

# Board of Trustees

**MEETING: April 24, 25, 2020**

Pursuant to notice duly given, this meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Association was held via Zoom conferencing. Times referenced are Eastern Time.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Genevieve Baldwin (youth trustee), Greg Boyd, Kathy Burek, Pablo deVos-Deak (youth trustee), Suzanne Fast, Susan Frederick-Gray (President), Mr. Barb Greve (Co-Moderator), Sarah Dan Jones, Sherman Logan, Leslie MacFadyen, Manish Mishra-Marzetti, Patrick McLaughlin, John Newhall, Lucia Santini Field (Financial Advisor), Tom Schade, Elandria Williams (Co-Moderator)

## Meeting Minutes

**FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2020**

**ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS:** Carey McDonald (Recording Secretary & Executive Vice President), Andrew McGeorge (Treasurer), Stephanie Carey Maron, Chris Buice and Danielle DiBona (chaplains), Barbara de Leeuw, Bill Young, Rebecca Throop, Charles Du Mond, Meg Riley, Carrie Stewart, Linnea Nelson, Debra Boyd, Elaine McArdle, Kim Hampton, Lauren Smith, LaTonya Richardson, Aisha Hauser, Claudia Pressley, Larry Stritof, Marcus Fogliano, Cathy Seggel

### Opening

Co-Moderator Elandria Williams opened the meeting at 11:05 am with a reading. Participants and observers crafted an intention collage as an opening ritual, introducing themselves and sharing their hopes for their faith community in the coming months.

### Commission on Institutional Change Report

Members and participants went into breakout groups at 12:00 pm to review the governance-related sections to the upcoming COIC report. Board members had received copies prior to the meeting. Groups discussed which items were ready to move forward this spring and which will require further discussion over the summer and the coming year (summarized in Appendix A).

The meeting broke for lunch at 12:30 pm and returned at 1:30.

Co-Moderator Williams apologized for lack of communication in agenda planning for, which meant the COIC members did not join this section. Based on feedback from breakout groups, the Board committed to further work in May to prepare resolutions or other actions for General Assembly.

### President and Staff Report

*COVID-19 Response*



President Susan Frederick-Gray reviewed the memo which summarized the different aspects of the UUA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and expressed gratitude for the work of UUA staff. She noted that the work the UUA has done around culture change, creating a human centered-workplace, partnership with impacted communities undoing white supremacy and patriarchy, mission clarity, and regional collaboration have all been critical in allowing the UUA to be agile and responsive and effective in this pandemic

#### *FY21 Budget Proposal*

Executive Vice President Carey McDonald reviewed the administration's FY2021 budget proposal, noting it was developed before COVID-19 began to spread, and that the proposal came with a commitment to revisit the FY21 budget in the coming months as more becomes known about the pandemic's trajectory. Carey noted that some of the key investments in the UUA's mission supported by this budget include continued support of Diverse and Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries, Transgender UU Religious Professionals Together (TRUUst), EqUUal Access, the Finding Our Way Home retreat for religious professionals of color, and the UU College of Social Justice. The budget also sustains internal culture change work, UU the Vote, and the new ministerial transitions system.

Items contained in the budget which were directly connected to the COIC report included:

- Implementing a new Conflict Engagement team for congregational conflicts
- Data on the identity of religious professionals
- Lay leader training and development pathways
- Curriculum and resource development
- Skilling up UUA staff in anti-racism and anti-oppression lenses to their work
- Maintaining regional staffing levels, building unified regional system under "one UUA"
- Supporting staff working with youth and young adults
- Promoting virtual events and accessibility
- Conversations begun, but ready to receive COIC recs:
  - Collaboration with professional groups
  - Conversation with seminaries and around theological education
  - Conversations with the MFC



Financial Secretary Kathy Burek reported that the Values and Resources Alignment Working Group agreed a pre-COVID budget with planned updates was most appropriate, and noted that funding for Article II Study Commission had been added. She said the Board needs to model lower expense for in-person gatherings and give guidance to UUA committees to do the same.

Treasurer Andrew McGeorge reviewed major variances in operating budget, and also reviewed consolidated budgets and capital budget. There was need for follow-up clarification of how tenant improvements are accounted in the capital budget.

#### **Consent Agenda**

Suzanne Fast moved, Patrick McLaughlin seconded, and the Board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda. This included minutes from the January, February, March and April 13 meetings.

The meeting took a break at 3:15 pm, and returned in Executive Session from 4:00-4:30 to discuss appointments.

