

# Universalist Retired Ministers and Partners Association Minutes of Zoom Conference Board Meeting — August 17,2022

Board Members Present: Susan Rak, Ned Wight, Gloria Perez, Ann Schranz, Millie Rochester, Barbro Hanson, and Wayne Arnason

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

Opening words read by Ned Wight:

“The Way It Is” by *Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer*. From the Poetry of Presence

STANDING REPORTS WITH HIGHLIGHTS AND ADDITIONS:

*Secretary - Gloria Perez*

Gloria submitted the minutes of the June 22, 2022, meeting for approval. **The minutes were approved and will be sent to Jaco ten Hove for posting on the website.**

*Treasurer - Richard Speck*

**The treasurer’s report was approved as submitted without comment.**

*President – Susan Rak*

When we begin talking about the Fall Conference, Susan would like to discuss our process of choosing the Minister Odyssiants, discussing our approach to Odysseys.

*Vice-president – Ned Wight*

Ned would like to review the cost/benefit of GA expenses. There will be a note in the next Elderberries about the peer support groups.

*Conferences – Barbro Hanson*

No addition to her report.

*UUA/UUMA Liaison – Wayne Arnason*

Wayne added new information to his report. There was a seminar, presented by Jan Gartner, regarding new guidelines for congregations in their approach to ministerial compensation. Also, there will be a new vendor for the retirement fund yet to be determined.

*Ann Schranz – Elderberries*

Ann would like to add an agenda item for our next meeting – determining back-ups for the board positions and the other positions of those who do the “business” of UURMaPA but are not board positions.

*Millie Rochester – Connections Chair*

Millie would like to highlight concerns about the area connectors' role, maybe a breakout session for connectors during the Fall Conference? Maybe a different approach to keep people connected?

**Millie will get contact the Area Connectors asking for suggestions/feedback about what is affective and what could be changed. She will report to the board for further discussion.** Area Connectors may be an old model that may no longer be useful considering the use of technology not previously available. Are there other possibilities which may be more effective in fulfilling our purpose? We won't be asking for new Area Connectors at this time.

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

*Fall Conference – Barbro Hanson*

Yvonne Seon has accepted the invitation for Odyssey presenter during the Fall Conference. **Wayne will talk with Yvonne and her daughter Felicia about finding a format which will be easiest for Yvonne with a video recording to be made from it. Wayne, Susan and Barbro will add context around the video presentation.**

As an agenda item, we will have further discussions about the process of having an odyssey presentation at our conferences, including the choosing of an Odysiant. Is an odyssey a remnant of a model we can let go of?

The conference planning team would like to know what the Board would like to do during the two sessions that we will have during the conference. Barbro suggested to put time with the Board during the first session to feature what the membership needs to know about what we are doing. If more needs to be said, then we can put that at the end of the conference. The UUA and UUMA have expressed an interest to having a presence at the conference. Richard Nugent would like some time to talk about the new retirement plan. **Wayne and Barbro will talk about the presence of the UUA and UUMA at the conference.**

We are in the process of discerning what our conferences are for. We noted that there is some reflection on the different wants and needs of our membership.

*Covenant – Wayne*

Wayne brought up points from his report about the continuation of the process of creating a covenant. Each member of the board gave their thoughts about how we should proceed with the process. **The board decided that we have an extra meeting this month to further discuss this question. Susan will create a Doodle to determine a meeting date.**

*Respectfully submitted, Gloria Perez*

## BOARD REPORTS

*Vice-president – Ned Wight*

Here are items on my workplan for 2022-2023 (based on VP job description):

### **Arrangements for UURMaPA member lunch**

- Reassess cost/benefit of in-person lunch at GA in light of rising costs and experience at GA 2022 in Portland
- If we decide to go ahead in Pittsburgh, be ready to request space as soon as I receive notice from GA Planning in December 2022

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

- Plan to attend

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

- Solicit workshop ideas through article in the fall Elderberries

### **Creative Sageing Award selection group**

- Reach out to Marni and Wendy to see if they will serve for another year
- At Millie's request, sent a certificate of the Unsung UURMaPA Award to Duane Fickeisen

### **Review financial accounts with the Treasurer**

- Still not sure what this means; I'll be in touch with Richard

### **Organize peer support groups**

- Need to contact convenors/facilitators to organize a new group with those who have expressed interest
- Write another article for the fall Elderberries inviting members to express interest in participating in new or existing groups
- Compile a list of current groups and convenors
- Contact convenors to check on status of groups and respond to any questions or concerns

### **Covenant discussion group**

*Secretary – Gloria Perez*

Approved minutes of the June 15, 2022 meeting was sent to the web master, Jaco ten Hove, to be posted on the web site under Governance

*Treasurer – Richard Speck*

Here is an up-to-date financial report covering June and July. The CEF is down slightly following the trend of the UUA investments. The GA Luncheon cost us about

\$1500 over what we brought in. We sent another \$500 in memorial gifts for deceased colleagues. Things will pick up now that registration is open for the fall conference. I will be traveling to see family in August and probably will not join you on Zoom.

