

Minutes of the Conference Call Board Meeting—December 4, 2014 Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers and Partners Association

Present:, Doug Gallagher, Judy Gibson, Dick Gilbert, Liz McMaster, Margi Nasemann, Joel Weaver, Judy Welles, John Weston

Absent: Jim Eller

CENTERING: John shared a reading from Edwin Muir.

CHECK IN: Board members did not do as well at confining their comments to one important thing – took longer this time for check in!

REPORTS: discussion issues and additions to written reports, which follow these minutes. *Actionable items in red. Voted items in bold.*

President – Dick Gilbert

Dick reported that as Board liaison to Historian Liz Strong, he invited her to serve another year and she has agreed.

His letters of invitation to UURMaPAs to attend the Orlando conference have resulted in several registrations; he urged other Board members to personally invite members and help swell the registration numbers.

Secretary – Judy Gibson

The minutes of the November Board meeting were approved and will be posted on the website.

Treasurer – Joel Weaver

Joel reported that there has been very little cash flow since our last meeting (his attached report gives details).

Due to his move, Joel has not been able to make arrangements for sending out the Fall fund raising letter to all UURMaPA members. Marcia has provided addresses, but the new letterhead has not yet been available, and he still needs to add info on where to send contributions. *Judy W offered to work with Joel to get the job done.*

Caring Network Coordinator – Margi Nasemann

Margi reported that in some situations where she has usually sent flowers to bereaved partners, they have requested that the money be donated to a select cause instead. *The Board will need to create a process for responding to this kind of request (next meeting agenda).*

At-Large /Caring Network – Liz McMaster

Liz reported that all arrangements have been made for awarding the Unsung UURMaPAN Hero award this month in a regional meeting, and photos will be taken for Elderberries.

At-Large /Conferences – John Weston

Orlando Conference, February 24-26, 2015 (Board meeting Feb 22-24) - John reported that there are 32 registrations so far (several being members of the Board). Our goal is 60, break even 50. Dick again urged all Board members to do some personal recruiting. *John will compose an announcement to spur more interest in Orlando and send to Judy G for UURMaPA Announce.*

Attleboro Conference, October 6-8, 2015 - John reported that Dan McKanan has agreed to offer the keynote - possible topic: the Relationship of Left wing Politics and Liberal Religion. Dan is Senior Lecturer in Divinity at Harvard Divinity School and author of [Prophetic Encounters: Religion and the American Radical Tradition](#) (Beacon Press, 2011)..The Board discussed the possibility of adding a day to the conference. Based on evaluation feedback, Monday would be preferable to Friday as additional day. Joel suggested that the cost would increase from \$200 to \$300, and we considered how to offer additional scholarship help. People

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registering could be asked to contribute to scholarship fund. **John moved that the Board approve asking the planning committee to explore possibilities for adding Monday, Oct. 5 programming to the conference, and to bring proposals for both 3 and 4 day conference programs to the Board.** (*passed unanimously*)

Newsletter Editor – Judy Welles

Judy W has proofed the Membership Directory, and is working with Marcia to have 150 copies printed at a cost of \$350.

She will soon be receiving these items from Greg Bear:

- full set of logos (computer file);
- letterhead listing current Board (printed, no envelopes, and computer file) ;
- note cards (printed on lightweight card stock, no envelopes, and computer file).

Judy W collected from each Board member info on which items they wish to receive.

At Large/Good Offices – Doug Gallager

Doug reported that the planning team for Regional Specialists on Transition met on November 20, and will meet again Dec. 12. They expect to have appointments made by the first of the year.

