

1 Unitarian Universalist Retired Ministers and Partners Association Minutes of Zoom
2 Conference Board Meeting October 13, 2021

3
4 Board Members Present: Susan Rak, Ned Wight, Gloria Perez, Richard Speck, Millie Rochester,
5 Ann Schranz, Anne Spatola, Wayne Arnason

6 *Note: Board decisions are in bold type. Action items are in red italic type.*

7
8 The standing board reports were briefly reviewed for highlights or updates since they were
9 circulated prior to this meeting.

10 Secretary-Gloria Perez

11 **The September 15, 2021, meeting minutes were approved as distributed.**

12
13 Treasurer-Richard Speck

14 We may make a profit from the Fall Conference. Report spreadsheets were sent to the board.
15 They will be included at the end of Board Minutes.

16 President-Susan Rak

17 Susan gave a shout out to board members' reports detailing the work which each member has
18 accomplished this past month.

19
20 Vice-president-Ned Wight

21 The third member for Creative Saging Award committee may be from the Western area of the
22 country. The contact is Emily Cherry from the Transitions Office.

23
24 Conferences-Anne Spatola

25 There is one change from Anne's report: one person dropped out of the Winter Conference
26 planning team. Anne was asked if the deposit for the Franciscan Retreat Center would be
27 refunded. The answer was yes.

28
29 Liaison to UUMA board-Wayne Aronson

30 Wayne affirmed that he could interact face to face with one person who is not coming to the
31 Fall Conference because of the speaker who is giving the keynote presentation. He was not able
32 to contact a person in NC for pastoral care.

33 Connections-Millie Rochester

34 Millie is working on a submission to Elderberries. She is waiting for confirmation from the board
35 about reconfiguring the structure of making connections. Very few connectors are keeping in
36 touch with those in their areas. People seem to be keeping in touch with people they know. She
37 noted that not many area connectors responded to her reaching out to them. She noted that
38 Sue Nichols kept in contact with her when she first retired. Things have changed now with so
39 many people using Facebook and other forms of staying in touch with each other.

40 Millie sent her video to Jon Chaney for inclusion in the board segment of the Fall Conference.

41 Connections Assistant-Ann Schranz

42 The UUMA is doing a good job of doing the obituaries for clergy. There are too many to keep up
43 with so maybe UURMaPA could just do the obituaries for the partners.

44

45 Conferences-Anne Spatola

46 The preparations for the Fall Conference are pretty well set. A request for board members to
47 facilitate small groups was not well responded to and there were some bad feelings about that.
48 Gloria has volunteered to be a facilitator but has not heard anything about it. Anne says there
49 may be information yet to come. Twenty-four facilitators are needed and there should be eight
50 to nine people in a small group. There are some details to talk about in the planning team's
51 next meeting. The number of registrations for this conference is higher than for the last three
52 conferences. We are expecting a profit from this conference.

53 Susan Frederick Gray will speak briefly. After her remarks, Richard Speck will monitor the chat
54 for questions and answers.

55 Winter Conference:

56 One person on the planning team just let Anne know that she would be dropping out. Anne is
57 not feeling much enthusiasm from the planning team. She is stressed out about this
58 conference. UUMA and UURMaPA are to participate in this conference. The registration fee will
59 not be as much as in the past since there will not be a theme speaker. So, the thinking is that
60 we would be breaking even for this conference. Should we be re-thinking about having this
61 conference? The other person who is to be working with Anne has not yet been in contact with
62 her. Wayne wonders if Anne should step back a bit saying there is time for attention to the
63 Winter Conference to unfold as those involved are still working on the Fall Conference.

64 Susan is thinking about the time window for the Winter Conference saying we are free from the
65 time frame of the Franciscan commitment. Can we look at maybe having more time between
66 the Fall and Winter Conferences, might the Institute in the end of January have any impact on
67 the timing of the conference? April might be a good time but Anne's working partner isn't
68 available after March nor are Richard Speck and Jon Claney. Anne already included the dates
69 Feb.28th-March 2nd in her taped recording for the Fall Conference and the dates are already in
70 this Elderberries edition. Wayne suggested that since it will be virtual and not in person as we
71 had anticipated, we might do a more reflective conference with less formatting than the Fall
72 Conference.

