

Board of Trustees

MEETING: December 14, 2020, 7:45 pm, Eastern Time

Pursuant to notice duly given, this meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Association was held via Zoom conferencing.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Genevieve Baldwin (youth trustee, Kathy Burek, Barbara de Leeuw, Charles Du Mond (Co-Moderator), Suzanne Fast, Susan Frederick-Gray (President), Sherman Logan, Leslie MacFadyen, Patrick McLaughlin, John Newhall, Lucia Santini Field (Financial Advisor), Meg Riley (Co-Moderator), Tom Schade, Rebecca Throop (youth trustee), Bill Young

ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS: Carey McDonald (Recording Secretary & Executive Vice President), Andrew McGeorge (Treasurer), Stephanie Carey Maron, Danielle Di Bona (chaplain), Marcus Fogliano, LaTonya Richardson, Sarah Gettie McNeill, Stevie Carmody, Sarah Lammert, Jackie Clement, Rebekah Savage, Sara Lewis, Larry Ladd, Debra Boyd, Cecelia Hayes, Mary Heafy, Stephanie Samson, Becky Brooks, Melissa Carvill-Ziemer

Meeting Minutes

Co-Moderator Meg Riley opened the meeting at 7:45 with a reading, and invited personal check-ins in breakout groups.

Consent Agenda

The Board approved the Consent Agenda without objections. The Consent Agenda included:

- Minutes from General Assembly 2020
- October and November Board meeting minutes
- Mutual expectations of the Board of Trustees and Article II Study Commission

Bylaw Working Group

Barbara de Leeuw reported from the Bylaws Working Group, noting they had met to discuss areas for bylaw changes to the Presidential nomination and election process, but that more conversation was needed before changes could be drafted or sent to the whole Board for review. A key question raised was what role or value competitive elections play relative to their cost in time and energy, and whether the UUA needs to require competitive elections for President.

The Bylaws Working Group had been charged to consider the possibility of suspending portions of the UUA Bylaws to allow for time to implement recommendations from the Commission on Institutional Change. They noted they still needed to discuss this possibility, and will bring questions and proposals to future Board meetings. Discussion noted that any possible bylaw suspension should address what happens to suspended functions in the mean time, and should not interfere with the UUA's status as an incorporated organization.





Professional Credentialing Committees

Leaders of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) and Religious Education Credentialing Committee (RECC) joined the meeting to discuss their relationship with the Board. Co-Director of Ministries and Faith Development Sarah Lammert gave a brief overview of the MFC and RECC authority, composition and role in assessing competency of candidates for credentialing.

Participants discussed and finalized a new appointment process for the two committees, in which staff continue to recruit and vet potential members as they have done in the past, but then encourage candidates to apply through the standard process managed by the Appointments Committee, who will ultimately make recommendations to the Board for their appointment.

Rebekah Savage and Jackie Clement, MFC Co-Chairs, shared some outcomes of the ongoing “widening pathways to ministry conversation” among MFC members. In the past year, they have:

- Implemented a new co-leadership model, and used a sociocratic method for leadership selection;
- Expanded to three panels to make the process less rushed;
- Done internal work on white supremacy culture and issued a public apology, convened racial identity caucus groups, hosted power and privilege observers; and
- Supported the push across UU professional organizations for a joint ethics panel.

They also named a number of other Initiatives in process, with which they welcomed future dialogue with the Board. These included:

- A Widening the Path Working Group to consider big questions in the fellowshiping process and address recommendations put forward by the Commission on Institutional Change;
- Redefining the purpose of the interviews and basic competency;
- Reforming the categories of fellowship and preliminary fellowship (rule changes expected to come to be sent to the Board soon);
- Reviewing and streamlining the complaint process; and
- Move to more ongoing and accessible online interviews, even once it is safe to gather in person.

Design Team Update

Suzanne Fast and Leslie MacFadyen reported that they had met twice since the last Board meeting to plan for the accountability recommendations called for by the COIC. They described their approach embracing the big picture, that the design process itself needs to reflect the goals for culture transformation work, and that they did not want to remake something that has already because it is the path of least resistance. They noted nothing more was needed at this stage from the rest of the Board and that they will continue to report back at future meetings.

Article II Study Commission

Becky Brooks gave updates from the Article II Study Commission (A2SC), with appreciation for the support of Board liaisons Kathy Burek, Greg Boyd and Meg Riley, and said there would be a fuller report at a future Board meeting. Becky

noted that the A2SC Communications working group is creating educational pieces on what Article II is and the history of the UU principles and sources, working towards weekly engagements for the public, and is beginning planning for General Assembly. The A2SC members planned to begin conversations with stakeholders identified in the charge with a set of questions to identify support and concerns. The A2SC is planning for a virtual “Collaboratory” style event in the Spring where representatives from stakeholders can have conversations together.

Board members clarified that, per the bylaws requirements for a report to the Board within two years, the A2SC had until June/July of 2022 to complete their initial work based on the timing of appointments. If they took this full time, this would mean the Board would not be able to add the A2SC’s proposal for amendments to Article II to the GA business agenda until 2023.

Nominations and Appointments

Co-Moderator Riley noted there was an upcoming open house to advertise vacancies on UUA boards and committees. Co-Moderator Charles Du Mond reported that a joint taskforce of Nominating and Appointments Committees’ members has started meeting to put forth recommendations for the Presidential Search Committee, providing they have a strong enough pool of applicants.

COIC Implementation

Executive Vice President Carey McDonald reported on UUA staff work to create an internal system to track and implement recommendations from the COIC report. The system is being led by a cross-staff COIC Implementation and Mission Alignment Team (CIMAT). He said that staff are very engaged in the process, that they are already undertaking a range of projects that the CIMAT will work to ensure are coordinated and accountable, and that the CIMAT will give a more detailed update on current implementation work at the January Board meeting.

Executive Session

The Board moved to executive session at 9:15 to review and discuss its covenant.

Closing

The meeting ended at 10:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Carey McDonald

Recording Secretary

