

Memo

To: UUA Board (Jim Key, et al)  
From: Matthew Johnson, co-chair, UUA Presidential Search Committee  
Date: October 29th, 2014

Dear members of the UUA Board:

The UUA Presidential Search Committee recently completed its fall meeting in Atlanta, GA. We finalized the process for suggestions, applications, and nominations for the office. We finalized the job description as well - and thank you for your comments, passed along through Jacqui Williams, at your October meeting. You can find these materials at our blog, <http://uupresidentialsearch.wordpress.com>. In the coming days, we'll be reaching out to those folks who have been suggested to us (including by members of the committee itself) and sending them applications.

Coming out of our meeting, I bring to you three simple requests and two proposed Rule changes for the GA agenda.

1. We strongly encourage members of the Board to suggest people to us, and to encourage those individuals to complete an application for the office of President. You know people who would be excellent in this work, and we hope to receive many strong applications.
2. We've found that the salary and specific benefits offered to the President are negotiated with the Board upon election. It would be helpful if we could give applicants at least a range or rough estimate for the salary. (We also wondered if an adjustment might be made for a lay-person who would not be able to claim the housing deduction as a minister would.)
3. Jim, we would like space on the plenary agenda for GA 2015; as early in the week as possible. Applications are due to us by July 15th, 2015, and we want to encourage people to speak to us during the week. Thank you.

In addition, we hope that the Board will, at their January meeting, approve and put on the final agenda two changes to the UUA rules.

The first of these changes would bring the election campaign season into line with our timeline. As currently worded, candidates who elected to run by petition for UUA President would get a head-start on campaigning. Our understanding is that the goal of our work is, in part, to shorten the campaign season. We would hate to see the candidates that we nominate be disadvantaged by this.

We thus propose something along the following:

*Rule G-9.13.7. Length of Campaigns for President and Moderator.*

*a. Campaigns for President and Moderator may appropriately begin ~~with small campaign committee organizational meetings and mass mailing letters no earlier than November~~ February 1 of the second year preceding the election.*

*b. It is appropriate for potential candidates, being considered by the relevant body or considering a run by petition, to have private conversations to discern their fit for the office, level of support, and ability to raise funds should they be nominated.*

~~*b. Active campaigning and solicitation of endorsements shall not begin prior to January 1 of the year preceding these elections.*~~

~~*c. No electioneering (defined as publicly announced meetings, rallies or exploratory events) of any sort shall occur at the General Assembly two years preceding the elections for President and Moderator. Private meetings about campaign organization that take place outside of General Assembly booked meeting spaces are permissible.*~~

This amendment would provide equity and simplicity to the process, shortening the campaign. The wording of the new paragraph b is not exact and you may wish to alter it, but it gets at the reality that folks will need to talk with potential supporters, mentors, and others about the viability of a campaign, while keeping away from any public campaign.

The second rule amendment is in regard to campaign finance limits. As we discussed in a previous memo, you have two options about how to structure this. You might set monetary limits in the rule, or you might instruct and empower the election campaign practices committee to set the limit. If the latter, you will need to appoint a committee with due haste, so that a limit can be set soon - preferably by July 15th, 2015, when applications are due, and absolutely by Feb. 1st 2016. If the former, you may need to revisit the amounts in future campaigns to adjust for inflation or the results of experience.

The amendment could look like this:

*Rule G-9.13.8 Campaign Finances Limits and Disclosure.*

*Candidates for the office of President may not, though the duration of the campaign, collect more than \$5,000 from any individual, nor more than \$100,000 in total. These limits shall be enforced by the Election Campaign Practices Committee.*

*All candidates for at-large elective positions shall keep detailed and accurate records of: . . .*

Again, the exact wording is up to you. Such a limit would meet the goals of showing fundraising ability, while keeping the campaigns at a more modest level.

I'm happy to answer any questions you may have about these matters, including in person or by phone or video at your January meeting. It's been a great pleasure for our committee to do its work so far, and we're excited to begin receiving applications for the position.

In faith,

The Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson