to add to last month. A GOP (Good Offices Persons) conference call is scheduled for May 13. I'll report out after that.