

UURMaPA Board Retreat  
at Bon Secours, Marriottsville, MD  
August 26-29, 2024

**Attending:** Wayne Arnason, Joy Atkinson, George Buchanan, Barbro Hansson, Fritz Hudson, Paul Johnson (via Zoom), Anne Marsh, Susan Rak, Ned Wight

**Note:** The earlier sessions of the retreat were discussions, led by George, of Sharon Welch's *After the Protests Are Heard: Enacting Civic Engagement and Social Transformation*. The notes that follow are from the later sessions on August 28-29, when, with the book's framework in mind, we turned to issues more specifically related to UURMaPA. These notes do not detail our wide-ranging discussions, but are only intended to summarize decisions and actions.

Decisions are in **boldface type**. Action Items are in **red type**. There were so many items in red type, that I repeated these action items in a list at the end of these minutes.

### **Goals for the year ahead**

We generated a list of goals for 2024-25, then prioritized them. The 4 goals given top priority:

#### **1) IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory)**

Some longer-term Board members have already done the IDI, but the newer members have not. In order to help us be a multicultural inclusive community, **we decided to have the 2025-26 Board do the IDI in the spring of 2025**, when incoming Board members will have been named. **Susan will contact Sue Sinnamon to see if she is willing and able to facilitate** (and to apologize for our apparently dropping the ball on our agreement with Sue for this past spring.) Cost in 2024 would have been \$900, plus \$100 per participant. Susan will determine whether this is still the fee structure, and whether participants are expected by the facilitator to contribute their \$100. **We would like to have UURMaPA cover all the costs if possible**. Once arrangements are in place, we will alert the Nominating Committee, so they can inform potential new Board members of their expected participation. If Sue Sinnamon is not available, we will consider other options at a future meeting.

#### **2) New Program Initiatives**

a) Wayne is arranging webinars with the Office of Church Staff Finances. In accordance with ideas expressed earlier in the conference, Wayne has asked Richard Nugent to address socially responsible investing with Empower. A webinar with the Transitions Office may also be arranged, though that office seems to be in flux at the moment.

b) One-on-one mentorship of new retirees is probably too labor-intensive, but **we would like to offer small groups for new retirees**. **Fritz will convene a Board subcommittee of himself, Joy, and Ned to come up with a plan for how to do this**. The subcommittee will report back to the Board at a later meeting.

c) "Branding" - who we are, what we do, how we serve, how to increase participation. When we receive their intent-to-retain form, Joy sends out a personal welcome to each new retiree, and Fritz sends them programmatic information. At Barbro's suggestion, **we agreed that Fritz will include an invitation to attend their first conference as UURMaPA's guest**.

### 3) Leadership Transitions

Susan noted that no formal integration of new Board members was done this year, but that an orientation should happen each year, including information on meetings, retreats, conferences, governance materials on the website, etc. She also reminded us that there will be significant changes next year, as she, Wayne, Fritz, and perhaps others will be leaving the Board.

Up-to-date job descriptions are part of the leadership transition process. These should be completed as soon as possible to assist the Nominating Committee in their work. It was noted that the Nominating Committee's charge includes working to recruit a multicultural diversity of Board members, including partners, though this goal is not always reached. **Susan will invite Nominating Committee Chair Beth Miller to attend either our September or October meeting, so that we can discuss leadership transition issues together.**

To help in the recruitment of partners, **Barbro will give Susan a list of those partners who registered for the past two conferences**, as conference participation may be an indicator of interest.

Fritz noted that sometimes new leaders emerge from the peer support groups. **He can ask convenors to see if any of their group members are interested.**

### 4) Fundraising

**Susan will draft a fundraising letter** to be approved by the Board and then sent out to all UURMaPA members in November, before Thanksgiving. She will include themes of gratitude and reciprocity.

