

DPA OBSERVER NOTES
UUA BOARD MTG
APRIL 18-21, 2007

Wednesday April 18

The UUA Board held a deep chair conversation in regards to Excellence in Ministry. Beth Miller, Director of Ministry and Professional Leadership (MPL) was in attendance. The board talked about the different areas of ministry, for example: pastoral, inspirational, leadership model, entrepreneurial. Are the theological schools addressing all areas of ministry? What is the board's role?

Thursday April 19

Policy Governance

The UUA board met with Mary Higgins, District Executive of the New Hampshire/Vermont and Northeast districts. Mary has studied the Carver Policy Governance model and is assisting the UUA board as they move toward policy governance. Mary talked about listening to our owners (congregations) and their prophetic voice. The board has a responsibility to three things: linkage with its ownership (congregations), write policies based on linkage and education and then monitor the Executive or Executive Team.

Since the President of the UUA is elected, the Board (represented by the elected Moderator) and the President must work together. The President comes to the table with a "mandate" when elected and the President's issues should be added to the Ends Policy created by the Board, after listening to their owners (congregations).

Open Space

The UUA board invited Helen Bishop to talk with them about the use of Open Space Technology (OST) at General Assembly (GA) in June. Helen is adapting most of the principles of OST and is expecting a large number of participants. There will be a set time for starting and ending the OST workshops because of the other work that needs to be done at GA (workshops, plenary, etc).

The board participated in a mock trial of OST.

Helen explained that the first session will be an explanation of how OST will work during GA. Anyone can participate in OST (delegates, non delegates, staff, etc) but only delegates will be allowed to vote in the last session. Several workshops are available during different slots and people can move within different workshops if they don't want to be in a particular space.

UU Musicians Network (UUMN)

After dinner, the UUA board met with Elizabeth Norton, who was accompanied by several singers and musicians (including Deb Weiner). They had the board singing many hymns, most from the new hymnal. Elizabeth also spoke about the UUMN working with DRUUM (Diverse & Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries) and others about music at GA and cultural misappropriation of music. The board also talked with Elizabeth about credentialing for music professionals.

Friday April 20

Congregations Working Group

Cathy Cordes, Acting Director of the International Office stated that the job description is available for the Director position and they are hoping to have someone in place by the end of June

Partner Church Council: Will Saunders attended the meeting of the PCC. They appreciate the UUA board support and participation of the liaison. Will suggested that those organizations that benefit from UUA support should be open and transparent and also use the AR/AO/MC lens in their work

International Policy Statement: Will and the working group continue to work for new language to be added to the policy statement.

Rev. Jory Agate (Ministerial Fellowship Committee, Chair) The MFC and the UUA are looking at restorative justice for victims of clergy misconduct and also for families of ministers who have been accused of misconduct. Rev. Fred Muir, (UU Church of Annapolis, MD) also attended and spoke about safe congregations and the need for the UUA to address this issue. He has been involved with this issue for many years and feels that the MFC is a UUA board committee, so that the board needs to be clear about what they want to happen.

Joan Lund, UUA Board trustee from Florida District, brought about the issue of dual membership in two or more congregations. The working group felt that it is a congregational issue and not one for the UUA board. No action taken.

The issue of what to do with a congregation that is not a UUA member congregation, for example, Fountain Street Church, was raised but no action taken.

The congregations working group again will host a Congregational President's workshop on Saturday June 23 from 2:45pm-4:00pm. It will have a more facilitated structure than last year.

Friday Lunch

Rev. Ken Beldon, Wellsprings UU Church, PA met with members of the board at lunch. The Wellsprings congregation is in formation and Ken brought everyone up to date. They held their first public worship service in January with an attendance of about 200. The average attendance since then is about 90. Ken was very enthusiastic about his ministry.

Friday afternoon

The UUA Board met with Barbara Merritt (Panel on Theological Education, Chair) on the topic of "Excellence in Ministry". Barbara asked the board a question about accountability. If funding is given to our two UU seminaries, who are they accountable to on how they disperse the funds? Right now, it seems that there is no accountability to the panel, UUA or congregations. There is also no system to measure effectiveness and the panel has no authority. The Shelter Rock congregation awards approximately \$650,000 a year to the panel to disperse. The majority of that money goes to Starr King and Meadville Lombard.

Saturday April 21

The Board heard from Kay Montgomery, Executive V.P. of the UUA. Kay spoke about her wonderful trip to India and how the children were so impressive.

The Melcher Book Award will be given to an author who has previously won a Pulitzer Prize, Debby Applegate. Kay also mentioned that Banette Sherman has been hired as the Program Consultant for NH/VT and Northeast Districts.