Doug further noted that, for medical reasons, he finds he will be unable to attend the west coast UUMA conference on Excellence in Ministry, Feb. 2-6. The Board discussed transferring the fully-paid registration to another UURMaPA representative. *Judy W agreed to attend in Doug's place. Since the space will be transferred, Doug will not have to cancel his registration by the December 14 deadline.*

BUDGET FOR 2015

The Board considered the proposed budget that Joel had prepared on 11/26/14, including all info he had to date. **Joel moved to accept the 2015 budget including the following two amendments:**

Conferences – Scholarships – increased to \$3000 (\$1500 per conference)

Communication – Elderberries publication – increased to \$4000

(passed unanimously)

Joel sent Board members the approved budget immediately following the meeting.

OBITUARY PROCESS

Conference worship honoring members who have died – It was suggested that the term “Necrology,” which has come into use for the conference worship service honoring members who died, be changed to “In Memoriam,” which sounds more dignified. There is no place in procedures or guidelines where the name for this service is designated, but *John Weston has agreed to insert “In Memoriam” into the Conference Guidelines (website, under Activities, link at bottom of page) where it states “service may include a reading of the names of members (including partners) deceased during the preceding year”*

Storing short obits for conference In Memoriam services – As death announcements are received, Judy W is preparing 50-word obits to use for conference services. She recommends storing them in date-of-death order in the UURMaPA Drop Box account, which can store other data in addition to Marcia's membership records.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, January 8, 2015, 4:00 PM EST by conference call.

Agenda will include:

- The issue of requests in lieu of flowers for partner deaths

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- Suggestions for back-up team for Membership Coordinator
- Establishing a new Resident Agent in Massachusetts for UURMaPA
- Decision about adding an extra day to Attleboro Conference 2015

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Gibson, Secretary

REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR DEC 4, 2014 - UURMaPA BOARD MEETING

President: Dick Gilbert

Sent 3 letters of condolence.

Sent 1 “welcome to retirement” letter.

Continued correspondence on how we handle obituaries with Judy W., Judy G. and Jay Abernathy. One problem is non-member obituaries of UU ministers not in fellowship. Provisional decision is to do brief obituary for Announce, but discussion continues on the nature of the archived obituary.

Discussion with CERG Lead Minister about a conference call/SKYPE/etc., with UUMA members pondering retirement. This may become a model for other groupings.

Contact with Nominating Committee on nominees for 2015. Sheldon Bennett has resigned from Nom Com and will need to be replaced. Nancy Doughty goes off, so Chris Backus will be chair.

Worked with historian Liz Strong on history.

Continue to work with Alicia Ford re. a joint UUA-UURMAPA-UUMA webinar on retirement.

Larry Peers has indicated interest in this and has shared materials.

Correspondence with Marcia Olsen and others re. back-up of UURMAPA lists, other information and a personnel back up for her.

Beginning to plan for transition to a new president. I have virtually everything on my computer.

With Duane, Marcia, new president and others will determine what and how this is transferred.

Wrote letter of commendation to Rhett Baird congratulating him on being named Unsung UURMAPAN of the year. To be read at cluster clergy celebration. SKYPE is impractical in this setting, so pictures will be taken.

Correspondence with Catherine Rowland at UUA re. the late Bill DeWolfe. UURMAPA is the beneficiary of memorial contributions. Wrote letter of thanks to Barbara DeWolfe.

Vice-President: Jim Eller

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Video Conferencing

I continue to find Zoom to be a superior technology. I would like to suggest that the Board plan to have either our January or February meeting on line. What this means is that we should all download the software. It is free and available at <https://www.zoom.us/>. It won't work if you haven't done the download ahead of time and also experimented with it before hand as well. So, in preparation, please do the download and find someone to test it with. I am glad to be that person for any of the Board. Just email me or call me and will set a time.

Nominating Committee Visit

This last week I received a call from the UURMaPa Nominating Committee, Nancy and Chris. They asked me if I would serve as the incoming President. I believe that I am capable of doing the work and am willing. I have been considering this possibility for some time and have visited with friends, colleagues and mentors about my discernment. I know I will need a lot of support from the Board and have also created an informal advisory group to assist me. They are Makanah Morris, Fred Campbell, Dick Gilbert and Judy Wells.

