

**Michigan Conference UCC
Board of Directors
DRAFT Minutes
September 17, 2017 - Approved**

Meeting at First Congregational Church of Chelsea

Excused absence: Akua Budu-Watkins

Other absences:

Board Members Present: Greg Briggs, Judith Furman, Karen Wheeler (treasurer), Dan Spaulding, Vaughn Peterson, Ruth Moerdyk (secretary), Coni Simons, Judith Booker (moderator), Karen Holcomb-Merrill (board chair), Ralph Sims, Dennis Green, George Bozanich

Staff Present: Campbell Lovett, Conference Minister; Cheryl Burke, Associate Conference Minister; Bob Heisler, Business Manager

Introductions

Devotions by Rev. Joe Jeffreys, of host church

Consent agenda adopted with changes:

- Board nominees moved to after lunch; executive committee needs to meet over lunch
- After Conference Minister report, Karen Holcomb-Merrill will offer comments on annual “check-in” with Campbell and herself, Judith, Coni

Minutes of July Meeting Approved

Financial report

- Karen Wheeler reviewed end of July figures; deficit for year currently about \$64,000 but other figures are running close to projections. Hard to assess at this point what end of year will look like.
- 2018 Budget
 - Projected deficit of about \$77,000
 - Bob Heisler reviewed budget-building process
 - Bob Heisler reviewed proposed budget
 - Bob Heisler reviewed practices re: current use of restricted funds
 - Karen Wheeler raised concern re: decreases in OCWM giving (down \$50,000 since 2014)
 - Accommodating deficit of 2018 budget would require using more of restricted funds than current practice.
 - Karen Wheeler reviewed history of investments

- Karen Wheeler named need to “take a hard look” at matching income and expenditures; possible need to “free up” assets
- Bob Heisler named possibility of reducing staff benefits in future; not fair to put deficit on “backs of employees” in his judgment

Moved and seconded to draw no more than 6%, based on 3-year average return, from Church Development Fund, Bows Lake Fund, and Conference Endowment Fund in order to meet projected deficit for 2018 budget.

- Further discussion of need to address financial circumstances and practices over a long-term.

Moved and seconded to create a task force to study long-range funding for Conference. Failed.

Moved and seconded to charge Budget and Finance Committee to look at long-term financial matters and funding for Conference and to bring a recommendation to Board. Passed.

Annual meeting and updates

- Campbell Lovett needs board volunteers from Board:
 - Worship reader
 - Offer OCWM thanks
 - Introduce retirees
 - Introduce new ministers to UCC churches
 - Introduce keynote speaker
 - Introduce Murdale Leysath Leadership Award winner
 - Present nominating slate
 - Prayer before dinner and lunch
 - Moderators for hearings
 - Manage speakouts
- Consensus reached to forward UCC bylaws revision to Michigan Annual Meeting
- Campbell Lovett mentioned a resolution re: repositories for archives that was not forwarded to Annual Meeting
- Campbell Lovett shared request from Faithful and Welcoming Congregations to attend Annual Meeting to address proposed resolution re: during hearing for Stewardship of Exhibit Space. Discussion followed, with general consensus reached that Faithful and Welcoming Congregations attendee should be welcomed and invited to participate in hearing on resolution.

Lunch Break

Item from Cheryl Burke

- UNA has accepted request from Zion Church in Brutus church to withdraw from denomination.
- *Moved and seconded to accept request by Zion Church in Brutus to withdraw from denomination. Passed*

Nominees for Board

- Karen Holcomb-Merrill presented a proposed slate:
 - George Bozanich, Moderator
 - Karen Wheeler, Treasurer
 - Dan Spaulding, continuing another term
 - Judith Furman, continuing another term
 - Akua Budu-Watkins, continuing another term
 - Ivona Barrow, first term, filling an at-large position
 - Judith Booker, first term, filling an at-large position*Moved and seconded to approve the proposed slate for presentation and vote at Annual Meeting*
- A question came up about Dennis Green's term. The possible need for him to be added to slate will be clarified.
- Karen Holcomb-Merrill clarifies that the Board will need to select a new chair when the new Board convenes, as this is her last meeting. Many thanks were extended to Karen for her work.

UCC Constitution Bylaws Amendments

- Previously ratified by consensus

Conference Minister Report

- Campbell reviewed his written report and asked what else may need to be covered in his report to Annual Meeting. Suggestions included:
 - Clarifying that the use of church development funds used to help cover personnel costs (rather than going directly to congregations) is appropriate, as staff fill some church development functions.
 - Clarifying what staff are covering various areas of Conference work, especially in light of hire of new Area Minister for SWA and Grand West with additional responsibilities in Latinx ministries.
- Seeking to strengthen churches as prophetic voice
- Campbell noted that improvements to the Conference website are underway

Annual "Check-in" with Conference Minister

- Campbell's objectives touched on. Shared expression and appreciation of his work and all conference staff work
- Ongoing challenges re: self-care. Will consider taking small 'chunks' of time off next year, as a 3-month sabbatical does not seem possible.

- Board. Governance work
- Challenges include addressing funding and future changes in funding structures in the wake of Synod resolution re: denominational funding

MAT Updates

- PIMAT: Work on funding requests and resolutions
- Faith Formation: Work on Immanuel scholarships; provided funding for trip to Germany by some representatives from Conference
- Vital Growth: Decisions are pending on innovation awards; there are three times more requests than money is available for
- Compassionate generosity: Reconfiguring; new members coming on.

Cheryl added that four Communities of Practice for clergy are meeting.

Adjournment