Spreadsheet for the month appears at the end of this document

### *Connections Chair Report to the UURMaPA Board — Millie Rochester*

Here is a summary of my activities since the Board last met:

- Communicated with fellow retirees via email, text and phone
- Attended the Welcome Luncheon at GA, and brought the banner home with me
- Attended the virtual Welcome gathering via Zoom
- Met via Zoom with Joy Atkinson to discuss our job descriptions and made some changes
  - *“Writes welcome notes for new members and partners when Intent to Retire forms are filed and notifies Area Connectors” can be shifted to the Connections Chair. Joy will send me the official UURMaPA stationary.*
- Discussed with Joy the changing nature of Area Connectors as that role has evolved over time – its effectiveness and even its necessity, given the many small groups that are organized according to interests and needs of members
  - I’ve been mostly unsuccessful in recruiting new Area Connectors (just one achieved in my year in this position).
  - Most ACs tell me that their contacts are sporadic at best, although a few gather with fellow UURMaPAns now and then.
  - We now have 8 vacancies, and I anticipate another when one moves to a different geographic area.
  - *I want to stress that this does not diminish the effectiveness of sending welcome notes to newly retired ministers and partners, the coordination of minister and partner deaths, sending notes of condolence, communicating with the Membership Coordinator, and being generally available to meet the needs of our members who feel isolated.*
- Discussed with Wayne via email his proposal of a mentoring program for newly retired ministers and partners, to be brought forward in the next couple of months.

This is an exciting time! It’s my pleasure to serve with all of you.

### *Connections Assistant – Ann Schranz*

I had a Zoom call with Joy Atkinson to begin to orient her to the position. I gave her "viewer" access to the obituaries database in the Board's Google Drive. As of July 1, I will change that to "editor" status. She'll shadow me on handling any minister or partner deaths in the coming weeks.

[Susan, were you going to invite incoming folks to sit in on the meeting?]

I have not written greeting cards welcoming the latest new retirees to UURMaPA. I figure it may be the end of the congregational year for some, GA is coming up, and it's a busy time. I will do so at the end of June so that Joy can start with a clean slate, so to speak.

I sent the invoice for the last Elderberries issue to Richard.

Regarding Elderberries, here are the articles in the hopper. I have what I need (or have commitments to receive it) unless the item has a question mark. These are in no particular order. I welcome comments.

- What brings you joy? -- Alicia Forsey will provide an article and photos.
- What's up with . . . ? -- Dee Graham will provide an article and photos.
- Do you know about the Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society (MCCS)?

by Mark Harris

- New books -- "Senior Moments: Poems" by Betty Jo Middleton, "Poems from the Gravel Road" by Sarah Voss, and "The Healing Way: A Path to Recovery after Abuse" by Lillie Mae Henley

- Obituaries -- ministers Jean Zoerheide, Denis Meacham, Dennis Kuby, and perhaps others that Jay Atkinson will provide

- List of new retirees
- Fall conference article? Perhaps by Rosemarie Smurzynski (publicity)
- President's message?
- Thanking Jaco and introducing myself as Elderberries editor. Thanking Duane and noting Jaco's new role.
- Creative Sageing award recipient? (Elderberries goes to the printer at the end of July, but four proofreaders need to review it first, and I need to make corrections.)
- Introduce Gloria Guldager (UUA retirement plan) -- I have invited her to submit info if she wants something other than what's on the UUA website.
- "Covenant" process update?
- Introduce Eleanor Richardson as partner obituary editor
- Poem on hearing loss by Karen Lewis Foley? -- She contacted me but hasn't sent it to me.
- Article on grief support group by Tom Korson

Regarding my "covenanting" process comments sent in a separate message, I might elaborate that "continuing education" could also be thought of as "religious education." My opinion is that as we age, in some senses, we become more childlike in terms of abilities, including cognitive abilities. So maybe we older people need more concrete lessons instead of solely conceptual ones, and maybe we need more repetition of lessons than we did at whatever our cognitive "peak" was.