June UUA Council Meeting

I have been in touch with Sara Lammert to confirm the dates and timing of the UUA Council meeting.

Secretary: Judy Gibson

Have continued to send out **death announcements** promptly as received from UUA, and **longer obituaries** as soon as received from Jay. Very little has come to me this month.

Forwarded obituary info (*from Tony Perrino's wife Karen*) to Jim and Dick (for Jay) for reference in preparing whatever **announcement or obituary regarding death of a non-member colleague** that they wish to have me post and/or file in our UURMaPA archive.

In collaboration with Gordon (Selma veteran and part of the Orlando program), **sent a personal letter to ten UURMaPAs who are also Selma veterans, inviting them to UURMaPA in Orlando**, mentioning the UU Revisiting Selma Conference following (Mar. 5-8), and including an Orlando registration form. Hoping this will result in some registrations!

The rest of my report is from liaison with Membership Coordinator Marcia Olsen: Connected with Marcia Olsen regarding Board's recommendations for **backup storage of membership data via Dropbox**. She has also asked Duane about possibilities for using the website.

Marcia also has suggested **storing on the website for future use the short obits prepared for conferences**. (Attleboro 2014 – by Dick Weston, and future conferences by Judy Welles). The Board may want to consider how we might implement this item.

Marcia has been working on arranging for **printing the updated Directory**, and has asked the Board to approve printing 150 copies (more than authorized in Sept. meeting), at cost of approximately \$350 (perhaps \$100 more than approved in September meeting). Also, when do we want these printed and distributed – right away? Early 2015?

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Marcia is tracking **requests for online Elderberries only**, and so far finds “most of these are folks outside the USA whom Judy W. contacted directly. We've already promised everyone will receive 4 issues printed; Judy W can repeat the info on how to notify me to receive only electronically and perhaps the Board wants to 'push' that a bit more?”

Marcia has officially agreed to continue for another year as **Membership Coordinator**. She has requested from the Board suggestions for UURMaPAns who are “detail-oriented and enjoy playing with spreadsheets,” and who might work with her/back her up in Membership duties, as she knows so few of our members.

Treasurer: Joel Weaver

UURMaPA Finances – November, 2014

Ending Account Balances November 30, 2014

Endowment	\$20,285
Money Market	40,279
Checking	<u>12,515</u>
Total	\$73,079

Cash Flow

Conference Income - Orlando	\$2,350
Member Contributions	285
Interest Income	<u>0</u>
Total Income	\$2,635

Design & Printing	(1,500)	
Board Meeting Expense	(464) McMaster	Transportation
Sageing & Unsung Hero Award	(500) Rhett Baird	
Bank & PayPal Charges	<u>(25)</u>	
Net Cash Flow		\$146

Newsletter Editor: Judy Welles

Thanks to the generosity of many contributors, who sent in their submissions early, I was able to get the Fall *Elderberries* out more or less on time. I'd like people to have it in hand right around the first of the month, although once it leaves the printer and is in the hands of the Postal Service, it can still take an unpredictable amount of time.

I somewhat underestimated the postage cost when I suggested in September that we consider mailing it to all members. It actually cost a bit over \$1,000 to put out this issue. I have asked Joel to increase the annual amount budgeted for *Elderberries* in his proposed budget.

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We are essentially finished with the logo project, and Greg has been paid. I await the final *final* version of the letterhead and note card, and I would like to have some conversation about the print order for those when we talk on Thursday. In a separate message I am sending the Board a questionnaire about this; if it is confusing to you, we can discuss it on the phone. By the way, Greg readily agreed to make annual changes to the letterhead as Board membership changes, at no further cost to us

I continue to be a little concerned about the backlog in the long obituaries, and I would like a reality check from you all on Thursday about whether to be concerned or not. I have had some conversation with Jay about finding an assistant; he is willing to have an assistant, but wants to find that person himself (or at least vet the suggestions before anyone is asked). I'll try to have an update on that by Thursday.

