

**MINUTES**  
**Annual Meeting**  
April 13, 2008

Massachusetts Bay District of the Unitarian Universalist Congregations, Inc.

**CALL TO ORDER**

District Moderator, Rev. Sheldon Bennett, called the meeting to order at 6:16pm.

District Administrator, Susan Thomas, was recognized and informed the assembly that 124 participants were in attendance, including 83 delegates representing 34 of the 55 congregations of the District.

The Moderator explained the voting process to the delegates.

**REPORTS AND RECOGNITIONS**

**President's Report: Rev. Jim Sherblom**

Jim offered the meeting the question: "Have you been transformed by UUism, yet?" His report focused upon the changes facing Unitarian Universalism reflected in the ministry of many of the District's congregations. The staff, directed by District Executive, Rev. Dr. Terasa Cooley, were recognized for the significant support and resources they have developed to encourage Healthy Congregations. He reflected upon his five years of involvement on the District Board and its transition, and offered an optimistic view of the future of the District and Unitarian Universalism.

**Sharing the Good News**

**District Executive: Rev. Dr. Terasa Cooley**

Terasa referenced the more refined purpose of the MBD adopted by the Board in December, 2007 and how it has particularly guided the development of programming that offers opportunities for congregations to grow by looking beyond their current challenges and needs and create vigorous connections and outcomes within the world. Terasa thanked Jim Sherblom and Barbara Bates for their years of service on the Board; the District staff for their talent and dedication; retiring MBD Program Consultant and colleague, Rev. Dr. Liz Strong; and all the volunteers of the District. Terasa followed with slides of pie-charts showing 2007-08 Budget and Forecast and proposed 2008-09 Budget; "Good staff costs money!"

**District Program Consultant: Rev. Dr. Liz Strong**

Liz began her report by musing upon her impending retirement in July, the many transitions that have occurred in the District over her past seven years, and her gratitude for having been able to work with wonderful colleagues and staff. Liz introduced, Sue Phillips, the new Director of Program Development. Liz primarily emphasized the importance of lifting youth and young adults helping them to feel that the churches they attend belong to them, also. The District Youth Steering Committee (DYSC) has engaged youth from many of our congregations, running five Cons each year and, with guidance from the UUA, is working through changes that will make it more effective in its outreach. Liz also stressed the importance of creating more effective campus outreach services and developing connections between local congregations and colleges and universities. Liz also stressed the vitality of the District RE Team as it considers expanding its influence and possibly becoming a cluster of LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators' Association).

**MBD Trustee to the UUA: Paul Rickter**

Paul was unable to attend this year's meeting, but did file a comprehensive report reviewing his work on the UUA Board.

## **Leadership Recognition**

Four persons were specifically recognized for their outstanding service to the District:

Barbara Bates, for her years of service on the Board and for her strong role in moving the District to a larger vision and the Board to Policy Governance.

Jim Sherblom, for his 5 years on the Board, two as President, and now moving on to assuming the Chair of the UUA Finance Committee.

Sue Adams, for her service to the District, serving on the Board as well as for her capable administration of the Woburn Grant.

Jim Staton, for his varied service to the District, notably, serving on the Board, the FACT team and chairing the Nominating Committee for the past four years.

## **District Business**

### **Annual Meeting Minutes, April 14, 2007**

Motion to approve the minutes was moved, seconded, and approved.

### **By-Law Discussion**

Board Director, Pat Manley, presented the case summary for the proposed changes to the By-Laws; the essential reason being to align them with the new accountability relationship through Policy Governance between the Board and the Executive Director. Pat offered to respond to questions and comments from the floor. A few changes were proposed:

Article 1:

Change the name of the district to the "Massachusetts Bay District of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations."

Article 2:

Replace "churches" with "congregations."

Article 5:

Specify that the terms of office of all elected positions begin at the adjournment of the annual meeting:.

Sect. 3: Specify that a board quorum is a majority.

Specify the Board's financial oversight responsibilities

To include compensation and benefits of employees of the district

Financial planning and budgeting

Financial conditions and activities

Protection of the assets of the district

Sect. 5: a requirement that the Nominating committee submit to the Board a description of the "open, transparent, and independent process used to solicit and select the nominees"

Article 8:

UUA Trustee section: societies to congregations,(12) and specifying that the election of our Trustee be consistent with the bylaws and rules of the UUA, and that congregations who vote for UUA trustee be certified, UUA member congregations.

The Moderator responded by mentioning that these were oversights as the intention was to use "congregation" throughout the by-laws to refer to churches, societies, parishes, etc. Sheldon asked for

a motion to approve the above. The motion was called and seconded. In discussion, three questions were raised:

It was noted that there was a misspelling of the word "society" which, otherwise, needed to be changed to "congregation."

A participant asked what was meant by "certification." The answer provided by Terasa was that it referred to the formal process by which the UUA determines a congregation's membership with the UUA.

In Article 1, Section 1, regarding the name of the MBA, a question was asked whether the proposed name change would affect the "independence" of the District. The answer provided clarified that the MBD's 501(c)(3) certificate was held by the UUA, so that this was not considered an issue of concern.

The Moderator called for the vote to approve the proposed by-laws, which was seconded and approved.

### **Vote to Elect Officers and Directors**

Nominating Committee Chair, Jim Staton, was recognized by the Moderator. Jim offered the following slate of nominations:

#### **Officers of the MBD Board of Directors (2009):**

Melissa Quirk for President, Pat Manley for Vice-President, John Laurenson for Secretary

#### **Moderator (2009):**

Rev. Sheldon Bennett

#### **MBD Board of Directors (2011):**

Geoffrey Beckwith, Jacki Rohan

#### **MBD Nominating Committee (2011):**

Dennis Brown, Lorraine Dennis

Nancy Nichols was also recommended to be appointed as Treasurer for a one year term.

The Moderator called for nominations from the floor. None came forth and the Moderator called for a vote of the slate of nominations. It was seconded and the slate was approved.

### **Closing Comments from Melissa Quirk, MBD President-elect**

Melissa offered her thoughts on the excellent manner in which her congregation of First Parish in Cambridge went about its change of mission and ministerial leadership by remaining clear in intent and united as an example of the importance for the District's member congregations to also remain united.

### **Adjournment**

The Business of the District thus completed, the Moderator called for a motion to adjourn. A motion was moved, seconded and approved at 7pm. This was followed by an address by the Meeting's keynote speaker, UUA Treasurer, Tim Brennan.

Respectfully submitted,

John Laurenson, MBD Secretary