73 **We will stick with the March dates with board members filling in with various tasks.** We will
74 work with the odyssey person regarding logistics. Wayne will be the odyssey coordinator. The
75 winter conference will be more fun as well as reflective. Conference planning team to finalize
76 the number of days of the conference. We welcome ideas for the theme. The board is to be
77 thinking about ideas.

78

79 Discussion items:

80 The common read, Unitarian Universalists of Color, edited by Yuri Yamamoto, Chandra Snell,
81 and Tim Hanami:

82 Members of the board were chosen to facilitate a discussion of three stories at a time, talking
83 about what drew their intention in the stories and asking some questions about what is similar,
84 what is unique, what things are not similar to each of the stories they are presenting and any
85 topics of the stories they found interesting. Each person facilitating will come up with
86 questions to cover the perspective of the congregants as opposed to ministers or ministers'
87 partners. There will be 15 minutes scheduled for these discussions before attending to the
88 meeting's agenda. **The schedule of facilitators is as follows: Ann Schranz will lead in November,**

89 Gloria will lead in December, Ned will lead in January, Richard will lead in February, Susan will
90 lead in March.

91 Google drive for UURMaPA storage and sharing: Richard will do the technical stuff to create it
92 for us. Ann will move what she has to the Google Drive. We will then decide what to include on
93 the drive.

94 Reorganizing of the Connections system:

95 Millie suggested a model that would widen the number of potential Connectors by dividing
96 North America into, generally, East and West, adding in UURMaPAns overseas. The geographic
97 areas that now exist would remain, however some might not have an official Connector and
98 others might have more than one. Connectors would not be limited to contacting members by
99 the geographic area in which they live.

100 Each area connector could contact each UURMaPAn in their area in any way that they can to
101 keep people connected to each other to help with feelings of isolation.

102 Ned suggested that there could be a buddy system for each new retiree rather than one
103 Connector having to keep in contact with all those in her/his area. This buddy could be chosen
104 by the retiree and might keep this relationship for several years. The thought behind this
105 suggestion is that they would stay in touch longer. We do need to keep in mind that not
106 everyone wants to remain in connection or have the ability to keep up connections as they age.
107 The newly retired may not be completely forgotten as they stay in contact with colleagues or
108 are already supported in life's ups and downs in other ways. Millie told us about one area
109 connector who was very excited that a friend was moving into her area. There is no one way to
110 look at keeping up connections. We offer ways to stay connected and we can re-envision the
111 work of Area Connectors. We can bring this topic up in future meetings.

112 Connections Assistant- Ann Schranz

113 Due to Roger Rochester's resignation, we need someone to write the obituaries for ministers'
114 partners/spouses. Millie said that this is a time-consuming job. We also need to encourage
115 ministers to advise us when their spouse/partner dies. Wayne said that older retirees' network
116 of friendship can let us know when a partner/spouse dies. Having two people writing the
117 obituaries would seem optimal. We are looking to fill three positions. The question was asked if
118 Roger could write a description of how he accomplishes this task in order to preserve our
119 capacity to do this job for the future. The history of writing these obits is that Jay Atkinson took
120 this task on as part of what UURMaPA does. The question was raised, do we want to continue
121 this process? Could we host a zoom gathering just after a death in order to honor the death in a
122 timely manner? We don't need to do this the same way we have done it in the past. The obits
123 in Elderberries are in depth so as to remember the deceased. These obits do come up in Google
124 searches. There are more ministers' obits than partners' obits. Millie can ask Roger for info
125 about how many partners' obits come up in a year's time. Wayne suggested that partners who
126 have been involved in UURMaPA could be used as a resource for people to ask for writing obits.
127 Richard read a note by Jay in 2015 asking for other people to help with the obits. There was no
128 decision about changing the process. We are thinking about asking for people to help in this
129 task.

