

RMCUCC Board of Directors Meeting

Saturday, January 23, 2016
RMC Offices, Denver, Colorado

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

Present in the Office: Jan Hepp

Present by Conference Call: Martha Jones, Gage Church, John Rostykus, Sue Artt, Martha Sullivan, Judy Baillie, Nate Miller, Rebecca Kemper Poos, Erin Gilmore, Karen Winkel

Absent: Matt Huntington, Courtney Dobbins, Max Michalec

Staff: Tamara Boynton, Lisa Callahan (in office); Cory Kibler (by conference call)

OPENING:

Martha Jones offered the opening prayer.

The Agenda was reviewed and rearranged to allow Sue Artt and Gage Church to leave at 10:50 to attend Marijke Rossi's ordination.

Karen Winkel agreed to take Minutes for the Executive Session.

The Minutes from the November 14, 2015 meeting were reviewed. There was one typographical correction to be made on page 3 to correct an incomplete sentence. John Rostykus moved to accept the November 14, 2015 Minutes with the correction; Jan Hepp seconded; MOTION APPROVED.

FINANCIALS:

- Jan Hepp presented the financial report.
- Complete financial reports were not available as the conference was in the process of closing the books for 2015.
- The total OCWM for 2015 is approximately \$384,147.35, which is a little shy of the original budget, and about \$11,000 short of what was expected
- Steve Haskins is scheduled to meet with Lisa and Sue to close the books for 2015 on Tuesday, January 26, 2016.
- Need to approve Sue and Tamara's housing allowing for 2016. Sue is requesting a 65/35 split between salary/housing; Tamara wants to increase her housing allowance to \$2,000.00 per month. **Jan Hepp moved on behalf of the Finance Committee to approve the housing allowances as requested; John Rostykus seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**

- The Finance Committee will present a complete financial report after their committee meeting in February.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT GRANT:

- Community Spirit sent a letter to Sue Artt advising that they will use the grant in a slightly different manner than originally planned.
- They can no longer afford a full-time pastor and have changed the position to part-time.
- Pastor Karen Winkel has agreed to stay on at a part-time salary but will keep her full benefits in place. Her compensation and benefits package will be adjusted based on her reduced hours.
- Community Spirit wants to continue with the grant, but wanted to be sure the Board knew of this change.
- The money granted will still go to covering the pastor's health benefits and rent.
- A stipulation of the grant from the Conference is that they will write for a national grant in 2016 to support their ministries.
 - The church feels they are just starting to get their legs underneath them and are doing well, but feel they cannot meet the 2016 deadline.
 - They anticipate being in good shape through 2016 and can request a grant in 2017 for 2018 funding.
 - They feel that writing the grant at this time would not be honest enough to truly reflect where they are and what they have come to. They do not feel authentic and ready to write the grant.
- Although the Conference is helping to fund the pastor for a struggling church, this is a new church start and the Conference provides this assistance for all new church starts.
- Karen is providing information regarding Community Spirit during the Board discussions, but will recuse herself from decision-making and voting.
- **Motion affirming that the Board received the letter from Community Spirit informing them of the changes in funding allocations. The Board affirms those changes, and affirms Community Spirit's continuing ministry and the adjustment in granting. The grant date has been moved to December 31, 2017. No further discussion. Nate Miller moved, Jan Hepp seconded, MOTION APPROVED (Karen Winkel abstained).**

ANNUAL MEETING 2016:

- Sue, Gage and Bob von Treba went to the University of Utah and reviewed the facilities – they will be fabulous!
- Glen Brown will be the overall chair. He convened a meeting earlier in January and has come forward with several ideas for the theme. Several key points:
 - They do not have a solid theme yet but are playing with the idea of being in the wilderness during a time of discernment. It fits the geography of Utah and where we are as a conference.
 - The wilderness theme seems to be a step back and not moving forward.
 - There is beauty and blooming in wilderness.