Otherwise, it's business as usual.

At-Large Member – John Weston

1. Orlando 2015: The board and partners are cleared for Sunday arrival at San Pedro. *Jim, Margi, and JudyW—what details need chasing down?*
2. Attleboro 2014: pasted in below is a summary of the evaluations.
3. Attleboro 2015:
 1. Dan McKanan, occupant of the Emerson chair at Harvard, has been engaged as our keynote speaker. His current work in progress has to do with the impact of Rudolf Steiner's esoteric environmentalism on the larger environmental movement.
 2. LaSalette has reserved the facility for us as follows:
 3. Fri Oct 2 to Mon Oct 5--Board meeting
 4. Mon Oct 5 to Thurs Oct 8--Conference
 5. *The board needs to decide where the conference will last an extra day (as reserved) or not. I recommend a preliminary discussion in our December meeting and a decisional discussion in January.* Carol and Ginger will provide us with alternative scenarios, but the financial dimension of the discussion is up to the board.
 6. Joel, shouldn't we cinch the five or six nights with a deposit? And if we have an additional day, how do we generate a richer scholarship program?
4. Santa Barbara n.d. On Nov. 20 Bets Wienecke is taking to colleagues the idea of a Santa Barbara [no date] UURMaPA meeting. She sounds excited and committed.

Summary of Evaluations

November 6, 2014

Summary of 2014 UURMaPA Fall Conference, Attleboro, MA

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We received 36 completed Evaluations. Not everyone answered every question. It was a good return with a lot of good information.

1. What aspects of this fall conference have been most important to you?

A. Reconnecting with old friends, meeting new friends, and generally visiting with colleagues. (*****)

B. Robbie Walsh's Odyssey (****)

C. Worship Services (***)

D. Keynote Speaker (**)

2. What were the highlights of this conference for you?

A. Robbie Walsh's Odyssey (*****)

B. Keynote Speaker & his subject (****)

C. Worship (***) plus several comments about the beautiful music by the pianist

D. Small Interest Groups (***)

E. Socializing (***)

3. Are there changes you want to suggest to the overall conference?

A. As a newcomer, I would like to know more about the attendees; where they live, last church they served, etc.

B. Many liked the Small Interest Groups Wed. afternoon and requested that they be run twice during the afternoon (1:30pm to 3pm and again from 3:30pm to 5pm).

C. Include the WIFI pas word in printed material in our folders.

D. Post room assignments on the bulletin board in the front hall by the elevator.

E. Several suggested we consider an additional day (possibly make it optional the first time we try it). There was a distinct concern for not arriving on Friday pm or leaving on Friday pm because of traffic issues - I think.

F. Provide a microphone in the dining room and be sure all microphones are working well. (the difficulty with the mic for Robbie's Odyssey was sited - some could not hear him)

G. A question came up --- "Can participants make announcements?"

H. Try to do larger group check-ins.

4. Did you like the format of the Wednesday morning program?

Overwhelming response was "yes". Beyond this there were some comments on how to improve on the process.

5. The focus of this year's program was on "Deep History: Why It Matters". Your comments about it are appreciated.

A. The majority of the comments were very positive: The speaker was engaging, he kept us involved. He was both a presenter & teacher. He opened up many worthwhile avenues for exploration. For some it was a new

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way of thinking.

Speaker could have been more prepared and focussed. Reading was dry - he was a lively young scholar. It was a stimulating discussion.

6. We welcome your suggestions for possible future programs that would be of value to you.

A. Something to encourage the thought process.

B. Theatrical presentation(s) with improvisational workshops on acting

C. Do a Social Justice project

D. The financial crisis of the UUA and the future decline in many of our congregations

(how are we coping?)

