

MidAmerica Region, UUA
Board Meeting Minutes
November 18, 2020
Approved January 5, 2021

Trustees Present: Hans Kelson, David Lauth, Tammy Lemmer, Rae Jane Araujo, Autumn Mahoney, Jim Moir

Trustees Absent: Dorit Bergen

Staff Present: David Pyle, Sharon Dittmar

Call to Order: Tammy. called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm EST and shared opening words. Tammy presided for the rest of the meeting.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Rae Jane moved approval with second from Autumn. The minutes were approved.

Discussion of *Governance Chapter* from ***Widening the Circle of Concern***

David P. facilitated the discussion.

Initial comments focused on General Assembly—comparisons made between virtual and in-person models. The traditional G.A. model is seen to favor participation by persons with time and money to spare.

There was also interest regarding the proposal to combine the posts of President and Moderator, with the further change that executive authority would devolve to an Board-appointed person.

We explored the tensions for UU polity expressed in the report:

nimbleness (good) vs informality (bad)

standards (good) vs bureaucracy (bad)

autonomy (good?) vs interdependence (also good) vs centralization and authoritarian (bad)

We noted how regions within the UUA seem to be the focus of many recommendations in the report. The big question is deciding who speaks to congregations and who in the congregations participates.

David P. outlined the steps taken by UUA staff regarding implementing the recommendations from the report. Staff will be trained to help congregations implement changes.

David P. cited the long-standing precept that congregations are meant to hold one another accountable and said the UUA has assumed that role instead, because congregations lack the ability and power to do so. **Denominationalism** is a thread expressed throughout the report—the glue that can hold us together.

Next Chapters. At the next meeting we will discuss *Hospitality and Inclusion* from ***Widening the Circle***.

Mission Statement discussion. Hans moved adoption of the Mission Statement, seconded by Autumn. After slight correction, the motion passed.

Minutes for Special Session at Retreat

A brief meeting was called within the October 17 retreat. The three-minute meeting notes appeared as part of the Retreat Summary. Jim moved that the minutes be accepted, Hans seconded. The motion passed.

Regional Lead Report:

The MidAmerica finances show a surplus thanks to fewer consultation requests and no travel. Staff have been taking advantage of the situation—participating in more staff development activities. The staff integration project has been completed. The UUA hopes to eventually take responsibility for all Leadership Schools.

The exploration of financial integration of regions into the larger UUA continues. David P. answered questions about some concerns specific to MidAmerica—especially the MUUC funds. Rae Jane said she would make contact with MUUC regarding our thoughts.

Rae Jane participated in a meeting of The National Advisory Committee. She said a list of questions for congregations is being prepared. There are also various Regional Reports received by the Committee, which she promised to share. Sharon said she expects to see “official” questions soon, and that they can possibly be shared at our January meeting. David P. suggested that MA Board members might each contact one congregation per month. There was general enthusiasm for the idea.

Meeting Schedule: We agreed to skip a meeting in December. There was a confusing attempt to discover an agreeable time and day for future meeting. David P. said he would find a technology that could help us sort out possibilities and determine that best schedule.

Closing: Sharon read a brief but relevant quotation.

Adjourned at approximately 9:13 pm EST

Respectfully Submitted by
Jim Moir
Secretary