### **Ministerial Fellowship Committee**

Sherman Logan, Patrick McLaughlin, and Elandria Williams shared back from their experience at the virtual meeting of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee they attended in March. They reported conversation that there had been generative conversation about how the MFC will consider bigger picture changes to the fellowshipping process, but noted that the longer facilitated discussion which had been scheduled for March had been postponed to September.

### **General Assembly**

In pairs, members and participants discussed what is most important in Virtual GA for the event overall and for the Board's participation. Following the pair discussions, the meeting took a Break from 5:10-25.

Returning after the break, members and participants shared back about their discussions. Possibilities included engaging a much wider swath of people who might be able to attend this year's GA, and more social opportunities such as drop ins and hang-outs. Suggestions for business sessions included expanded pre-GA tutorials, regular explanation of the new process during the meetings, minimizing the amount of business considered, ensuring there is a way for the moderation team to huddle with the parliamentarian and legal counsel, and immediate vote counting.

Board members committed to virtual office hours, similar to in-person office hours at previous GAs, and to following up with UUA staff to ensure they have a sufficient technology set up to fully participate in GA.

Expected challenges included tech and bandwidth issues, new accessibility considerations, sustaining attention to Zoom meetings over the course of multiple days, providing ongoing tech support, projecting a moving spiritual and musical virtual experience, and the risk that key leaders may be sick or incapacitated.

Members and participants engaged in a brief personal check-out, and ended the meeting at 6:10 pm

### **SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2020**

**ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS:** Carey McDonald (Recording Secretary & Executive Vice President), Andrew McGeorge (Treasurer), Stephanie Carey Maron, Chris Buice and Danielle DiBona (chaplains), Barbara de Leeuw, Bill Young, Rebecca Throop, Charles Du Mond, Meg Riley, Carrie Stewart, Linnea Nelson, Debra Boyd, Elaine McArdle, LaTonya Richardson, Marcus Fogliano, Mary Byron, Cir L'Bert Jr., Leslie Takahashi, Elias Ortega, Natalie Fenimore, Laura Conkle, Kim Hampton, Ted Fetter, Mandolin Restivo, Sofia Betancourt

### **Opening**

Co-Moderator Williams opened the meeting at 11:05, and participants joined in song, and opening reading, welcoming and introductions.



### **Bylaw Amendments**

Board members reviewed drafts of three bylaw amendments which has been circulated before the meeting, and did a straw poll to see which had support for moving forward for GA 2020:

*CARE Team proposal* – discussion noted that the language was not fully fleshed out, so while the Board affirmed the direction of the language submitted by the Election Campaign Practices it declined to place this on the agenda for GA 2020.

*Co-Moderator vacancy* – there was agreement to put this on the agenda and would consider approval of one of the language options at a future meeting.

*Nomination timelines* – feedback noted that the draft needed to be simplified, for possible consideration at a future meeting.

*Other items* – Other previously discussed potential bylaw changes related to the UUA elections process were postponed for consideration in the coming year.

### **Commission on Institutional Change**

Members of the COIC expressed their frustration at the planning for the meeting, having expected to lead the discussion around the presentation of their final report in the same manner as they had done for prior Board meetings. They acknowledged the pressure and struggle faced by leaders at all levels in the midst of a pandemic, especially those who are Black, Indigenous and People of Color, and noted they had emailed the Board to convey their frustration.

Co-Moderator Williams apologized for miscommunication in agenda planning, and offered appreciation for the COIC members' honesty. The discussion from the prior day was intended to help the Board members clarify which actions they can take quickly on the COIC's recommendations and how to best approach budgeting for implementing recommendations in FY21, recognizing Board members had only recently received the full report and would need to have much more conversation in the coming months.

The chaplains provided a centering moment, and the meeting took a break at 12:45 pm and returned at 1:30.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The meeting went into Executive Session to discuss internal Board process.

### **OPEN SESSION**

The meeting returned to open session at 3:05 pm.

Discussion reviewed outstanding GA issues from breakout groups. Members noted the need to continue to share the COIC report after GA, ways to better include youth participants, the importance of a pastoral tone for the event, and the remaining approvals for bylaw amendments and the rules of procedure.

### **Budget Approval**

Kathy Burek moved, Lucia Santini-Field seconded, the Board unanimously approved the following motion:



**DRAFT – NOT YET APPROVED BY THE BOARD**

*Given the uncertainties posed by the coronavirus pandemic, especially the impact to both revenues and expenses, the Board suspends Policy 2.6.1.1, requiring that the administration submit a balanced budget to the UUA Board, for FY2021. The Board and the Administration commit to refining this proposed FY2021 budget as more complete financial information becomes available.*

Kathy Burek moved, Patrick McLaughlin seconded, Board unanimously adopted the proposed FY2021 operating budget and consolidated budgets, including FY22 outyear budgets.