- The Design Team group discussion centered around times of hopelessness and frustration in the wilderness, and other times in the wilderness that offer promise and the promised land just over the next hill, so they wanted to lean into the hope and promise of wilderness times and give more clarity of who we are, where we have been and where we are going.
- There is a lot of alignment around blooming, not just wandering in the wilderness.
- John likes the theme in terms of setting/context but the piece he wants to see everyone grapple with is future staffing of the Conference ministry.
- As an alternative, Martha Sullivan stated she liked a phrase that Sue Artt previously came up with: “reclaiming our story.”
- We are redefining all the roles because we are in the wilderness and in a place we have never been before, so how do we bloom among us and begin to discover in the wilderness new ways of being church?
- Perhaps change “wilderness” to “desert.” We are a healthy part of the body of Christ and can celebrate that – we are blooming in the desert.
- A lot of churches are in some state of transition and even if some things are settled within the Conference, the goal is to give churches the tools they can use to inspire their people.
- Feedback from recent Annual Meetings indicate there is a desire to come away with more concrete directions/actions. It is good to talk and share ideas but we need to help people come away with a more concrete outcome/takeaway.
- Perhaps we could put forward the idea of blooming in the desert and redefining the narrative to actually spell out what we have done.
- We want people to take away a sense of joy and a sense of knowing where we are going, along with a sense that we have come through this journey, we are closing this chapter, we are blooming and this is where we are now, and we are moving on to the next leg of the journey.
- This will be the closing of the interim period and the beginning of the next period.
- We have been tilling the soil, working it, planting seeds and sprouts, and they have taken root.
- Celebrate the transition and that rite of passage.
- Change is hard and change is good. We have come through hard places and it is good to be on the other side.
- Sue will take this core of blooming in the desert and work with the Design Team, and come back with a solid proposal.
- Need to start getting information out regarding the Annual Meeting with the tag line: Blooming in the Desert.
- The Intermountain people have jumped on board to help with worship.
- Gayle Engle has been invited to attend the Annual Meeting so that everyone can meet him and honor him for the work he has done. He was delighted to be asked.
- Conference Staff will send out save the date cards and begin early registration soon.
- Tamara will work on worship packets to be sent to churches for use while their minister is at the Annual Meeting. She will prepare those packets earlier than last year and will make them more public than last year. She will also need to recruit someone to help her.
- Pricing and logistics:
 - The full cost is \$350/person for three nights in the dorms and eight meals in the cafeteria.

- The meal plan is roughly \$30/day. They will only scan those who come through the door so meals are based on actual usage, not per person.
- The meeting space charges are \$6,200.
- We have booked the Officer's Club for Association meetings on Thursday (must be completed by 4:00 p.m.).
- Boundary Training is in a separate room all day Thursday.
- We have reserved a few dorm rooms on Wednesday evening for staff and those who will be attending Boundary Training on Thursday morning; breakfast and lunch on Thursday are **NOT** included in the registration.
- There will be a cocktail party Thursday night. We will need to contract with caterers. Only beer and wine are allowed, and will need to be purchased ahead of time. They do not allow a cash bar.
- There will not be a banquet on Friday due to the cost differential, so we will eat in the cafeteria.
- We will hold a Friday night awards ceremony – perhaps with a catered desert.
- Tamara has budgeted \$3,250 for a key note speaker, photo booth, extra hotel rooms, last minute supplies, etc.
- Although the goal for this meeting is to increase attendance by 50%, the space reserved did not allow for a 50% increase in attendance due to cost, and it seems dangerous to presume we would have a 50% increase and end up paying for empty rooms.
- The offsite rate for local people is \$225 (minus dorm rooms). There is a little room to play with this, if necessary.
- There will be a discount for retired clergy – usually just a \$10 to \$20 discount.
- Registration will be set up like last year's meeting at La Foret: attendees will need to pay for the entire meeting, and not piece meal each event.
- Additionally, we have reserved 30 hotel rooms on campus. There is an up charge of \$75 per night, resulting in an additional \$225 at registration. Still need to work out pricing for two people in same hotel room.
- The dorms are near the cafeteria; the hotel is near the meeting rooms.
- There is a van/bus to travel around campus for those with mobility issues.
- Staff will look into the possibility of a chartered bus from the Denver metro area
- For those who will be flying in, there is a commuter rail that goes from the airport to downtown Salt Lake City, and one switch takes you to the University.
- The Board affirms the pricing for the 2016 Annual Meeting. The cost is \$75.00 more than the 2015 meeting at La Foret, but the price is comparable to the 2014 Annual Meeting in Grand Junction.

CONFERENCE UPDATE:

- There are 28 churches currently in some form of transition.
- There is a light at the end of the tunnel for some of the churches we have been working with.
- The interim pool is empty – most interims have been placed somewhere and we are tapped out. Luckily, this won't last forever.

