

UUA COMMISSION ON APPRAISAL



Minutes for Meeting March 3-6, 2011
First UU Society of Albany
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Table of Contents

AGENDA REVIEW:	1
MINUTES AND NOTES FROM SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER MEETING & JAN. CONF. CALL:	2
COVENANT REVIEW	2
REPORT ON TRANSPARENCY GUIDELINES	2
ARCHIVES UPDATE	2
LISTSERV UPDATE	3
TRANSCRIPTS & OTHER FOLLOW-UP ON COMPLETED GROUPS	3
CODING AND OTHER DATA ANALYSIS	3
TREASURER’S REPORT AND BUDGET	3
LOOKING AHEAD TO GA	3
CONGREGATIONAL CASE STUDIES	4
SCHEDULE FOR GA	4

Thursday, March 3:

Present In Albany: Barbara Child, Jacqui Williams, Bev Harrison, Don Mohr, Erica Baron, Megan Dowdell, Pete Fontneau.

The meeting started with dinner with Sam Trumbore, the Albany Congregation’s minister, who joined the commissioners. Barbara Child led the Commission in an opening worship. Nana Kratochvil joined the Commission by Skype for check in.

Agenda Review:

Additions to agenda:

- Friday morning: Jacqui-compliance review with Openness Committee requirements
- Friday 1:30 Erica-New UUs in focus groups, other Focus Group check-in issues
- Treasurer's Report: Extend the time to consider implications of lower budgets. Allow discussion of funding to fall over into conceptual time.
- Saturday 4:10 Discuss methods for looking at commissioner bias for case studies.
- Youth Program: Megan report on progress.

Minutes and Notes from September/October Meeting & Jan. Conf. Call:

September / October Meeting: Minutes are approved.

Minutes and Notes from January Telephone Meeting: Approved.

Covenant Review

The Commission reviewed the covenant as contained in the handbook.

Friday, March 4

The morning began with an opening Worship led by Bev Harrison.

Report on Transparency Guidelines

Jacqui Williams presented a report, based on her discussion with Sam Trumbore.

- Jacqui reported on the Commission's obligations regarding timely posting of minutes from its meetings.
- Posting advance notice of CoA meetings on the website is also very important. Portions of the agendas that will be open to the public should be specifically indicated as such.
- The Commission should also make efforts to ensure meetings are accessible. While it may not be possible to get to 100% accessibility, the CoA should be, for example, reluctant to meet in a person's home if that is an inaccessible location.
- The Commission should include church addresses and other location information concerning where it will be meeting in the agenda.
- The CoA also should be open to the possibility of people joining meetings via Skype.

Archives Update

Jacqui reported on her continuing efforts at archival of the Article II project materials. This is still in process, and she is working with Nancy and Michael (on checking some documents). Jacqui expects that Nancy will do all the printing and get it to the archives in hard copy. No electronic documents are required. Jacqui is planning to complete the archival work before GA 2011. Bev will finish any portions of the project not completed by GA.

2:00 PM Nana Kratochvil rejoined the Commission via Skype.

Listserv Update

Erica Baron presented an update on the Commission's listserves, established to solicit comment from various "expert" groups on the Commission's study topic. Some discussion has been generated on the Interim List & The MSR list, although of course many people on those lists are quite busy. Good officers do not have an already established list, nor is there any readily accessible list of all of the good officers in the UUA. CoA members should continue to feed questions to Erica to pose to those on the listserves regarding the study.

Transcripts & other follow-up on completed groups

Commissioners discussed the status of their various efforts to recruit participants for and conducting focus groups. Erica stressed the importance of timely completion of these in order to provide data to build on for the next stage of the process. End of GA is the goal for completion of all of these.

Coding and Other Data Analysis

Megan, Don, and Erica have started to do coding of transcripts from focus groups. These Commissioners reported on their initial efforts and techniques for doing the coding. Erica reported on data analysis strategies for the information, once it is coded. Discussions from the listserves will also need to be coded.

Treasurer's Report and budget

- The CoA's balance is about \$19K now; the Commission having spent about \$5600. Only one charge for GA 2010 appears on the FY 11 expenses. This meeting is expected to cost \$7-8K leaving \$11K for GA. Normal GA costs are around \$15K.
- Don volunteered to do some homework on restaurants at GA and getting groceries for a reception. He may be able to provide a shuttle car.
- CoA is only getting quarterly reports from the UUA regarding its budget.
- Barbara requested a cross check on one expense; Rachel has not gotten back yet on this.

Saturday, March 5:

The Commission held a public meeting at the First UU Society of Albany with a series of focus groups during the morning and early afternoon.

Upon re-gathering for its meeting, the commission began with a worship led by Don.

Looking ahead to GA

Who should we interview at GA?

- Good Officers (several)
- Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries chief + one or two staff people
- Re-interview some people from last year: Sarah Lammert, Keith Kron, potentially others
- Karen Brammer?
- Other board members-especially clergy board members
- DRUUM President (Leslie and Clyde are outgoing co-presidents)
- Ministers of Breakthrough Congregations
- Youth Caucus leaders (to be arranged at GA) and possibly create focus group
- Others

Congregational Case Studies

The Commission discussed its initial planning and thoughts for in-depth case studies of a few congregations, to be conducted over the next two years, following up from information gleaned through focus groups. Once the data has been fully collected and processed from those focus groups, the Commission will be in a better position to determine just how many case studies will be optimal and how best to go about conducting them. There is a significant possibility of conducting some case studies in conjunction with Commission meetings, given that Commissioners will already be traveling around the country for the meetings. This will help to minimize costs and maximize efficiency.

Schedule for GA

The Commission's hearing slot will be Thursday from 10:45-noon. The Commission made plans for a "fish bowl" style workshop that will solicit discussion and broad participation from people in attendance, allowing both the Commission and those attending to learn from the experiences with ministry and authority of different groups of people (ministers, lay people, etc.) in attendance.

Megan and Erica will work on planning a "park bench" sort of event to invite discussion and participation at GA.

The meeting ended with a check-out and closing led by Pete Fontneau.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michael Ohlrogge, Secretary, Commission on Appraisal (with substantial assistance from Pete Fontneau, who filled in for minute taking responsibilities in Michael's absence from the meeting)