The Board affirmed that it intends to consider modifications to the FY21 budget in conversation with the COIC in the coming months about what resources are needed to move forward on their recommendations in the coming year.

**Closing**

Members and participants did a brief personal check-out, and the meeting ended at 3:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Carey McDonald

Recording Secretary



## Appendix A

Breakout group discussion points on moving forward with the report and recommendations of the Commission on Institutional Change.

*Summary of areas to move forward from Board member and staff conversations:*

- Repair relationship with the COIC members, address miscommunications
- Finalize Article II Study Commission charge and members
- Establish an intersectional accountability group to carry on the work of the COIC and the Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Committee
- Addressing difficulties with the Nominating and Appointments Committee processes
- Creating leadership development pipelines for UUA leadership
- Continuing to build systems of metrics and accountability
- Evaluation of working groups of the Board, UUA committees, and other commissions
- Doing an anti-oppressive and anti-racism assessment of the Board and governance approach to determine what is needed next
- Return to standardized model of anti-oppression trainings for Board and committee members
- Finalize potential bylaw changes to the Presidential search process
- Hold the value of collective empowerment and collaboration across our shared work, solidify values of Board culture and put them in the manual
- Charge to Administration to support youth and young adult programming and leadership holistically - leadership development, theological development, support system and doing justice and anti-racism work in the wider world
- Articulate clear goals for implementing the COIC's recommendations, administration will develop a work plan
- Continue review of regionalization
- Commit to revisions for the entire UUA Bylaws



*Summary of conversations with observers and other participants, answering the question: “what would you love for our governance to look like if it was fully realized in terms of anti-oppression, anti-racism and liberation living into our theology and values?”*

### Current Governance

- Mixed reactions to **Policy Governance**...some suggest education for board. And others feel it should not be used. Move from dismantling to building new and better.
- The **structure of the organization** is bulky and doesn't allow for flexibility. Hard for change to occur. UUs tend to think their own voice must be heard because Trust, Accountability, Relationships are not secure.
- Need **transparency** and more voices to be heard, which might be more possible with the opportunity for accessibility online.
- Need to **inspire** people to want to be involved and learn about governance at the regional or UUA level

- Need opportunities to **move beyond AR/AO/MC 101**. Even ministers who go to seminary without deep UU/Church experience leads to lower understanding of governance.

**Support for Improving Governance**

- We need more **grassroots engagement** that will come from **Lifespan Faith Formation that includes adults**, which will then build interest in our faith and can lead to support of governance. **Recognize the pipeline for engagement** has changed with the loss of districts., now congregational to national level.
- Generationally, we need to we **educate** all ages in our faith and combine youth, young adult and adults based on their level of understanding. Examples UU office of the United Nations spring seminar and RE Week at Ferry Beach.

**Communication and distribution of resources and information**, both digital and physical resources, with a particular shout out to youth resources. Also need ways to reach people who do not know about us.



## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES SCHEDULE**

- **Videoconference Meeting: May 11, 2020**  
8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. (Eastern)
- **Videoconference Meeting: May 18, 2020**  
8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. (Eastern)
- **Videoconference Meeting: June 1, 2020**  
8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. (Eastern)
- **Videoconference Meeting: June 8, 2020**  
8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. (Eastern)
- **Videoconference Meeting: June 15, 2020**  
8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. (Eastern)
- **Videoconference Meetings: June 2020**  
Tuesday, June 23—Wednesday, June 24, 2020: Board of Trustees Meeting  
Wednesday, June 24—Sunday June 28, 2020: General Assembly  
Monday, June 29, 2020: Board of Trustees Meeting
- **Videoconference Meeting: October 2020**  
Thursday, October 15 – Saturday, October 17, 2020
- **Videoconference Meeting: January 2021**  
Friday, January 22 – Saturday, January 23, 2021
- **Meeting: April 2021, TBD**  
Friday, April 22—Saturday, April 23, 2021
- **Meetings: June 2021, Milwaukee, WI**  
Tuesday, June 22—Wednesday, June 23, 2021: Board of Trustees Meeting  
Wednesday, June 23—Sunday June 27, 2021: General Assembly  
Monday, June 27, 2021: Board of Trustees Meeting

