

**MidAmerica Region, UUA
Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 4, 2019
Zoom Conference**

Trustees Present: Brian Bach, Dorit Bergen, Kyrie Bock, David Lauth, Tammy Lemmer, Sarah Oglesby-Dunegan

Trustees absent: Christopher Sims

Staff present: Sharon Dittmar, Lisa Presley, David Pyle

Call to Order: President David Lauth called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm CST.

Opening Words

Brian shared opening words by Common: “The impact of a conscious artist is necessary, and it ripples through the world.”

Introduction of Region Lead David Pyle

David P previously served the Joseph Priestly District, and has experience in MidAmerica with connections to the Central Midwest District, Midland, MI, and Evanston, IL. He also serves as an Army Hospital Support Chaplain with the Army Reserves. He and his wife will be moving to Kentucky in October, (near an Army Base) and he may be receiving a faculty posting in Wisconsin. David P shared his first impressions of the MidAmerica staff as caring, skilled, and under-resourced.

Check-in

Board members and staff introduced themselves by sharing connections and personal history with Unitarian Universalism.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Brian to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2019 Board Meeting. After a second by Dorit, the motion carried.

Appointment of Vice President

The resignation of Mitra Jafarzadeh from the Board created a vacancy in the position of Vice President, and it is the Board’s responsibility to elect a replacement for the position from among current Board members. A motion was made by Brian to approve Christopher Sims to the position of VP. After a second by David, the motion carried.

Board openings and Guidance for the Nominating Committee

David L reviewed inquiries received from the Nominating Committee regarding Board priorities for current and future vacancies. There are two open seats (Janelle's and Mitra's) and the Board is looking to the Nominating Committee to help identify potential candidates for appointment, including individuals who come from underrepresented populations.

Current priorities are age and racial diversity. In the past geographic diversity was an important criteria, especially in the first years of Regionalization. That is now deemed the lowest priority. There is also the recognition that the emphasis on "previous congregational/board leadership" could be a barrier. The Committee is advised to look broadly at "movement leadership" and include those who may have nontraditional leadership backgrounds.

Financial Reports

Lisa reviewed the financial report for the Fiscal Year, which reflected a net surplus of \$77,000, rather than the projected \$32,000 loss. This difference is attributed to several factors: Congregational giving was up, staff expenses were down (vacancies, etc.) and fewer in-person Board meetings. It was also noted that not all Board members submit for reimbursement of their expenses. If Board members would rather have the Region keep the funds, it is preferred that everyone get reimbursed, and then individuals who wish to do so may make a contribution back to the Region.

Lisa also discussed the Financial Review conducted by Smith and Cull. The review was originally requested when the three Districts merged and Regional Leadership was establishing consolidated management of the funds. A review was recommended rather than a full audit for both logical and economic reasons. There were some unanticipated delays in completing the review, but the official report was finalized in December 2018, and covered FY14 and FY15.

Lisa recommended continuing to work with Smith and Cull and have them look over the records for the period FY16-FY19, to make sure there are no issues, especially following the embezzlement issue in FY17. A motion was made by Dorit, to work with Smith and Cull to conduct a Financial review for the period of FY 2016-2019. After a second by Brian the motion carried.

Lisa recommended a change in financial practices from a "cash based" (funds are recorded when received and/or spent,) versus an accrual based system (income/expense is applied when it happened, not when the money changed hands). Brian affirmed that the change made sense and is an accepted accounting practice. A motion was made by Sarah to adopt a true accrual system for FY 2020. After a second by Brian, the motion carried.

It was noted that Authorized signers on the Regional bank accounts are the President, Treasurer, Regional Lead, and the Financial Secretary (Lisa). Sharon has served as a back-up. Tammy made a motion to add David Pyle to the bank accounts as an authorized signer. After a second by Dorit, the motion carried. This will officially become effective in early November following the approval of the minutes in October, as required for documentation.

Appreciation was extended to Lisa for her time and efforts on the financial needs of the Region.

Updates/Discussion of 2020 Regional Assembly

The Congregation in Rockford, IL is willing to host the assembly, with a social event on Friday evening, April 17, and the full assembly Saturday, April 18, including worship, the business meeting, a keynote address and possibly some workshop sessions. There would be technology to stream at least the keynote address and the business meeting as well, but voting will be restricted to those attending in person. There would be no vendors or exhibits.

The Board could hold an in-person meeting on April 17th as well. Further discussion will occur at the October Retreat.

Update on Board schedule for October and November

David discussed future Board meeting and retreat dates, and proposed cancelation of the October and November calls. The plan for the retreat is to arrive at the Mt. Olivet Conference and Retreat Center (7984 257th Street West, Farmington, MN 55024) on Friday evening for a group meal if possible. A full day of meeting is planned for Saturday and a portion of Sunday morning, including a formal Business meeting. David L is working with MN UU Social Justice Alliance to identify a possible service project or act of social witness.

Process Observation Comments/Check-outs

While this was a long meeting, it was deemed a good, productive meeting, and people were engaged. David P noted that it was nice having the opportunity to get to know people.

Closing Words and Adjournment

Following closing words from Brain by Rainier Maria Rilke, President Lauth adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Tammy Lemmer