**We agreed to aim for 100% Board participation in this year's fundraising efforts. Each of us will consider a gift in accordance with our means, and will let Paul know by September 15 what we plan to pledge to UURMaPA in 2024.** These donations are best made through the website, as donations made as part of conference registration should go to scholarships. **Barbro will contact Richard Speck and Jon Claney to see if the conference donation button can be clarified to indicate those donations are for scholarships.**

### 5) Scholarship Funds

**We would like a written proposal from the Financial Aid Task Force detailing their request to set up a dedicated fund or line for conference scholarship donations.** We agree on the importance of making sure scholarship donations go to scholarships and that we need a mechanism for carrying over any unspent scholarship funds for use at future conferences. **Paul will consider the best way to do this from an accounting perspective. It may or may not be a separate special fund.** We are now offering \$45 registration fee scholarships and an additional \$45 reimbursement for pod attendees. Jaco ten Hove would like larger reimbursements for pods. We will revisit this at a later meeting.

## Other Topics

### 1) Membership Database:

**Susan will send an email to the members on behalf of the Board asking everyone to update their directory information on the new membership system. She will ask Richard Speck if he will be the contact person to help those who need assistance** in confirming the

transferred information. Once in the new system, entries are self-updatable. Some have found it confusing to enter **data for partners in the new system. Wayne will ask Richard about the problems he's encountered.** Fritz wants to be sure he is kept in the loop on the database.

## 2) Bylaws

Current bylaws specify mail-in ballots for voting, although if only one person is nominated for a given position, that person is considered elected. We need to update the bylaws for electronic voting, and other updates may be needed as well. **George offered to work on bylaws revision when we get to that.**

## 3) Fall Conference

Ned and Anne will lead the ingathering worship, and Susan will lead the closing worship. We will have a 15-minute slot to introduce the Board and give an update on what we're working on. We will discuss further at our September and October meetings.

### Reviewing Our Purpose

At the end of our time together, Susan reviewed our UURMaPA Purpose statement to see how we're doing at fulfilling these purposes:

"be an inclusive multicultural community"

- Board commitment to continuing education ("common read")
- conference content, leaders, and participants

"serves interests and enhances well-being of retired UU ministers and partners"

- links with UUA and UUMA, including Office of Church Staff Finance
- keep members informed of current issues
- advocacy

"informational communication"

- *Elderberries*
- UURMaPA Announcements
- website

"periodic membership gatherings"

- spring and fall conferences
- peer support groups
- webinars
- new member welcome gatherings

"other supportive programs and activities"

- awards (Unsung UURMaPAn, Creative Saging)
- link to Transitions Office - UURMaPAn's continuing ministerial service and exchanging wisdom

"cultivating anti-oppressive attitudes and practices"

- IDI for Board

**Meeting Reminder:**

**Our September Board meeting will be on Thursday, September 26, at 2pm Eastern. Beginning on October 10, meetings will move to the second Thursday of each month.**

**ACTION ITEMS**

**EVERYONE:**

- Each of us consider a gift to UURMaPA in accordance with our means, and let Paul know by September 15 what we plan to pledge for 2024.

**SUSAN:**

- Contact Sue Sinnamon to see if she is willing and able to facilitate IDI for the incoming Board in spring 2025.
- Invite Nominating Committee Chair Beth Miller to attend either our September or October meeting.
- Draft fundraising letter to be approved by Board and sent out in November.
- Send an email to the members on behalf of the Board asking everyone to review and update their directory information on the new membership system.
- Ask Richard Speck if he will be the contact person to help those who need assistance with the new database system.

**FRITZ:**

- Convene a Board subcommittee with Joy and Ned to come up with a plan for small groups for new retirees.
- Include an invitation to attend their first conference as UURMaPA's guest in welcome letter to new retirees as soon as we receive their intent-to-retain forms from the UUA.
- Ask peer group convenors to see if any of their members are interested in UURMaPA leadership roles.

**BARBRO:**

- Send Susan a list of those partners who registered for the past two conferences.
- Ask Jon Claney and Richard Speck to change donation button on conference registration form to indicate that these donations are for scholarships.

**PAUL:**

- Consider from an accounting perspective how to best set up a scholarship fund.

**WAYNE:**

- Ask Richard Speck about problems encountered with partner data in the new membership database.

**Financial Aid Task Force:**

- Submit written proposal to Board.