- Accounting: We have contracted with Greg Ellis of Ellis Bottom Line Bookkeeping to do the Conference accounting for 2016. We will make the transition next week as soon as Steve Haskins closes the books for 2015.
- Website: Cory and Ty Stark are working on the new and improved RMC website and should have something in the next couple of weeks. They have done wonderful work so far.
- La Foret Land Sale - Cory put an article regarding the land sale in a recent RoMoCo. Sue has been in contact with seven people at the national office, including Cornerstone, United Church Funds, Church Building & Loan Fund, and the Pension Board, and asked them to name anyone who may be interested in buying land at La Foret. One person has taken a site visit with Larry.
- Conference Minister in Residence: Sue is in Utah as part of the “Conference Minister in residence” program. This is a program she and Tamara are trying to do several times a year. She is busy with seven appointments on Friday for various conversations, the ordination of Marijke Rossi on Saturday, and will be at Congregational UCC in Ogden on Sunday. We have heard many good comments about this program.
- Western Region Conference:
 - There are eight Conferences in the western region – including Hawaii.
 - Sue met with those Conference Ministers in November.
 - There were several comments that Conference Staff throughout the western region need to work more collaboratively and share resources/training.
 - Charles Buck, Hawaii Conference Minister, suggested holding a western regional staff support intensive in September 2016 in Hawaii.
 - Sue gave an initial response that RMC would participate.
 - They are asking the Council of Conference Ministers for a grant to help with funding.
 - The cost to RMC would be around \$5,000, but it would be worth the investment for Sue, Lisa and Cory.
 - John stated that over the last two years, approximately \$10,000 has been put in reserve for candidates for the Conference Minister search which, hopefully, we will not need after June. There is also a general reserve which we could tap into. Independent of this proposal, the Finance Committee will need to recommend what to do with those reserves on the premise that Sue is our Conference Minister at this year’s Annual Meeting.
 - General consensus is this would be good for RMC. Sue will go ahead and continue to work on this. It will be time well spent to help Cory and Lisa.
- Association Updates:
 - The Association Leaders meeting was super well received. Rachel Heckenberg from the National office attended, along with Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi. The evaluations were positive and attendees felt Associations are beginning to work more efficiently by learning from each other. There were 28 attendees, although only one representative from Intermountain. Next year’s meeting will be in August so that timing may help increase attendance.
 - Metro Denver is working on a psychological evaluation process for candidates.
 - Boundary training is still an issue with respect to logistics.
 - Metro Denver is planning a social media training
 - There was a Lay Leaders training for moderators in December.
 - Platte Valley is working on periodic reviews.

- Need to do some publicity in RoMoCo, etc. regarding the new date (August 18-20, 2016) for the Association Leaders Retreat. Tamara will be out of the country, but Sue will be there and will recruit someone to assist.
- A big shout out to Cory – the Association tidbits he is sending out are great.

UCC COVENANT

- John Dorhauer’s Installation:
 - To be held April 15, 2016 in Riverside, NY; April 16, 2016 in Chicago, and April 17, 2016 in Seattle.
 - Sue has been asked to be one of three preachers in Seattle.
 - It would be good for RMC to have a representative other than Sue attend. Rebecca will go to Seattle to represent the Board.
- As moderator of General Synod, Sue will make a site visit to Baltimore February 4-7, 2016.
- John Dorhauer is confirmed to be here for Congregations Alive in February 2017.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

John led a discussion regarding the Board’s strategic objectives, how to keep following the objective work to be done, and how to make progress when we only meet as a Board. Team assignments were completed. The Objectives themselves are old news.

- **MP-1: Healing CM History (Karen Winkel-Leader; Gage Church)**
 - Want to engage in a Conference-wide conversation.
 - Will include: training, communicating roles, ministry during interim time, how is ministry evolving in the UCC, how to improve our own methods for making decision, how does our decision not follow a traditional interim process, how do we make churches understand this?
 - The Board is spearheading this and is responsible for promoting it beyond the Board.
 - Teams may enlist whatever help is needed beyond this group.
 - The Board is doing this work – not a ministry team independent of the Board.
- **MP-II: Vision Implementation (Martha Sullivan-Leader; Jan Hepp; John Rostykus)**
 - A lot of work has been done in Board meetings regarding our Vision. Need to start making these ideas happen. There may be other ideas as well.
 - Mission Seeds versus the Vision:
 - The Vision goes through everything being done, and is a marketing tool.
 - Mission seeds are just one aspect or one way of implementation of what is being done. Mission seeds prior to November 2015 emphasize communication; now the emphasis is on how to proceed.
 - Perhaps the wording should be changed to Vision Clarifying.
 - Cory’s Association Roundup is another form of vision implementation/dissemination/clarification.

- There is some overlap between the Vision and Mission Seeds. Teams may be doing different kinds of work, so we need to organize our thoughts and create a proposal for how to get there from here, and how to do it.
- MP_III: Clarify CM Expectations (Judy Baillie-Leader; Martha Jones; Rebecca Kemper Poos)
 - The Board has done a lot of work on this, including the November Board meeting and prior meetings.
 - There have been many discussions around the questions of how to balance expectations and needs around the Conference.
 - The numerous conversations during the search process have helped focus on naming the next steps and engaging conference membership.
- Mission Seeds (Erin Gilmore-Leader; Nate Miller; John Rostykus)
 - The focus may be more on assessing where we are and how much we invest in the current path we have gone down versus alternatives.
- Delegate Clarification (Executive Committee; Staff)
 - The Board would like to increase attendance at the Annual Meeting for everyone, not just voting delegates.
 - The Annual Meeting should be a gathering of all members of the Conference.

MEETING SCHEDULE:

March 12, 2016 at the Conference Office

May 7, 2016 at the Conference Office (regarding Annual Meeting)

MEETING ASSIGNMENTS MARCH 12, 2016:

Opening Prayer – Karen

Closing Prayer – Nate

Time Keeper – Matt

Executive Session Minutes – Nate (Karen - backup)

Tamara will be at the next Conference Minister in Residence in Wyoming so will call in.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Sue, Tamara, Cory and Lisa were excused)

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Callahan
RMC Office Administrator