130 It was noted that the element, Service of Remembrance, in our conferences is very meaningful.
131 Ann said that even though she is not supposed to track down information about partners'
132 deaths, she could look up the deceased on google. We also have hopes that the ministers

133 would let us know about their deceased partners/spouses. In the case of Elise Becker do we
134 reach out to her minister partner to write a deeper obit for her.
135 Maybe we need to look at the whole system about handling obits.
136 The UUA/UUMA obits are intentionally in a simple format so as not to create a hierarchy about
137 the work of any particular minister. Jay's intent was to have a more in-depth obit written about
138 the deceased. We tabled further discussion about this topic for now.

139 The board retreat:

140 We are considering if we will meet in person or virtually or a hybrid format. How can we best
141 do a retreat? We are encouraged to be thinking about possibilities and how we would like to
142 proceed. We are welcome to float ideas via email and to discuss this topic at the November
143 meeting.

144

145 Respectfully submitted by Gloria Perez, Secretary

146

147 Board Reports:

148 President-Susan Rak

Very brief report this month. UURMaPA CONference stuff and home renovation taking up much of my time these past three+ weeks.

- Completed and submitted recordings for the Fall Conference (brief “welcome” on behalf of the Board and the “in the Loop” board report)
- Currently writing my Elderberries column for the WINter issue
- Followed up with Ned Wight about “peer and support groups”. Given how this program has lagged a bit on the past two years, I suggesting that he take the program in whatever direction he deems most effective.
- Perusing the book “Unitarian Universalists of Color: Stories of Struggle, Courage and Faith”, proposed as the Board’s Common Read. I hope that in our meeting we can come up with a plan for reflection and discussion. Please bring your ideas.
- Phyllis Hubbell sent an update on her ongoing work on archiving documents and videos for the Rainbow History Project. She is working with Maureen Jennings from Andover/Harvard Divinity School Library and they are finishing transfers of waiver documents so that they can make available the videos they already have stored. A further review with respect to all the conference participants to tie up loose ends is planned and she intends to wrap this up by the end of this year.
- Wondering what to do about a Board Retreat. Traditionally the UURMaPA Board gathered a couple of days prior to the Winter Conference for some time in deeper discussion and planning. The last one was held at the Scottsdale Conference in February 2020. We attempted to have some “retreat-like” conversations on Zoom last winter, but I think we only managed one meeting.

An idea was proposed to me that even if the winter conference was to be virtual, the Board might still gather at the Franciscan Center for their retreat. That is now moot since the reservation has been cancelled.

However, I feel there a need for an in-person meeting of this Board for a couple of days to have deeper conversations and do some planning - e.g. on the topics that are not as well suited for a general monthly meeting. Not sure if we can make that happen - there would be logistics to consider (location, travel, etc.) and costs (it may not be in the budget to do this). But I’d like to get your feedback and suggestions on this.

There’s an agenda this month item to discuss how ought the Board have a “retreat”.

150 Vice-president-Ned Wight

151 **Report to the UURMaPA Board from Vice President Ned Wight—10/13/21**

152

153 Updates on my workplan for 2021-2022 (based on VP job description) appear *in bold italics*:

154

155 **Arrangements for UURMaPA member lunch**

- 156 • Tentatively planning for day after SOLT in Portland, June 2022
- 157 • 9/11 contacted the GA Planning office to update me as their UURMaPA contact person:
158 Don Plante (dplante@uua.org); he has updated his files and I will receive notification
159 when space reservations can be made, most likely in late October or early November
- 160 • Plan to request space as soon as I receive notice from GA Planning in December 2021

161

162 **Attend Service of the Living Tradition and survivor's luncheon** (during GA)

- 163 • Plan to attend

164

165 **Propose workshops during Ministry Days or GA**

- 166 • Will solicit workshop ideas in January? Article in the next Elderberries?

