

**MBD Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes  
March 3, 2009**

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

**Present**

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

MBD Staff: Terasa Cooley (District Executive), Sue Phillips (Program Consultant), Greg Buckland (Youth Advisor).

UUA Trustee: Paul Rickter.

Vice President, Pat Manley, acting in the absence of Melissa, called the meeting to order at 8:50am.

**Action: Acceptance of the Minutes of December 3, 2008**

Approved without amendment.

**District Executive Report (handout)**

Report on the District Ends

District staff met in retreat to plan the 09-10 program year. Newsletter focusing on specific topics and inserts offered to congregations for their Orders of Service. This out reach will be addressed at the Annual Meeting. Newsletter will also include information programming. Many congregations have requested a variety of assistance. Much work has been put into the budget.

The Woburn Fund has around \$850k remaining. The fund was formed by the sale of the Woburn congregation and its use is at the discretion of the District. Around 12 years ago grants began to be distributed to District congregations, managed by Sue Adams. This has become the traditional use of the Fund. Sue Phillips recently restructured the process for applying for grants, and developed more objective and reliable guidelines for the grants panel.

There are several unfunded mandates defined in the budget, particularly the Youth and Young Adult ministries. –The Woburn Fund could possibly fund these.

This year, 20 congregations have applied for grants totaling around \$167k. The allocation for this year's allocation is \$57k. Terasa is considering using \$20k to fund a Youth and Campus Ministry Advisor.

The Chalice lighters program is being resumed. The plan is to raise funds from District congregations and combine with an amount from the Woburn Fund to create a new fund to assist congregations in particular need; the idea being to help develop a sense of responsibility by all congregations to each other.

**Budget Review**

Terasa asked the Board to be aware of the complicated situation of the budget. A decrease in financial support from congregations is possible, though there is cautious optimism that it will not be too much. A transfer from reserves will be necessary to reduce the \$9k deficit.

ACTION: This review was at the request of the DE. The Board offered a general endorsement to use the Woburn Fund for strategic District purposes and to continue its traditional use upon the discretion of the DE.

**Survey Results**

The response frequency and count were recorded for each question and the staff created an interpretive summary. Notable highlights include:

- 75% of congregations consider their membership to be growing, though district data shows a 3% drop in overall membership. District membership only includes those who sign congregation membership books. However, some congregations are growing.
- A large percentage of current UU's have been so for 10 years plus; possibly indicating a need to reach out to new people.
- Results indicate that ministers are very aware of district services and are encouraging their use to congregational leaders.

### **Title Change**

Terasa has asked the board to affirm the change of Sue Phillips title to Director of Program Development (by removing the currently preceding "Acting") and her intention to make this position permanent. Lilli pointed out that congregations are concerned about the level of RE services available and that needs to be taken into account as we move forward.

ACTION: Board affirms this change and will ask their congregation's RE Directors for direction on perceived needs.

### **Board Nominating Committee Connection:**

The committee needs support to remain sufficiently intact to complete its charge as an autonomous group. Pat provided minimal intervention by holding conversations with members to help with organization and has suggested the following means of maintaining appropriate connection:

- Developing sufficient relationship with the committee to help members in recognizing their involvement as way of supporting a larger view of the faith.
- Creating a liaison by promoting a structure of continuity whereby the current, past and upcoming Chairs are sitting on the committee; also that the District Board president stepping down from the Board also sit on the committee, if willing, and that the current President serve as liaison.
- Geoff will rewrite the "job description" for the delegate and liaison roles.

### **Review of UUA Draft Ends**

Paul Rickter asked the Board and staff for their views of the draft created by the UUA Trustees. Comments were generally mixed as the draft tended to be over worked and wavers from the format directed by Policy Governance; that it needs to be shorter, clearer, and grammatically consistent. Concern was expressed over the proposed "Global Ends" and "High Level Ends" as being confusing; that they should be edited down and combined into the "Ends" (What good, at what cost, and for whom?). It was suggested that they be re-worded to be immediately understood by a complete outsider; that it should avoid any "insider" language that can be understood only by those acculturated into UUism.

### **Executive Limitations Policy Discussion and Review**

Pat has made an extensive review of the policies of other Districts and has concluded that the current Executive Limitations Policy is needlessly restrictive. the Pat offered a new version that is shorter yet maintains the integrity of the original intent of the document. The Board also recommended the following changes:

- 1.1.2: remove the entire paragraph, then renumber
- 1.3: remove ". . . or not in accordance with . . ."
- 1.4: remove ". . . or not in accordance with UU . . ."
- 1.7.4: put the 10k restriction back in

ACTION: Motion made to amend the Executive Limitations Policy as presented by Pat with the additional changes above. The motion was approved.

### **Structuring the Annual Meeting**

Terasa suggested creating an opportunity to engage participants, after the conclusion of the business meeting, in a discussion of the District Ends.

TASK: Lilli and Terasa will develop questions to help guide the discussion. Participants will be divided into groups led by District Directors.

### **Other Business**

Greg Buckland joined the meeting at noon and informed the group about his work in tracking UU youth as they move from their original congregations into adulthood; into college, work, etc.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 1pm. The next Board Meeting is on June 6, 2009, at the MBD offices.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Laursen, Secretary