

MINUTES

Michigan Conference United Church of Christ ~ Board of Directors

Via Zoom

September 19, 2020

Present: Judith Booker (president), Greg Briggs, Ruth Moerdyk, Karen Wheeler, Phil Hart (Transitional Conference Minister), Cheryl Burke (Associate Conference Minister), Akua Budu-Watkins, Ralph Sims, Mary Ann Martin, Ivana Barrow, Phiwa Langeni (Moderator), Liz Larrivee, Judy Furman

Absent: Helene Singer, Dan Spaulding

Agenda Moved and seconded to adopt consent agenda. Passed

Minutes Moved and seconded to approve minutes of July 2020 Board meeting. Passed

Board of Directors Responsibilities

Judith Booker reminded Board members that each of them is required by the Conference by-laws to serve on a Mission Area Team. Checked to see that all members are doing so.

Financial Reports

Karen Wheeler, Treasurer, reviewed previously distributed financial reports. Moved and seconded to accept financial reports. Passed.

2021 Budget

Karen Wheeler reviewed previously distributed proposed budget for 2021. Moved and seconded to approve proposed budget for 2021. Passed.

Treasurer's Report

Karen Wheeler reviewed previously distributed treasurer's report. Moved and seconded to approve treasurer's report.

Moved and seconded to affirm recent action by the Budget & Finance Committee regarding investments and to direct Budget & Finance Committee to bring a suggested process regarding the sale and movement of investments to the January 2021 Board meeting. Passed.

Property Updates

Phil Hart reported on a recent casual inquiry from a possible buyer for the Parish House property. After discussion, moved and seconded to authorize the Conference Minister, in consultation with the Business & Finance Committee, to investigate potential sale or reuse of all East Lansing property. Passed.

Phil reminded the Board that permission to sell Camp Talahi was given to the Board at the Annual Meeting 10 years ago. He also reported that Horse Powered People (HPP) has made an offer \$900,000 for the property; it has recently been appraised for \$1.28 million. After discussion, moved and seconded to authorize a \$1.2 million counteroffer to HPP regarding the sale of Camp Talahi property and to undertake negotiations with HPP regarding the potential sale of the property. Passed

Update Annual Meeting 2020

Phiwa Langeni reported that plans for the meeting were proceeding, and noted the need for tech help administering the meeting, as well as their awareness of the need for a better-organized record of meeting details that need tending each year.

Update Search Committee for Conference Minister

Judith Booker reported that the Executive Committee was beginning to receive responses to applications for the Search Committee.

Update Nomination Committee

Greg Briggs, Vice-president, reported that Ivana Barrow, Judith Booker, and Liz Larivee had been working to gather nominations. The Treasurer and General Synod delegate positions have yet to be filled.

Resolution for Annual Meeting 2020 - "Encouraging a Plant-based Life"

A previously distributed proposed resolution for 2020, sent but not fully approved by Prophetic Integrity MAT, was discussed and found to not meet the Conference guidelines regarding resolutions.

Moved and seconded that the Board finds the resolution "Encouraging a Plant-Based Life" to be out of order for the following reasons:

- its length does not conform to Conference resolution guidelines
- lines 10 & 11 do not conform to Conference resolution guidelines regarding conflicting and ambiguous language (found in section 3.2 of the guidelines)
- the resolution does not conform to guidelines regarding avoiding inflammatory language (section 3.2 of guidelines) nor to the guideline that resolutions and their accompanying statements not be written in a way that "brings into question the Christian commitment of those who disagree with the authors" (Section 3.6 of the guidelines). This point emerges from the cited quotations from A. Breeze Harper and the statement that "Living in love is our greatest commandment, but animal consumption violates that in myriad ways..." included as part of the resolution's biblical and theological rationale.

Transitional Conference Minister update

Phil's verbal report included:

- the need for an ongoing need to look at Conference process and procedures to help assure that power and process are held in, and conducted by, the appropriate individuals and committees
- deep thanks and appreciation for the Conference staff
- recognition of Bob Heisler's resignation letter and thoughts about filling Business Manager position, including:
 - the Conference Minister is tasked with hiring staff positions; will consult with the Business & Finance Committee
 - process may include a reconsideration of what is needed in the position
- the need for ongoing examination of how best to use Conference money
- a desire to celebrate Bob's retirement well, despite present circumstances

Next Meeting: Saturday, November 21, 2020

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth Moerdyk, Secretary