167

168 **Creative Sageing Award selection group (3 people)**

- 169 • Marni Harmony is willing to be part of this group; still *need to choose one more person*
170 *for the selection group*
- 171 • I reviewed the UURMaPA website page listing previous recipients

172

173 **Review financial accounts with the Treasurer**

- 174 • I'll be in touch with Richard

175

176 **Organize peer support groups**

- 177 • Inventory groups currently running
- 178 • Determine interest among retirees in 2019, 2020 and 2021
- 179 • Select conveners/facilitators and get these groups going
- 180 • *Received from Susan Rak list of 2020 and 2021 retirees to whom we can send an*
181 *invitation to join a peer support group*
- 182 • *Made video for Fall Conference Board presentation inviting volunteers to serve as peer*
183 *support conveners*
- 184 • *Sent an article re peer support groups to Jaco as Elderberries editor*
- 185 • *Reached out to Sarah Gabbey at the UUA to confirm that the UURMaPA VP is on the*
186 *distribution list for new retirees*

187

188 Secretary-Gloria Perez

189 My report

190 I sent the approved Sept. minutes to Duane for posting on Oct.26,2021.

191 I attended the Fall Conference and facilitated two small groups on the first day. It was an honor

192 to serve in this way. People really appreciated the opportunity to be together. I also co-

193 presented a workshop with Barbara Child on the last day. The group was small and they, too,
194 appreciated the opportunity to hear about Barbara's Handbook and discussing a little about the
195 relationships between previous ministers and partners with current ministers.
196 I really enjoyed the music which was played during the picture slideshow before each session.
197 The play list inspired me to think that a way to live into the inclusivity and diversity to which we
198 aspire would be to intentionally choose more music by artists of color and marginalized folks. I
199 included that idea in my evaluation of the conference.
200 See you all on Wednesday.

201
202 Grace happens,
203 Gloria

204
205 Treasurer-Richard Speck
206 See worksheets at the end of the Reports

207
208 Elderberries-Jaco ten Hove
209 Elderberries and more Elderberries. I'm awaiting various items to come my way (soon!), but I
210 have about half of it written, edited, and laid out so far, with proofs going out to those featured
211 in print, to improve the odds for accuracy.

212
213 I can also report incidentally that we have had happy visits with numerous colleague friends
214 along the way over here, such as Hank Peirce, Sarah Lammert, Johanna Nichols, Leon Dunkley,
215 Doug Wilson and currently our bro-in-law Dave Weissbard (in Canton).

216
217 Connections-Millie Rochester
218 Hello everyone. There isn't very much for me to report for Connections this month, partly due
219 to being preoccupied with Roger's and our son's recovery from surgeries.

- 220
- 221 • Finished reading Unitarian Universalists of Color: Stories of Struggle, Courage, Love and Faith, finding it an interesting read.
 - 222 • Reached out to all of the Area Connectors for their feedback on how the system seems
223 to be working from their perspective and had email conversations with the half-dozen
224 or so who replied
 - 225 • Recorded and sent to Jon Claney a video for the upcoming Conference

226 Other thoughts might emerge during our meeting. I look forward to seeing you soon,
227 Millie

228 Connections Assistant-Ann Schranz
229 Hi, everyone. This is a quick note to say I haven't received word of any new colleagues who
230 have filed the Intent to Retire form. I don't have mailing addresses for the people who aren't
231 UUMA members. (There were a handful of them in a recent Elderberries.)

232

233 I have been in contact with Roger Fritts about the ministers and partners to be memorialized at
234 the upcoming conference. He knew of several people who I had not been tracking -- Elissa
235 Bishop-Becker, Gary Wyke, Mary Mullarkey, Susan Majeau, and Ann Reynolds Campbell.

236

237 I have been in contact with Roger Rochester, who helpfully told me of corrections regarding
238 partner information to be made to the data now kept on Google Drive. I need to update the
239 spreadsheet with activity for the past month or so.

240

241 There have been 20 deaths of ministers or partners that I have begun tracking over the past
242 four months. Not all of the deaths occurred in the past four months. I have sent notices to
243 UURMaPA-Announce list as appropriate. I'm not sure that anything has been posted to
244 UURMaPA-Announce about Elissa Bishop-Becker, Gary Wyke, Mary Mullarkey, Susan Majeau,
245 or Ann Reynolds Campbell. I need to search past messages and gather information to be able to
246 post.

247

248 I have not received an update from Duane Fickeisen about any progress on modifying the
249 website to include upcoming memorial services.

