

Mass Bay District Board of Directors Meeting

Feb. 5, 2011

Present: Pat Manley, Rev. Kate Wilkinson, John Laurenson, Laura Graham, Jacki Rohan, Rev. Frank Clarkson, Jeanette Ruyle, Rev. Sheldon Bennett (Moderator), Paul Rickter (UUA trustee), Rev. Sue Phillips (DE)

Highlighted lines are action and/or further discussion items.

8:34 a.m. Meeting convened with a reading by Jacki.

Approval of minutes of Nov. 13, 2010: Correction/addition—add Rev. title to those present. Motion to approve: passed.

Consent agenda

Monitoring reports -- Accepted.

There is a question about how the policy 1.6.2 (about the DE not allowing expenditure of more funds than are conservatively projected to be available without prior Board agreement) differs from policy 1.7.2.

UUA Trustee report—Paul Rickter presenting. He described the UUA Trustee “field trip” to the Arizona-Mexico border, along with meeting in Phoenix to plan Justice GA 2012, focusing on immigration issues. See his report for full details. Idea floated up from Pat: At a time closer to pre-GA 2012, consider ways to increase awareness in this district about GA and immigration.

Appointment of Nominating Committee member – discussion

- Julia Herzig’s term is unexpired and needs to be filled. Rev. Mark Caggiano has been proposed. He is minister at Chestnut Hill UU congregation. This would be an interim appointment. We the Board are required by by-law to approve this until Annual Meeting in April at which time he would be nominated for a full term at Annual Meeting.
- Questions were raised about the Nominating Committee’s role and expectations for this committee, e.g. whether it can be more of a leadership development group, and how nominations are sought.
- Nominating Committee s a five-member committee; members are listed in Annual Meeting report and probably on district website.
- Idea: Bring the discussion of nomination procedure to the June MBD Board meeting, and invite the Nominating Committee to attend.

Motion to approve the interim appointment of Rev. Mark Caggiano to the Nominating Committee: passed.

Financial Matters

MBD Annual Program Fund—Q & A meeting with Laurel Amabile, Director of UUA Annual Program Fund, by Scype.

- How does an APF team look? Answer: It varies from district to district. An APF team is accountable to our UUA and also work within their district, so there are variables. Usually, the most effective working team is a structure that comes through the financial services of the district boards. Modeled most effectively by Joseph Priestly District and Ohio-Meadville. Both streams of funding are followed—district and UUA. NOTE: from Sue-- MBD does not have a “financial service” nor does it have an APF team.
- How might a linkage conversation/situation include APF? Answer: Would work nicely with linkage. Fundraising is relational by nature. A challenge has always been for the congregations to feel in relation with the districts and UUA. There is often a disconnect with the resources congregations have used and their understanding of how those resources are made possible. The amount of money given by congregations is “an indicator” of something; if it is low, a conversation is warranted—find out, have dialogue about what is going on for the congregation. This will inform what approach to take. APF giving is one talking point to use in a conversation with a congregation. APF team and district staff can be in communication about what issues there might be for a congregation—e.g. pastoral in nature. Reasons there seems to be a barrier in giving can be explored carefully. The message is the APF team is there to help congregations achieve their own mission.
- How much of the dip in giving/fair share can be attributed to the poor economy? A: We can expect to see improvement, and are seeing it already. Whether it is good or bad economy, the relationships need to be cultivated, always. The culture around UU identity at the district level makes a difference. MBD can improve communication, get more people involved, and build on a strong UU identity that already is there.
- What can be done about the “New England culture” of not doing fair share so much? A: Charitable giving in general in New England is comparatively low and it helps to be aware of this. The closer the congregations are to UUA headquarters, the lower the giving, it seems. Need to understand giving and stewardship as a developmental process. Old history in New England may play a role in giving/not giving to a relatively new Association. Is there a way, in this region, we can come together in exploring our identity and faith and what it means to us to be giving? The culture *can* shift over time. One way: explore how a congregation’s own mission—what matters to them-- is supported by what is going on in UUA and district.
- Would you recommend MBD have an APF team? A: It is something to consider. An APF team could help the board figure out how linkages can be done. Can look at grant-funding, tracking district dues, looking at the whole picture. Laura can support and talk with an APF team about the work.

