

**Massachusetts Bay District  
Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes  
December 13, 2008**

**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: Greg Buckland (Youth and Young Ministries Coordinator), Terasa Cooley (District Executive).

MBD Moderator: Sheldon Bennett.

The meeting was called to order at 8:50am with opening words from Melissa and lighting of the chalice.

Director Lynne Merle announced her need to resign from the Board due to personal reasons.

Geoff offered a new e-mail address to use: gbeckwith@mma.org.

Action: The Minutes of the September 27, 2008 Board Meeting were approved.

The Agenda was amended to include discussion of the Annual Meeting.

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

**Executive Director's Report**

Terasa described the current revenue streams as being adequate to provide consistent income. Cuts, if they need to occur, can come from adjustments to program offerings. Recent grant application for young adult ministry was not approved. However, an application will be made for a more extensive grant in the spring for this essential program.

Other report highlights: Programs have been very popular. Sue Phillip's participation has greatly enhanced these resources. Generally, congregations appear to be stable within the District. Technical Consultant has been contracted to help develop optimal communication methods. District is now authorized to perform CORI checks; this new offering will be advertised to congregations. Integration of UU University into GA moving forward; 6 tracks available: governance, stewardship, theology, social justice, and multiculturalism, multi-generational.

**TASKS:**

- Terasa, Sue and Melissa will draft a letter to be sent to congregations on framing upcoming stewardship drives with info on Stewardship Conversations Workshop on February 5, 2009.
- Jackie will work with Terasa on developing the content for this workshop.

**President's Report**

Melissa attended a UUA Board meeting in October to help form the discussion around setting Ends for the move to Policy Governance on July 1, 2009. Other critical matters need to be addressed: reduced Board size, staff controlled committees and UUA President's oversight under such circumstances, and clarifying relationship between UUA Trustee and District Board. All this information will need to be communicated to congregations in a manner that will not create confusion.

Melissa also attended the District Presidents meeting in November and will be posting information from this meeting on the website soon.

**Policy Governance Review**

Pat has reviewed all the changes to the Ends Policy made by the Board in September and confirms that they are consistent with the Limitations Policy.

**TASK:**

Pat will review the Limitations Policy for possible inconsistencies and send summary by e-mail to all for their review.

**Discussion Concerning Incorporating Decisions into Ends Policy**

As substantial issues are considered and changed, the Ends need to be adjusted to remain in line with these changes. A method to do so in a timely manner needs to be developed. One idea is to state the Ends as outcomes that are then clarified with bullets; i.e., "Growing UUism" is an outcome clarified by, say, "Maintaining a strong Youth Ministry."

**TASK:**

Lilli and John will help to shape a format by which discussions of the Board may be shared with congregations. Geoff suggested that we bear in mind that congregations likely just want to know what the 'District' is up to, and are not interested in the Board, per se.

**Policy Governance Staff Review Process**

The Board evaluates the Executive Director's work according to its consistency with the Ends and the Limitations Policies. Terasa suggested a kind of on-going method of evaluation by offering to organize her reports around the Ends. Other concerns are how merit is credited. –How does Harlan make his determinations? What kinds of affirmation can the President make that is credible as the President has no role in the raising of finances. Another complication concerns to the dual funding sources of the DE's salary.

**TASK:**

- Melissa with contact Harlan Limpert for clarification of the review process of the District Executive.

**Delegate and Liaison Roles**

Descriptions have been drafted but require further refinement with more streamlined, clarifying, and affirming language.

**Task:**

- Geoff will further develop the delegate and liaison descriptions and send out to Pat and John preliminary review before sending off to whole group.

**Directors Contact with Congregations**

Directors had a variety of results from their contact of assigned congregations. Many offices would only offer to forward an e-mail to the Governing Board President rather than give out phone numbers or e-mail addresses directly. Many presidents wanted to be the liaison. Lilli suggested that Directors contact the minister directly for a contact person. A concern was voiced over whether this contact by Directors was creating some confusion in the congregations about the different or overlapping communications coming from Trustees, Board, District Staff, UUA, etc.

**TASK:**

Directors will complete their contacts to assigned congregations by the end of January 2009.

**Annual Meeting: April 25, 2009**

Terasa has recommended a new format with a breakfast business meeting for delegates in the early morning followed by a conference/workshop in the later morning for the delegates and the larger community. The business meeting will include some visioning work with a consultant. Terasa has also offered to lead the conference on the topic of spiritual development based on a similar conference she recently led in Seattle to a couple hundred participants.

**TASKS:**

- Melissa will contact the Nominating Committee about this year's nomination needs and to fill the Director's seat vacated by Lynne Merle.
- Pat will work with Melissa on AM preparation with Paul.

## **DISCUSSION: FAITH DEVELOPMENT**

The topic for this month was rephrased to include research conducted by Terasa Cooley.

Background: Faith Development used to be managed by Liz Strong (now retired) in her role as District Consultant directly supporting the DRE's of congregations. Sue Phillips's role, as Acting Director of Program Development, is very different and broader in scope. Most congregations have p/t DRE's who often do not have professional qualifications. Frequently RE in congregations tends to cater more to children rather than promoting Life Faith Development. The Ends of the District may not necessarily be reflected in the staffing structures of the congregations, often because they don't know how to set up such an organization rather than lack of interest in the Ends.

Terasa's research involves taking a multi-generational view to faith development, based upon the primary work of Strauss and Howe as presented in their book, Generations, as well as the later work of Winograd and Hais in their book, Millennial Makeover. The general theory is that change occurs over 4 generational periods as 'Generational Cycling' wherein each generation, each of which has very different life experiences, teaches and informs the next. Change occurs in a non-linear and concurrently dynamic time frame, rather than the assumed accumulation of past events leading to the now.

The current generational participants and their general traits are: *Depression/WW2*; i.e., "*The Greatest Generation*" (idealistic, civic minded, sacrifice); *Baby Boomers* (self-involved, entitled); *GenX* (cynical, raising themselves, eschewing values of parents); *Millennial* (civic responsibility, technologically savvy).

It would seem that Unitarian Universalism would be a faith-based organization of great appeal to the Millennial Gen. Yet UUism is not growing much. How might this research inform us how to better show the relevance of UUism? Other characteristics of the Millennial Gen include: multi-ethnic comfort, viewing the future as "positive," interest in subtlety rather than broad views, pro-institutional, identity as a non-issue (race, gender orientation, social class are irrelevant and obsolete), group oriented ("in touch by constant communication through technologies such as Facebook, democratic), service (it makes a difference), and global mind-set (that we're all in it together).

In many ways, the Millennial Gen espouses much of Unitarian Universalism in its potential.

Discussion to be continued . . .

### **TASK:**

- Geoff and Jackie will lead the next meeting's discussion topic on Finances.

### **Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 1:15pm. The next Board Meeting is on March 7, 2009 at the MBD Offices.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Laursen, Secretary