250

251 I sent a short video to Jon Claney for use in the conference. I mentioned to Susan Rak (in
252 hopefully not too whiney an email) that I preferred the board to speak live at the conference
253 instead of by a videotaped message. I hope we will consider that for future conferences. From
254 my point of view, it doesn't have to be all or nothing regarding live or taped remarks. I think
255 attendees would prefer to hear from board members live, even if there are glitches. As I
256 mentioned to Susan, just because something is easier for the Zoom coordinator doesn't mean
257 it's better for the attendees. Nonetheless, I thank the conference planners for all their work. I'm
258 just hoping we can have a fuller discussion about this for future conferences.

259

260 Regarding Elderberries, I followed up with Anne Clarke, who I suggested as a possible story
261 lead. However, she wasn't interested in being in Elderberries, even though she enjoys the
262 newsletter.

263

264 Ann Schranz
265 Connections Assistant

266

267 Conferences-Anne Spatola

268

October Board Report, 2021

Anne Spatola

Fall Conference

- Registrations currently at around 140
- Final communications /publicity blast to be disseminated Oct 11
- All but 2 conference recordings have been received by Jon
- Richard will handle Q/A chat moderator for UUrMaPa, UUA (Susan F.G., UUMA.
- Attending weekly planning meetings and providing updates as appropriate
- Sent out several requests/reminders on board actions for conference
- Wrote and recorded conference piece

Winter Conference

- Cancelled Franciscan Renewal Center and they agreed to refund our deposit of \$2500.
- Facilitated the team meeting in September
- With Fred Wooden's assistance, the team agreed to assume additional tasks usually associated with the convener role.
- Fred and I will work together handling part of these and Fritz and Walt will take on the remainder. Hopefully, this will make it more manageable.
- I prepared a timeline to keep us on schedule with reminders on actions needed
- Discussed publicity with Anne Hines who will prepare an update for the next Elderberries issue
- Solicited Jon Claney and Richard Speck for the technical team and they accepted
- Sent out contact lists with specific roles
- Working on agenda for next meeting on Oct 13.
- We still haven't declared a theme- we have a few under consideration. Suggestions?

Report of the At-Large Member for UUMA/UUA Relations - Wayne Arnason October 11, 2021

Since we've last met I did some followup at the request of the Conference Planning Team with UUA and UUMA representatives who will be presenting at this month's Fall Conference. Melissa Carvill-Zeimer and I corresponded about whether she should attend the small group session on the Pros and Cons of creating UUMA Retirees Chapter. We agreed it would be a good thing for her to be there, to listen, and to be able to compare notes with me afterwards. She would not be in a leadership role but could answer questions related to the UUMA Chapter requirements if needed. I am brushing up on those requirements so that I can be as well-informed as Melissa.

There has only been one piece of correspondence directed at me as a result of the Pros and Cons statement being sent out. That came from a Planning Team member who had some curiosity about how this process started and what the defined "problem" was that this idea might solve. It was a good question and exchange.

I have had an opportunity follow up on the issue we discussed at the last meeting regarding the process for inviting the theme speaker for the Fall Conference. The UURMaPA member who had concerns that she shared in writing with Susan reached out to me and sent me a copy of the letter. I was glad for the invitation to be in conversation about her feelings and that conversation is ongoing, by email and on the phone.

I undertook a pastoral outreach to a member whose communication with Patt Herdklotz in response to a message she sent out on our behalf raised some concerns for Patt. With no Connections representative in this member's area, Patt asked if I could make some inquiries and possibly reach out, and I was able to do that.

Looking ahead, I wanted to make sure that all UURMaPA members are aware that the UUMA's Convocation in February 2022 will be all-virtual. There are usually some UURMaPA members who attend the Convocations, although others find the costs out of reach. The virtual option has always been there but now that this is the only option I wanted to draw it to our members attention. So I created some publicity for Elderberries about the Institute, coming up in February 2022. This month I also followed up on Jaco's request for any articles we might be able to generate for the fall issue of Elderberries and sent one in.

I have now received my copy of our suggested common read Yamamoto et al. *Unitarian Universalists of Color*. I've barely started it but a deadline for some discussion to start would spur me on.

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