I'm also thinking about trying (as a Board) to change the course of the ocean liner that is UURMaPA regarding troublesome boundary violations -- getting in the way of our successors and making life harder for former congregants -- and regarding intentionally

welcoming BiPOC members. I'm thinking we might be most effective doing what we can as an executive Board, using repetition and concrete examples as much as possible rather than more elaborate, conceptually based processes. I reserve the right to change my mind! These are part of my "thinking out loud."

*Report of the At-Large Member for UUMA/UUA Relations - Wayne Arnason*

After General Assembly was over, I slid into a month of complicated travel, health issues, and emotions, and let UURMaPA work go until this past weekend. In June I submitted the Elderberries article summarizing the outcomes of the May focus groups on our covenant study, and supported the UURMaPA events at GA, and that has been about it for me .

My wife and I contracted covid, probably at GA, so our staggered quarantines preoccupied much of early July. We recovered by the time of our visit with our daughter's family mid-month, just in time to pick up a bronchitis bug from one of the grandchildren. I recovered quickly, but it laid my wife low for a full week of our late July vacation time in Canada with my family.

Rob Eller-Isaacs' death and my mother's memorial service added an overlay of grief on top of all this illness, so when we had periods of good health and joy with family, I just wanted to enjoy that and not manage much else.

During the week between submitting this report and joining our August meeting, we will be moving our extra apartment kit from our home in Charlottesville to the new apartment in St. Paul and settling in there.

I have started up the promised conversation with Millie about next steps for a volunteer support program for retirees entering their first year. We hope to be able to have some agenda time on this subject at our September Board meeting.

After Mark Ward's untimely death, Barbro asked me if I could be the contact and support person for the Odyssey presenters, although Susan has done much of the communication to possible presenters thus far. We will hear more about where that stands at our meeting.

The one agenda item I did offer to set up for this August meeting involved some reflections to prime the pump for our conversation about the next steps in the year of study of a possible UURMaPA covenant, so here we go – probably at excessive length:

My first thought about next steps and the year of study is that our Board needs to recognize that this is ultimately a strategic leadership decision on our part, and not a discernment through conversation of a consensus among the membership. There won't be a consensus and our decision about how to go forward will disappoint, annoy, or maybe even drive away some people. We should recognize and accept that.

My second thought, and one that I made pretty clear in the article for Elderberries, is that the covenant conversation inevitably involves what it means for UURMaPA to somehow make a different commitment to de-centering our white cultural context. Since this is the water in which we swim, we are having the same experience we

have all been through before in other UU institutions we engage with. Some people don't see the need for or resent the conversation, and others carry wounds from their previous engagements, or are just plain tired of it, and want to claim the white privilege of not having to think about it. Other people are passionate about affirming such language to the point of obnoxiousness and those two poles within the UURMaPA membership will be in tension. Of course, making some kind of commitment to de-centering whiteness is not the only value that will be held up in a UURMaPA covenant, but it will be impossible to not have that come up and to be important in whatever we put forward as possible statement.

I think we can safely say that most people in the focus groups wanted the conversation to continue. I have suggested a few ways that this could happen leading up to the fall conference:

- (a) Organize a second opportunity to join another round of focus groups and give more people the opportunity to participate in that format. Taking this approach would be based on whether we think the sign up and participation in the focus groups in the spring did not exhaust the possibilities for that approach.
- (b) Take the initiative as a Board to build on the feedback we have received and work over the next six weeks towards a new draft statement that could be publicized and discussed in one of the small "interest-group" one-hour segments at the fall conference and see who turns up and what happens there. We could make it clear that we still see this is part of the study year and not a hard decision but indicate that the Board would like to get more concrete this fall about the content of a statement and move further towards exploring how it could be affirmed.
- (c) Use the "interest group" opportunity at the fall conference to have a wide-open conversation about the results of the focus groups as described in the Elderberries article, without having anything further to present. In that approach, we see if the same people or usual suspects choose to attend, or if the article draws any new interested people, and we monitor how the conversation goes and evaluate where we are at the November meeting.

As I said in the Elderberries article, and previous communications within the Board, I think that there is some rich conversation happening in the UUA and UUMA now about the meanings of covenant, and how seriously we take the covenants we already have. Mykal Slack's Berry Street lecture at GA following the Commission on Appraisal's recent report has brought Kathleen and I back to re-reading Alice Blair Wesley's amazing Minns Lectures from fifteen or so years ago. There's a lot to talk about in all these reflections.

