

Report of District President's Association Observer at UUA Board of Trustees Meeting
Kathy Burek, President, District President's Association
June 25, 2012

It was an honor and a privilege to observe the Board of Trustees, along with UUA Moderator Candidates Jim Key and Tamara Payne-Alex, and *UUA World* reporter Michelle Deakin, for the Board's post-GA meeting.

Supreme Court Ruling on SB 1070: The meeting began with discussion of the just-announced Supreme Court decision striking down key pieces of Arizona's SB 1070. While the "show me your papers" requirement was left standing, there were strong indications that the court would entertain challenges in the future. The court also cautioned law enforcement against racial profiling in making such requests. The court's decision was viewed as a welcome culmination to a week of action against SB 1070.

UUA President Rev. Peter Morales had already issued a statement on behalf of our Association which he showed the board (see <http://www.uua.org/news/pressroom/pressreleases/208906.shtml>). The *Boston Globe* and the *Guardian* asked for interviews during the meeting, which President Morales accommodated. Our Tent City Vigil received quite a bit of coverage, in the US and globally.

Introductions: Board members introduced themselves to the newly-elected Youth Observer, Katherine Allen of Unity Church Unitarian, St. Paul, MN, and to the new DPA Observer, Kathy Burek, President of Prairie Star District.

Major Items: The majority of the meeting focused on two planned agenda items. One was the process for nominating 4 board members to complete two year terms. This action is part of transitioning from the current board size and composition, to a smaller board elected at large. Members of the Board also shared their assessments of "Justice GA", completed the day before.

Process for Implementing the Bylaws Change Reducing the Number of UUA Trustees: The board engaged in a lengthy discussion of the process for nominating trustees to serve as the board is downsized. The board's original schedule called for a recommendation at the October meeting; this does not align with the Nominating Committee's schedule, which has a September 30 deadline.

The board came to consensus on several key points:

- Board members agreed that they would first like to identify the qualities, experience and skills they would like to see in their nominees.
- The names of board members interested in continuing to serve will be forwarded to other board members in Executive Session; this information is not to be shared outside the board

- Board members may participate in the qualifications process discussion without being in violation of the Board's conflict of interest policy
- The Board Qualities Process Exploration Team will be chaired by Caileb, and will include Jeanne, Natty, Jake, and David F. They will gather information from board members and recommend a process
- Trustees will be asked to provide input within the next two weeks for the task force working on this issue
- The board will meet by phone on July 26 to discuss and adopt a process
- The board will name its four persons in August; Dan Brody will develop a process for selecting the four board nominees, similar to that used to choose the two moderator candidates

GA Assessment: Overall, members of the Board were pleased at how Justice GA went. It was felt that the partnerships and relationships that were built played an important part in the successful outcome.

- Board members expressed the modeling of leadership and partnership and expressions of gratitude among parties working on GA
- There were varied opinions regarding music. Some were positive, others expressed concerns about some of the choices of music and musicians, and whether these reflected diversity or were appropriate to the theme.
- Board members noted the need to care for leaders.
 - The Right Relationship Team is often put in the position of being chaplains or mediators, when their role is to bring systemic issues to the attention of delegates.
 - Several Trustees were dealing with personal health or family issues during GA; they appreciated the support of other Trustees
- It was noted that there was far more participation in worship and workshop leadership on the part of DRUUMM members than in the past. Board members valued the opportunity to do linkage work with youth. Facilitators were asked by Linda Laskowski to turn in their notes ASAP.
- It was noted that delegates did high quality work on business items this year, focusing on the important, There was some feeling that not having AIWs contributed to the positive outcomes
- Board members also shared the gratitude expressed by several members of the hotel staff for our work at this GA.

What Next for GA?:

- There was discussion about how we can continue to do our GA "business as usual" at the high level of this year's Plenary Sessions
- The Board will discuss bringing the recommendations of the Fifth Principle Task Force to the GA delegates next year.

- The Commission on Social Witness would like recommendations from the Board on Actions of Immediate Witness. Lew, Michael, Sarah, Clyde, Graham, Dan, Jake volunteered to work on that issue
- Members of the Board agreed that a discussion leading to a new understanding of covenant needs to be on the agenda at this time, or we may miss a crucial opportunity.

Adjustments to the Schedule of Monitoring Reports: Board members made adjustments to the schedule of monitoring reports based on actions taken at their June 20 meeting.

Rules Changes to Implement Bylaws Changes: Deferred until September due to questions about the meaning of “adult members” and whether for delegate allocation purposes, people can belong to a physical congregation and the CLF.

Work with Puente: A number of board members planned to work during the afternoon with Puente AZ, one of our partner organizations.

Board members went into Executive Session to discuss appointments.

Observation:

One indication of the impact of our work at GA came just prior to the meeting. Our breakfast server (whose name I’ll withhold to protect his privacy) expressed his appreciation for our witness. He also told President Morales about a review, in the *Phoenix New Times*, of a book* contending that Sheriff Arpaio neglected to investigate serious crimes as a result of his focus on undocumented immigrants. Our server brought several copies of the article for the board to read during the break. Board members were clearly interested in this information.

Historically, people in serving positions, especially people of color, would be expected to “know their place”, and would be largely invisible to those they serve. Even today, I would guess most people barely notice those who serve them, except to make a request, a demand, or to complain. Our work at this GA impressed our server enough for him to feel that he could step beyond the servant role to share information about an important issue. The Board’s response validated his action. This is anti-racism and anti-oppression behavior in action.

**If There Were Any Victims*, by Bill Louis, El Mirage Police Chief (retired)