E. Meet with retired religious leaders from another faith

F. Future of ministry? Interfaith challenges? theology today with Paul Razor

G. Deep History II

H. Music -- I liked last years performers (Dan & Jan Karney)

I. A tour of LaSalette Center

J. Something just for Partners (ice breaker, maybe some sharing beyond that)

K. End of Life Choices & Decision-making - anticipating serious health changes and how we are coping with them

K. Miscellaneous: have a big puzzle to work on during the conference; knitting lessons, quilting lessons; yoga; take a field trip to an interesting place nearby; art class; crafts class; World Tending - I could contribute

L. Individual Suggestions:

* Harvey Cox might come, 65 Frost St. Cambridge, MA -- he is of sound mind and isn't too far away

* Jeremy Taylor, UU minister and Dream Teacher who lives in Bay area and goes to UURC&CC every year, so you might be able to piggy back on a trip. He is at Rowe Camp Oct. 3-5 this week.

* Climate change/Global warming with Naomi Klein - This Changes Everything - Book

* Have Ralph, John, & Joel do a workshop on "Maximizing our Retirement Income"

* A workshop on 20th Century Universalist Theology - I, Richard Trudoue, can lead it.

* Refresher & Review of Existentialist philosophers views on "Being" and "Conduct" and maybe another one on "Conventions & Normalcy"

7. Would you like to participate in planning a future conference?

A. There were 19 "no".

B. Some willing but not next year

C. There 6 distinct people willing to help.

8. Did the LaSalette Conference Center meet your "creature comfort" needs.

There wer a variety of comments here. For the most part people were positive. A few complaints about room temperature, etc.

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The one thing we need to work on is how to convince the Center kitchen crew that we don't need two big meals a day. We will need to suggest simpler lunch meals. Some reflected on the bathrooms being uncomfortable - too small for large people - no grab bars, etc. Meals overall better. Some would like cookies as an alternative to cake. All commented on the new (ugly) chairs being very comfortable!

9. Do you have suggestions of a retreat center in the New England area for our Fall conferences that would be affordable?

Most said no.

The Espansal Center in Waltham(?) - right of Rt 128

The Catholic Retreat Center in Waltham, MA

The Eastern Point - an Episcopalian Retreat Center on Cape Ann

The Barbara Harris Center in New Hampshire.

The Glastonbury Abbey in Hingham? (near the ocean)

The UU Rowe Camp and Conference Center, Rowe, MA

Pringle Hill (?)

Some said - Stay at LaSalette Conference Center.

10. Do you have other comments to share regarding this 2014 UURMaPA Fall Conference?

These comments were all very positive.

Caring Network Chair: Margie Nasemann

Sent three congratulations cards to new retirees

Sent three sympathy cards to surviving family members

Communicated with one of our Caring Network persons who is having financial difficulty. Gave this person the contact person for the UU Society for Ministerial Relief

Sent letters to two members asking them if they would be willing to assume the job of Area Caring Network Coordinator (Mass Bay Inland and New Mexico; this is an ongoing project)

Contacted Marcia about the number of new Directories I need for Area Coordinators.

At-Large Member: Liz McMaster

I contacted 3 Area Coordinators re retired UURMaPA members

Spoke with Doug Gallagher re Peer Groups

I spoke with an Albuquerque colleague who might be interested in doing Area Coordination for NM. I will have lunch with her soon to 'seal the deal'.

At-Large Member: Douglas Gallager

A year ago I thought we were on the threshold of getting six Regional Specialists (one for each of the five US regions and one for Canada) appointed. The UUMA envisions several

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specialties eventually, but the first is to specialize in transitions around retirement. The process has moved more slowly than I had thought, but in the end the deliberate pace might well make for a better end product.

The team that will be making the appointments met on November 20. Our next meeting, at which, presumably, we will be finalizing the appointments, will be on December 12. We divided the applicants between us for a preliminary vetting.

If any of you have further nominations, particularly people in the southeast, please let me know.

I'm assuming that the next stage is devising training for the Regional Specialists so they will all be singing from the same hymnal. UURMAPA's earlier work on transitions will undoubtedly be a basis for this training.

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