



*from the virtual desk of Gini Courter*

September 25, 2008

It's been a full summer for me, and since I keep running into trustees in various places, I know it has been busy for many of you, as well. I look forward to catching up with all of you next month in Boston *and Worcester*. Glad we'll be getting out. ☺

Crafting the agenda for this meeting has been a challenge. We have a lot going on, and none of it is fluff. There's so much Board *work* to be done that there's barely time to conduct a Board *meeting*. Here is the notion that keeps me anchored for this meeting: our policy governance work is forcing us to replace old ways of doing our work. It will be chaotic (which is a fine environment for change) and exhausting (which is, well, exhausting and not fine) until we're willing to give up some old ways to provide the new ways with a place to live and draw breath. For the past n years (5 years? 3? 8?) we've added new practices, yet clung tenaciously to our old habits, too. This year, we need to be willing to kick some of our old practices to the curb. The fullness of this agenda forced me to wonder: why not start in October?

I know you'll all read the agenda, but here's an overview of Saturday afternoon and Sunday: the Board meeting. When we return from Worcester, we'll hold a short board session (chapel, 25 Beacon) for reports from Board officers (Secretary, First Vice-Moderator) and *action reports* from committees (including the GAPC) and working groups. An action report only includes items that trustees will be asked to discuss and vote on Sunday. Our task on Saturday is to go through the action items briskly, but completely, asking any questions that need to be asked. Our goal is to finish our business so that we can take a break before returning for work on our Board Covenant, followed by the Budget Discussion.

On Sunday, we'll hear reports from the President, Executive Vice-President, Treasurer, Financial Advisor, and perhaps even the Moderator. Then we'll do two rounds of reports from the committees and working groups: Updates and Motions. In the Update, each working group will highlight important non-action items so that we're all aware of the current and upcoming work of the Board. Motions are what we usually do on Sunday: we'll discuss and vote on the motions presented on Saturday.

To make this work, each working group and committee needs to make sure that their notes have all the motions clearly identified (or even on a separate page, ready for Nancy to put on the screen), and email/give Nancy their notes by 9 am Friday morning. (Committees and working groups meet on Wednesday, so this should work.) Nancy will assemble the notes into a packet and have the packets copied and ready for board members to pick up 5 pm on Friday at P/E. We will all need to review the notes packet before we start the meeting at 2:30 pm on Saturday. I think we can make this happen. (On Sunday afternoon, CoCo can decide if we actually did.)

I am excited about the October Board meeting. We should have wonderful conversations with the district presidents and members of the UUMA Executive Committee. After n years (5? 3? 8?), we're finally going to draft ends. Hallelujah! Laurel Hallman and Peter Morales will be working with us. We get to expand our owner linkage toolkit and build some expertise together. What more could we ask for, friends?

Soon, friends. Very soon.

Gini

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