

**MBD Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2008**

The meeting was held at the MBD offices in Watertown, MA.

Present

Directors: Geoff Beckwith, John Laurenson (Secretary), Pat Manley (Vice-President and Chief Governing Officer), Lynne Merl, Lilli Nye, Melissa Quirk (President), Jacki Rohan.

MBD Staff: Terasa Cooley (District Executive), Sue Phillips (Program Consultant).

MBD Moderator: Sheldon Bennett.

UUA Trustee: Paul Rickter.

The meeting was called to order at 8:50am with opening words from Melissa.

Action: Acceptance of the Minutes of June 7, 2008

Approved without amendment.

Administrative Matters

Policy Governance Review

Pat attended a conference in Texas on Policy Governance and policy development and returned with suggestions to edit out the negative policies, replace the term "owner" (considered a pejorative term among some cultures) with "MBD congregations" or "users," and reduce overall length. A summary reason for change and a draft revision was sent to directors in August.

Action: Approved, but to continue to include the current numbering system, add the summary to the top of the revision, and add revision date.

MBD Report

DE, Terasa Cooley, highlighted matters around the District: Reviewing the MBD office tech resources and needs, numerous well-attended programs conducted, Fall Conference to be held in November, reviewing the Woburn Grant process.

Acting Director of Program Development, Sue Phillips, highlighted some of her activities since joining the staff: Active support of RE Directors in Life Faith Development, creating team approach with Terasa, job title indicates that Sue's role includes acting as advisor to optimal changes to be made to this position and maintain support to the District's DRE's. MBD granting \$5k to the N. Atlantic LAREDA group over the next two years. Sue will retain role as "first caller" for ministers and DRE's, then consider others for further contact.

President's Report

Melissa participated in a variety of national and District meetings and workshops, most notably GA and the quarterly national District President's meeting in CO.

UUA Liaison/Trustee Report

Paul, with the UUA Trustees will interrupt their 4 day meeting to participate in the NE Fall Conference in October. Consideration of suggested revision to Article 2 of the UUA Bylaws: "Purposes and Principles." Generally, the possible changes involve the addition of an elucidation of each of the Principles. Youth Ministry Working Group considering new recommendations. UUA planning to move to a Policy Governance model during the beginning of the term of the new President. Shift in GA programming announced: UU University to be mainstreamed into the meeting into nine tracks with different topics.

Name Change

Per the approval of the recent by-law changes in April, the name of the legal name of the MBD is: The Massachusetts Bay District of Unitarian Universalist Congregations. Changes to office letterhead and signage will occur over the next year.

Board Treasurer Role

Nancy Nichols has faithfully held the role of "Treasurer" for several years and now asks for clarification of the role under Policy Governance. Though the Board oversees all aspects of the District, it does not directly create the budget. Does the Board need to create a policy that the Treasurer selected by the DE or the Financial Committee inform the Board directly of any malfeasance? Revisions to Governance Policies 1.4.2.1 will be considered.

UUA Marketing Campaign and the MBD Board's Role

The discussion involved what role the Board has in the marketing campaigns of the UUA and the concerns of MBD congregations to that marketing. The view was that this is a matter of the UUA and concerns of MBD congregations should be directed to the MBD Liaison.

Financials

District waiting for matching funds. Conflict noted between DE Limitation Policies and Governance Policies. Dues raised: \$160k conservatively expected given current economic environment. Format needs to be developed when the Board identifies compliance issues.

Task: Melissa will work with Terasa on above.

Delegate Role Definition, Assigning Congregations

Geoff and Lynne developed a draft "job description" for discussion. How might the role be supported within the congregations? –That one of the three delegates would be a liaison with a Director representing the District. Pat suggested a monthly communication with liaisons, Lynne a quarterly report. Given this level of involvement, what does the board need that will not conflict with District services?

Delegates are responsible to the Board. What do we expect from the liaison? Separate feedback from the congregations about the District's work. The survey is to be sent out, by the District, only to those congregations receiving services. More direct contact with Directors would permit communication with those who do not. Do we need another evaluative means to aid contact between Directors and congregations in terms of education about services?

Tasks:

Geoff, Jackie, and Melissa will develop some standardized "talking points."

Melissa will divide the congregations among the 7 Directors. Directors will, in turn, contact assignments to alert them that we'll be sending material.

Services Survey

Terasa made several revisions to the draft and Directors suggested additional changes, upon which all agreed that it was ready to be used.

Nominating Committee Policy Revisions

Melissa made several revisions to the current document to which the Board added a few more.

Task: Melissa will contact the Nominating Committee about these changes.

Discussion Topic

Future Topics: "Faith Development" will be December's topic. Send suggestions for further topics to Melissa.

Task: Pat and Lilli will facilitate December's topic on Faith Development.

This Meeting's Discussion Topic: "Intergenerational Ministries"

Led by Melissa and Pat. Topic materials had been previously sent to participants.

Terasa provided an overview of the topic: How the District attempts to address the topic and offer the necessary services.

MBD Ends serve the future of Unitarian Universalism rather than members, *per se*. Traditionally, MBD was supporting only those youth who attended COMs. Now, what are the best means to support youth within UUism? Why are we not attracting them into congregations, thereby serving the future?

An issue identified by many congregations is that they are not explicitly welcoming youth because "they don't *have* youth to attract." Without sufficient structure, these congregations will not survive.

Terasa asked for advice about the current age range used to assess "youth." She feels that it is too broad for which to create one attractor. Also, how to develop a practice and means to allow for more generational community?

Currently, the District is offering a campus ministry training to develop a more explicit UU presence on campuses.

Pat asked what is it about UU that *should* be attractive to youth?— Such as its encouragement of idealism and social change. Melissa asked just what are the distinct groups of youth that come to a UU congregation?

- Youngsters brought to church for Sunday School.
- Older youth (high school, college) who are finding themselves.
- Young adults who come to church and want to find others of the same age.

What is the District's developmental role in encouraging the involvement of youth in our congregations? Lilli asked what kind of tools and guidelines could be offered to help them integrate better. It was noted that congregations can offer resistance to attracting youth by not making the necessary accommodations specific to what youth seek in a church. Some of these accommodations include:

- Foster larger sense of UU identity besides simply "being a member of the church."
- Emphasis on Social Justice initiatives that have especial relevancy for youth.
- Active spiritual development that addresses faith development through life.
- Structures that are geared for short-term involvement.
- Holding vibrant worship services.

Terasa offers some suggestions to consider:

- Create an endowment for a full time Youth Coordinator. Such a position cannot be sustained by dues alone.
- UUA create a multi-district F/T position that could serve, say, the NE region.
- Increase program fees.
- Use the Woburn Fund to seed an endowment to support a Multi-Generational Ministry position. The District may use this fund as it sees fit, not only for grants.

- Supporting groups of churches to develop a youth ministry position. Again, an endowment would be most helpful here; Churches with primarily adult congregations and few youth, but support the multi-generational concept.)

Often significant life events may impel people to church, but that's not why they continue to go. What are the bridges or thresholds required to help people move from one life position to the next. Terasa feels that the Board affirms this approach within congregations. The Chalice Lighters program may be another means that can support youth development.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 1:15pm. The next Board Meeting is on December 13, 2008.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Laureson, Secretary