You all may have other possibilities to offer about what we do next, but I hope these options will get our thinking started. I'm looking forward to seeing you on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

Monthly Treasurer's Report 2022 — AUGUST										
	2022 Budget	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	2022 Total	Budget vs. Actual
<b>INCOME</b>										
Member Donations	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$350.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$350.00	\$0.00	\$1,200.00	40.00%
Member Donations Paypal	\$3,000.00	\$1,682.12	\$55.00	\$105.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$70.00	\$1,927.12	64.24%
Memorial Gifts	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,037.01	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,037.01	51.85%
Conference Fee Income Checks	\$4,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Conference Fee Income Credit Cards	\$13,000.00	\$1,725.00	\$4,100.00	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$120.00	\$6,095.00	46.88%
GA Luncheon Income	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$70.00	\$465.00	\$251.02	\$472.13	\$1,258.15	419.38%
UUMA Subsidy	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Scholarship Income	\$2,000.00	\$550.00	\$900.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$50.00	\$1,500.00	75.00%
Other Income	\$125.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
<b>Total Regular Income</b>	<b>\$28,925.00</b>	<b>\$3,957.12</b>	<b>\$5,405.00</b>	<b>\$755.00</b>	<b>\$1,112.01</b>	<b>\$470.00</b>	<b>\$606.02</b>	<b>\$712.13</b>	<b>\$13,017.28</b>	<b>45.00%</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>										
<b>On-Site Board Meetings</b>										
Transportation	\$3,600.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Room and Board	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Hospitality	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
<b>Total Board Meetings</b>	<b>\$5,800.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
<b>Conferences</b>										
Attendee Fee Refunds	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Room and Board	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Speakers	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Music	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Technology Support	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,500.00	90.00%
Hospitality	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Scholarships	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Misc.	\$100.00	\$278.68	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$125.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$403.68	403.68%
<b>Total Conferences</b>	<b>\$6,875.00</b>	<b>\$278.68</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$4,500.00</b>	<b>\$125.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$4,903.68</b>	<b>71.33%</b>
<b>General Assembly</b>										
Luncheon Cost	\$900.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,832.80	\$0.00	\$2,832.80	314.76%
Transportation-President	\$400.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Transportation-Vice President	\$400.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Room and Board	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Technology Support	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
GA Fees & Misc	\$400.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%



New Member Welcoming Gifts	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
<b>Total General Assembly</b>	\$4,600.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,832.80	\$0.00	\$2,832.80	61.58%
<b>Communications</b>										
Elderberries Publication	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,442.46	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,049.21	\$0.00	\$2,491.67	62.29%
Fundraising Appeal	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Peer Support Groups (video calls)	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Website	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Zoom	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Database Management	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
<b>Total Communications</b>	\$6,200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,442.46	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,049.21	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
<b>Other Expenses</b>										
Retirement Planning Seminar Expense	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Saging & Unsong & Navius Awards	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	50.00%
Rainbow Project	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Postage	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$19.19	\$0.00	\$19.19	9.59%
Connections Network	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Memorial Gifts - UUMA and Others	\$2,000.00	\$400.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$1,400.00	70.00%
Donations to the Endowment	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
President's Expense	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Credit Card Processing Fees	\$300.00	\$68.46	\$169.11	\$4.01	\$3.14	\$13.48	\$0.63	\$9.32	\$268.15	89.38%
Bank Expenses	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Board Misc.	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$134.40	\$0.00	\$15.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$149.40	99.60%
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	\$5,450.00	\$468.46	\$303.51	\$4.01	\$518.14	\$13.48	\$19.82	\$1,009.32	\$2,336.74	42.88%
<b>Total Expense</b>	\$28,925.00	\$747.14	\$303.51	\$5,946.47	\$643.14	\$13.48	\$3,901.83	\$1,009.32	\$12,564.89	43.44%
<b>Profit/Loss</b>	\$0.00	\$3,209.98	\$5,101.49	-\$5,191.47	\$468.87	\$456.52	-\$3,295.81	-\$297.19	\$452.39	
<b>Ending Account Balance</b>										
Endowment		\$95,346.49	\$90,924.71	\$89,210.64	\$83,900.01	\$83,900.06	\$78,817.34	\$78,817.54		
Money Market		\$19,223.21	\$19,223.95	\$19,224.77	\$19,225.56	\$19,226.38	\$19,227.17	\$19,227.99		
Checking		\$32,454.84	\$37,587.79	\$36,558.57	\$37,238.37	\$37,555.73	\$34,255.55	\$33,814.77		
<b>Total</b>		\$147,024.54	\$147,736.45	\$144,993.98	\$140,363.94	\$140,682.17	\$132,300.06	\$131,860.30		