

Vice Moderator's Report

We have several items that should be targeted for the tentative agenda for GA2015:

- 1) Elimination of Committees. These proposals are coming to the Board through the Finance Committee
- 2) Proposal for Campaign Finance Reform. Several changes to the rules are being proposed by the Presidential Search Committee. These are included as the Vice Moderator Report – Attachment 1 Campaign Finance.
- 3) Proposed changes to make the Bylaws consistent with the evolving nature of Districts and Regions. The proposed changes are described below and the specific language is included as the Vice Moderator Report – Attachment 2 Districts and Regions.

As was discussed at the October Board Meeting, the Southern Region District Boards are moving forward with plans to dissolve the legal structure of the 4 Districts in the Southern Region without replacing those entities with a new regional legal entity or governance structure. The vote to move forward or not on this will be taken on April 18 at the District Assembly meetings that will be held concurrently throughout the Southern Region.

This step by the Southern Region is one approach to the charge that was given by the UUA Board in its [2010 Motion on Transforming Governance](#). The planned actions by the Southern Region take that charge to its fullest logical conclusion. If adopted, governance of the UUA staff will be overseen solely by the UUA Board of Trustees through its monitoring. Elders and other volunteers in the Southern Region will continue to work together in a regional framework to strengthen the ties between congregations. You can see a more complete description of the plans in the Southern Region [on their website](#).

This is one model of response to the UUA charge, but it is only one. For example, the Central Midwest, Heartland and Prairie Star Districts merged to form the MidAmerica Region with a governing board and a nonprofit legal entity status. Other districts are considering various models.

The proposed amendments are intended to put the Bylaws in position of neutrality regardless of the decisions that individual Districts or Regions make regarding their path (or not) towards regionalization. At this meeting the Board will be asked to vote on whether or not to put the proposed changes on the Tentative Agenda.

The attached document is a full copy of the UUA Bylaws as there are changes needed in quite a few sections. Proposed changes are in red with deletions shown with a strike out and insertions as red text.

Overview of the proposed changes:

- 1) Retain the concept of Districts or Regions in the UUA Bylaws in Section 13.5. This is beneficial for several reasons. First, some Districts or Regions do not have independent 501(c)(3) status, and being explicit in the bylaws that they are part of the UUA helps enable them maintain their

ability to use the UUA tax exempt status. In addition, many Districts and Regions continue to operate in the traditional way, and making it clear in our Bylaws that this is acceptable and expected supports them in this decision.

- 2) In order to recognize that not all Districts or Regions may have District Boards or even District Assemblies, we would remove the special provisions that allow District Boards or Assemblies to place items on the UUA agenda. The ability for congregations by action of their Boards to work together to place items on the GA agenda so would remain in place. This accomplishes two things. First, it pushes accountability and power more directly to the congregations and encourages direct collaboration among congregations. This is consistent and even supportive of our Ends. It makes it easier for Districts or Regions to take the kind of steps the Southern Region is contemplating and the MidAmerica region has already taken as all areas of the country will be on a more equal footing regardless of the type of structure they select for their District or Regional governance.
- 3) Wherever the concept of District remains in the Bylaws, it is replaced with "District or Region."
- 4) Leave intact the role of Districts or Regions regarding the admission of new congregations into the UUA or the termination of a congregational membership in the UUA. Where the requirement was to contact the District President, replace add "or other official designated by the District or Region."
- 5) The G Rule Changes that are needed to implement the proposed Bylaws Changes are also included and should be included in the consideration of whether to place this on the Tentative Agenda. Most of those changes are to either eliminated Districts from the entities providing agenda items or to expand the concept of Districts" to "Districts and Regions." It is also proposed to remove the list of district names from the Rule G-13.1 and have the list maintained by the Board. In practice I expect that this would be done by the Staff in its support of the Board. The benefit of this is that we would not be required to have a vote of the GA every time there is a change such as the districts combining into a region or even just changing their name. The Districts would be able to make those decisions themselves as long as it was consistent with the other provisions of the Bylaws and Rules.
- 6) A modification to Rule 6.4.1 is included in this document that reflects the assignments of numbers to each trustee slot that we agreed to at the October meeting. The Rule that assigns Trustees to Regions can be modified by the Board. This should be voted separately from the other items as it is an actual adoption of a rule by the Board rather than a vote to put something on the Tentative Agenda. This is highlighted in light blue in the attached document.
- 7) There are some Rules changes that need to be adopted by the Board only after these changes are adopted by the General Assembly. Those are included in the attached document, highlighted in green. These should not be voted on until the June meeting after GA or the October 2015 meeting.

The only C Bylaws that is proposed for amendment is:

C -15.1 – Amendment to the Bylaws where District Boards are listed among those allowed to submit proposed amendments to Article II "as described in Section 15.2." However, Section 15.2 is not a C

bylaw and thus can be amended with just one vote. Presumably bringing 15.1 into alignment with 15.2 will then be a simple matter in 2016.