The new UUA website is up and running! The Leaders Library will be available in a week or so. Kay also mentioned how much she appreciates the work of the UUA Treasurer, Tim Brennan.

Tim Brennan, UUA Treasurer gave his report to the Board. The audit committee was reviewing the management letter from the auditors and taking steps to address any issues. Tim is working on a better document for policies and procedures.

The FY 09 budget is being reviewed by Tim and the finance committee.

The GIF committee has selected a new small cap manager.

Paul Richter, UUA Board secretary reported that certification went well. All but 50 congregations certified on time, which is about 95% compliance). The 2007 elections

are not contested so that delegates will be asked to vote in plenary, rather than a written ballot. Paul is in discussion with anyone interested in running for the UUA President's position in 2009.

Jacki Shanty, First Vice Moderator for the UUA Board, reported that there were 2 articles in recent days in local newspapers about UU ministers. She also mentioned that she is looking at how to better manage reports that come to the Board. She also asked that the Board table a discussion on how to "fire" volunteers.

Living Our Faith Working Group:

1. During Open Space Technology, board members are encouraged to listen well during workshops.
2. Working group meeting notes will be going online.
3. The committee reviewed Paula Cole Jones' report to the Board
4. The group welcomed by motion a 120 page report from Joe Sullivan in regards to the Gulf Coast and a review of the work that was being done. Several points were:
 - a. Need an implementation plan from the UUA
 - b. UUSC needs a domestic plan
 - c. UUA-UUSC relationship needs to work on faith based organizing and fundraising
 - d. Congregational preparedness
5. The Journey Toward Wholeness co-chairs, Rev. Monica Cummings and Carolyn Cartland reported to the board on their work on behalf of the UUA. Several key points were:
 - a. Communication needs to improve between congregations, the districts and the UUA
 - b. Lesbian and gay ministers have gained more acceptance than bi-sexual, transgender, and Latino/a Hispanic ministers (probably because there is less direct experience with these ministers)
 - c. Less awareness of JTW issues in congregations because of leadership turnover
 - d. Need to end the shaming and blaming
 - e. Districts need to better track the AR/AO/MC work
 - f. Evaluation of district staff?

Recommendations:

- a. Ministers need to take a lead in order for transformation to happen
- b. The role of the MFC in regards to AR/AO/MC work needs to be defined
- c. Leadership, Methodology and Structure

Congregations Working Group: (see my report for Friday morning)

1. New Congregation report:

The board voted to accept the Unitarian Universalist Church of Hot Springs into affiliation with the UUA.

Growth Working Group:

1. UUA membership has grown 3.5% over the last five years. Reporting of attendance records is going well.
2. Draft for UU Congregational Growth Report includes strategies and tactics for growth. It will be a useful tool for UUA staff, district staff and growth teams.
3. Breakthrough Congregations are working on their videos for GA
4. UU University registration is 25% ahead of this time last year.
5. Ideas for Worship DVD will be available at a nominal cost to congregations.
6. Leaders in Growth will have a gathering in November to share experiences and capture the factors of their success.

7. DPA concern about minister's training re: growth: Ken Sawyer mentioned that requiring continuing education or some sort of re-certification for religious professionals has been raised in the past and not been received favorably by the UUMA (UU Minister's Association). The UUA could possibly provide growth training for ministers through CENTER or our districts.
8. Rev. Ken Beldon, Wellsprings congregation brought a power point, brochures and copies of Wellsprings "Core Values and Beliefs". All new members are required to take a 3 hour class and complete an Initial Gift Inventory. The four foundations of membership are spiritual growth, showing up, serving and sharing. As part of their commitment to membership, newcomers are given 10 copies of the Wellsprings brochure to share with friends.

Association Working Group

1. Religious Education Credentialing Committee Rule Change
The credentialing committee asked for a rule change regarding candidates being able to be considered for more than one status at a time. There seems to be an inconsistency in their rules. The committee voted to recommend a motion to change rule.
2. Consultation on Youth Ministry
The working group read the report to the board April 2007. Beth Dana and Jesse Jaeger attended the working group meeting and they expressed the hope that the report and recommendations would not "sit on a shelf and collect dust". Six themes came up that are worth mentioning here:
 - a. spiritual development in ministry to and with youth
 - b. more than a one size fits all approach for programming
 - c. preparing and supporting adults for ministry with youth
 - d. building an intergenerational community that integrates youth
 - e. welcoming all youth in a multicultural world
 - f. examining how the structures we have relate to and engage (or not) youth
3. Review and Discussion of Multicultural and Institutional Change
Competencies Report (October 2006)
The working group discussed the data and felt that it was time to articulate that we are called to do this work, not because of a GA resolution but because we are a faith community.
4. Election Process and Resources
The working group will recommend a motion that would have the resources of the UUA available for candidates. (See Sunday's motions on the UUA website)
5. Planning for GA 2007
The group will host a workshop for Homebred UUs
6. Independent Affiliate Update
A letter will go out to applicants explaining the reason why they were not afforded independent affiliate status according to the new UUA guidelines. Copies will be sent to the trustee, DE and DP where appropriate.
Independent Affiliate status will be granted upon Board approval to :
 - a. Council of Unitarian Universalists Camps and Conferences
 - b. Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry

