

## **April 2008 Governance Policy Work Agenda**

**To: Full UUA Board**

**From: John Blevins, for the Governance WG**

**Date: 17 March 2008**

There are **two primary goals** for this April meeting, from a governance perspective:

1. **Goal 1: To “adopt” as many of the Policies attached (Sections, 2,3,4), as we are able.** Adoption means that we are ready to say, “I can live with this”, and let us put them on the shelf until we officially put them into practice in 2009. We all know that we can change these policies at any time. But it doesn’t make sense to not establish a place to start from, and move on. The Governance WG has a strong consensus that it is time to move on. We hope you agree.

Doing this allows us to:

- a. Turn our full attention to ENDS questions, which we began in earnest in January, and
  - b. Continue the education we all need to operate effectively in the new governance model, as demonstrated by the monitoring training you will receive at this April meeting.
  - c. Address those remaining “sticky wickets” as shown in the “Topics under discernment” below.
2. **Goal 2: To obtain our first training on the meaning, intent, and process of “monitoring”.**

### **Your Preparation for the April Meeting:**

1. Give some thought to the “topics still under discernment” below and begin to frame your own thinking on each.
2. Read through the latest (near final!) Policies, and look for those that are highlighted in the text (they’re RED in the text on the web agenda). These are issues that we already know about, and we need your guidance. There may be others, but we know of these. We will be reviewing these with each WG at 8:30 on Friday morning. We have very little time together, so the better you can frame your concerns and ideas, the more effectively we’ll all be able to use our time.

## **Topics still under discernment:**

1. The essential question of: **Who are of who are the “moral owners” of the Association?** It would probably be helpful to go back and re-read the two Carver Governance booklets we gave you last year.
  - a. Until this is answered, we cannot be clear about our ENDS.
  - b. Confusion continues about the meaning and intent of this label. I think that we agree that “member congregations” are moral owners. See the discussion in the very brief Section 1 of the attached Governance Manual. How is a stakeholder different that an owner? Who do we most clearly honor as we make our decisions as Trustees?
  - c. Some of us are struggling with the label “owner”. Too corporate. No spiritual aspect. Racist. The Gov WG has not yet been able to find another term that is not ambiguous. Your help is needed.
  
2. **Openness and Transparency.**

Our Bylaws, per a 2004 amendment (see Rule G-2.1 Democratic Process), call for an increased level of openness and transparency in our work. One particular area of concern revolves around the transition of work that this Board formerly undertook via Committees and Task Forces, and which is now being transitioned to a staff responsibility. There is some sense that the visibility of, and the opportunity to participate in, some of this work will be reduced for our member congregations as a result. I think that this is probably true.

Each of us (yes, each) needs to be clear and committed to this process. We need to work together to find a place through our governance process that makes sense from both a business perspective and a “moral owner” perspective.

How can we provide the necessary information to ourselves, and our member congregations, and at the same time avoid “micro-managing”?
  
3. **Speaking with One Voice**

The meaning of this simple phrase is difficult to put into practice. Much is subject to interpretation. At particular issue is how a Trustee who disagrees with the democratic decision of the Board is able to maintain their own integrity while honoring this covenant to “speak with one voice”.

And how does this practice relate to our covenant with each other as Trustees?

The CoCo team has set aside some extra time to talk about this issue at our April meeting.

Thank you all for your continuing commitment to this significant change in our Association.

See you in April.

John Blevins, convener, Governance Working Group