- Laurel: We do not have a strong theological message about giving to congregations, district, so we need to approach it from all angles. Religious education is crucial for this—developing a culture of generosity.

Discussion about this meeting with Laurel

- What is our role as a Board and staff with APF? Sue says it is a gray area. Right now there is no stewardship process for collecting district dues here. In some districts, the DE is responsible for recruiting APF team members. Sue proposes recruiting a team and inviting them to be a part of the Board’s linkage efforts. Sue would do the recruiting. She is already doing this in Clara Barton District.
- Qualities of an APF team member: (per Sue) Enthusiasm for our faith; capacity to articulate how UUA and district support congregations; a willingness to do the work. Others: Ability to hold confidential information; have the team representative of different areas of the district.
- Asking for two “dues”—UUA and district—need to educate about this.
- This all shows how important linkage is—having a relationship with congregation, e.g. board member visiting congregation leader meetings.

Budget for Board of Directors FY 2012—We have not been providing our DE with an estimated cost of governance.

- What amount to use? Add to GA expenses so another board member can go, e.g. out-going and in-coming board president? Linkage money, e.g. focus group food? These are proposed figures and then Sue will work them into the draft budget:
 - District Board meetings—500.
 - Board development—1750.
 - NE Regional Meetings—2500.
 - President dues—400.
 - GA expenses—4000.
 - Volunteer appreciation—100.
 - Linkage—400.
 - Annual Meeting—1700.

Sharing Revenues with CBD—from Sue Phillips

- CBD is paying us 37% of total administrative costs. CBD pays 26% of their operating budget for office expenses. MBD pays 28% of our operating budget for office expenses. NOTE: CBD has 54% of the congregations we serve, with fewer members; they have more assets than MBD.
- Sue wants to know, do we think this fair? She wants to use a “rational number,” i.e. explainable number. She encourages us (MBD board) to engage in conversation with the CBD board about all this. CBD has had no cost saving due to staff-sharing (cost is level), but we both have gained in having two full-time staff people.
- How to proceed? Need to meet with CBD Board? How does this figure in with the issues of possible board role-change and co-employment (see item below)? We do need to address the joint operating agreement with CBD regardless of other issues. Pat will call CBD president about possibly meeting with them at their board retreat April 29 for a couple of hours to put clarity around the operating agreement that would be in effect for at least a year, and explore our shared ministry with each other.

Regional Trends in Governance and Co-employment—Jacki presenting

- History aspects: UUA Board has come up with global ends; MBD board has worked on ends, and done some linkage in the past. “Southland” districts have recently come up with “Orlando Platform”—a plan for four district boards to have the governing piece done by the UUA board and the districts then focus on growing our faith – together.
- New England as a region is unique in its number of congregations relatively close geographically, plus the long history. So a regional approach might make sense in that way.
- What would our job as board look like if we freed ourselves up from governance and gave it to the UUA board? Policy governance has already separated out the process of governance from service delivery.
- “Regionalization” theoretically can mean different things: clusters; clusters within larger districts.
- How did the four southern districts get together and come up with this? Historically, those districts have done many things together. Those boards have been talking about sharing resources for quite awhile. They have a shared mission to evangelize the south.
- How can we take a stand and so that we are perceived somewhat along the lines of Standing on the Side of Love? How to bring the theology of Universalism to the fore?
- Sue thinks we already are leading in the country by sharing district programming and staff. We could also lead by and through considering change in: governance, regionalization, co-employment.

- Regarding co-employment: What if we were to end that? How would it be for staff? It could end the gap between responsibility and authority that is an aspect of the co-employment situation.
- NOTE: much positive energy in the above discussion. Consensus is to keep up active discussion and consideration.

Linkage with Congregations—postponed discussion due to time constraints.

MBD Annual Meeting April 10, Sunday, late afternoon. Location is being worked on.

- Intentionally invite congregational ministers and leaders to attend the Annual Meeting, in addition to delegates.
- Structure it so it is linkage-related. Each board member will lead a conversation, and be trained for this, about a linkage question/issue.
- Keynote speaker idea—Linda Laskowski,; knows about linkage.
- Plan to meet again before Annual Meeting to plan more.
- Review a draft budget before Annual Meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30ish.

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Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Ruyle, secretary