Governance Working Group

1. The working group will ask the Coordinating Committee to schedule several educational pieces on future agendas. There will also be a recommendation for time to go over policies, how to communicate with owners, and budgeting for training of new trustees.
2. Desire Personal Qualities of Trustees
 - a. How trustees think is more important than what they know
 - b. Openness to new ideas

- c. Willingness to challenge themselves and others, within covenantal relationships
 - d. Desire to grow and change
 - e. A deep sense of accountability to the moral owners of the Association
3. Publishing Working Group notes
The working group felt that publishing “rough” notes is not constructive and recommends that maybe one trustee becomes a communications officer if monitoring reports and other comments aren’t sufficient.
 4. Openness Implementation Committee Motion
The working group would like to see the OIC charter be amended as to continue through Dec. 2009 to work during the UUA board transition to the new governance model.

Finance Committee

1. FY08 Capital Expenditures Budget
Basically capital expenditures are about ½ of what was expected so depreciation will be down significantly (renovations at 25 Beacon were pushed to FY08)
2. FY09 Operating Budget
The board will vote to receive the FY09 operating budget at Sunday’s meeting
3. Comprehensive Campaign
40% of goal has been realized including 70% of cash goal
4. Stewardship and Development
Friends of the UUA income is up about 30% from last year
At least 8 districts are undergoing transitions with their APF chair.
5. GIF Marketing update
A brochure is being developed. A name change for the fund is being considered
6. Investment Committee
Performance is about 9.5% return. The committee is looking for greater diversification. The CSRI (committee for socially responsible investing) is looking at certain stocks to divest re: Darfur issue
7. Beacon Press
Beacon Press is on track to exceed plan and bottom line.
8. Health Insurance
Right now, the numbers are looking good. There are approx. 1000 subscribers from about 200 congregations, with about ½ being ministers.
9. Compensation Guidelines
A new category has been added with Mid-Size II (now 250-349)being split and adding a Mid-Size III (350-499 members)
10. IT Update
The new UUA web page is up and running.
11. FY09 APF Ask amount will be raised by \$2 to a total of \$56 per
The Board will vote on Sunday.

Ministerial Fellowship Committee

1. Community Ministry
Community Ministry has become a compelling choice for preparing for the UU ministry but it is also increasingly difficult for community ministers to affiliate with a UU congregation during fellowship.
2. Executive Committee Members
The UUMA proposed to the MFC that a UUMA representative be put on the MFC Executive Committee. The Board feels that that should be left up to the chair of the MFC however, the board liaisons on the MFC reminded the board that currently there is no requirement or even expectation of consultation between the UUMA and the MFC chair regarding the UUMA’s appointment of representatives on the MFC

and also no input from the UUA board coordinating committee. The MFC is accountable to the board, so should there be some input or responsibility on the board for who is selected to sit on the MFC from the UUMA?

General Assembly Planning Committee (GAPC)

1. The GAPC was wondering about who is accountable for the significant change in programming (Open Space) at GA this year since it was at the Board's request.
2. Concerns have arisen about gang activity near the convention center so the GAPC is encouraging our youth to meet with the police about safety issues.
3. The 2010 site has been moved back to Minneapolis.
4. Trustees are being asked to help with ushering, etc at the Ware lecture.

Congregations Come First (CCF)

Roger Comstock and David Friedman, UUA board trustees gave a brief update on CCF. I was asked to also participate in the discussion since I am on the CCF team. We apprised the board of the pushing back of our report to the board, making it later than the January '08 originally date. The team will be meeting in St. Louis May 17-20.

At the conclusion of the Saturday afternoon meeting, I had to leave to catch a plane. I thanked the UUA board and staff for their hospitality during my attendance at the 3 board meetings this year. It was a wonderful experience and my hat goes off to each and every board member for their hard work and sense of commitment to our Association.

On Sunday, President Bill Sinkford and Moderator Gini Courter gave their reports to the Board. I apologize for missing them.

Please check the official Board minutes for all motions made on Sunday.

www.uua.org/board

Elyse M. Reznick
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2006-2007 President, DPA