

Rocky Mountain Board of Directors Meeting Minutes of Aug 22, 2015

With corrections as of 10/5/15

Rebecca opened the meeting at 9:05.

Present: Rebecca Kemper Poos, John Rostykus, Matt Huntington (left at 2 p.m.), Jan Hepp, Courtney Dobbins, Max Michalec (called in), Erin Gilmore (called in to begin, then joined later), Gage Church, Karen Winkel, Nate Miller, Martha Jones, Judy Baillie.

Absent: Martha Sullivan (ill) , Rev. Sue Artt (assisting Montana Conference of the UCC)

Staff: Cory Kibler

Rebecca spoke about new UCC President John C. Dorhauer's words on the future of the church, and offered opening prayer.

Introduction of the 2015/2016 Board of Directors. "What brings you here?"

- Martha Jones felt that Annual Meeting 2015 at La Foret was best-ever!
- Rebecca and John gave a helpful overview to the new members of the nature of the Board, the nature of the Executive Committee of the Board, e-Voting, and how the meetings usually flow.

Re-Engage Vision (What part of the Vision moves us in 2015/2016?):

- Review Core Purpose, Core Values, Big Inspirational Goal, and Vivid Description of the Future.
- Rebecca: Sense of RMC getting "beyond ourselves." Getting outside of Conference identity, but how do we connect with EVERYONE? UCC + United Church of Canada are in full communion.
- Karen Winkel: Prophetic and revolutionary teachings of Jesus. Excited about what has happened at Annual Meeting; interested in how we can support these folks who began the Mission Seed process. Grateful for the movement of the spirit.
- Jan Hepp: Working with churches who are struggling and helping them connect with themselves; promoting new kinds of doing ministry. Parkview and First Plymouth are co-sponsoring an in-discernment candidate.
- Gage Church: Finding new ways of doing ministry; transitioning from brainstorming into finding the tools and advice to provide to churches, helping them connect with one another.
- Matt Huntington: Sue's Mind Map is super helpful, and the Radical Connection is still a huge goal.
- Judy Baillie: Being more radically connected more clearly and purposefully with the congregations themselves. Offering different kinds of connection.
- Nate Miller: Struck by the energy involved in the regional clusters and during last year's Annual Meeting. Often, we rely on clergy to make those connections, but the empowerment is shifting around, including to lay-people.

- Courtney Dobbins: Our Conference culture has shifted from a noun to a verb. Need to make our presence known and show the Christian community that the work we do is important, and that we're making a difference.
- Cory Kibler: Board is taking clever/calculated risks, and the power and autonomy is disseminating throughout the Conference.
- John Rostykus: This is the year we can move from brainstorming to implementation.
- Erin Gilmore: Struck by how bold and forward-thinking our Vision is. Feels exciting to have this kind of vision. Appreciate the boldness and bigness and outward focus of our Vision.
- Martha Jones: Love the imagery in the Vision and the image of the radish. Also, there's an image of a rug, many colors, many strands, and this very rich tapestry provides our pathway; where, we aren't exactly sure, but it expands before us. Very rich Vision.
- Rebecca: Our Core Values are tied back to the UCC's Core Values.

Approval of Meeting Notes

- John Rostykus moves to approve the meeting minutes
- Matt Huntington Seconded
- "Inglis" spelling needs to be corrected in the June 13 meeting notes.
- Approved with unanimous vote; motion passes. Once fixed, the notes will then be posted to the website.

Discussion of OWL Meeting eVote

- Motion from Jan Hepp, seconded by Matt Huntington: "The BOD spend \$1,000 from the Strengthen the Church Fund to support the OWL training at Plymouth Congregational UCC in Fort Collins, CO on Aug 14-15, 2015."
- Passed 8/6/15 via e-mail

Appointments to Committees & Boards

- Rick Danielson has been nominated to the Personnel Committee
- Karen Caton has been nominated to the Nominating Committee
- John moves to appoint Rick Danielson to the Personnel and Karen Caton to the Nominating Committee
- Matt seconded
- Motion passed

Matt Huntington: Building Management Committee

- Matt and Sue talked about creating a committee about making sure the building is properly managed.
- Matt Huntington has volunteered to be liaison.
- The Warehouse owners want to split the electrical panel to two separate panels. This will be at no cost to the RMCUCC.

- Jordan wants to use our roof for solar panels.
- We may need to rethink who manages the building, because of Sue and Lisa's skills and time constraints.
- Building Management Committee will be a subcommittee of the Finance Committee.

Report Back on Annual Meeting:

- People LOVED the puppet show. They like being entertained and engaged!
- Fascinated about the comments about the Search Committee. Upside of it is the transparency of our processes and struggles with all of it. People didn't feel like Search-Committee talk consisted of parking-lot conversations.
- Live out our "Extravagant Welcome" Core Value. Maybe be more intentional about our Core Values.
- Hawaiian Leis were super helpful to identify the Board and Staff.
- Some people get burned out on hearing people talking, so it's important to put a centerpiece of sorts at the front of the room
- People's flexibility on the Board was vital because of all the impromptu meetings.
- Photo booth was a HIT!
- Conflict was handled really well by the Board.
- Online Meeting Agenda was super helpful, putting everything in one place for people to access. Erring on over-sharing materials may be OK.
- Despite new staff, no major logistical hiccups.
- Comments from clergy being appreciative of the sermon packet.
- Change pastor appreciation thing to Saturday Night so people can stay ☺ Maybe add something that's more integral to the programming.
- Certificate Ceremony was good, could be sped up though.
- People not that into Creative Aspects (brainstorming)? Some people couldn't connect...
- Let's talk more about Association Leadership, both clergy and lay. Could this be a part of an orientation? Association Leaders serving communion. Don't want to give lectures on association, but want to call them out.
- Youth leadership of songs and stuff was HUGE. People loved it. Would have been nice if the youth were leading some of the programming itself. Important to engage the youth and make them more of an integral piece of programming.
- Nametags finally had people's names bigger, which was REALLY good. And to name the actual church and name (e.g. not just "First Congregational")

Approval of Annual Meeting Notes

- John R. motioned to approve THE ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES; Martha requested Nikki Frontz' name to be spelled correctly; Rebecca requested the pages to be numbered.
- Matt Huntington seconded, motion was approved. Meeting Minutes to be added to front page of website.

Mission Seeds – Erin Gilmore

- Four Mission Seed groups have been extremely active; 6 or 7 have been needing more prodding.
- Congregations Alive is “on the rails” which is a positive thing.
- Some groups still need a bit more nudging but they all have the Convener sheets they need.
- Lots of value in putting our energy into the groups that are strong and exciting. “Water each seed and see what happens.”
- Association Leadership Meeting and how that can overlap with leadership from Annual Meeting. Tamara is the person who is organizing this and leading it. Last year’s Association Leadership Retreat was great. Board Members invited to attend? Erin Gilmore is following up with Tamara on the Association Leadership retreat.
- John bringing up the discussion about what we do with the teams that are currently in existence and what happens to them. Do they go away forever, do some of them hang around? How do we close out certain ministries? What communication is there? **Put this on September Agenda!**
- Erin isn’t quite sure about the full expectations of the Board Member role. Erin: “Don’t want the pressure of success or failure of the Mission Seeds solely on me.” No set-in-stone expectations of the job. Role is like a shepherd for the Mission Seed leaders. Concentrating liaison responsibility but it’s not all on Erin.
- Sue Video.
- Video about United Church of Canada from Dave Inglis, regarding our official partnership from GENERAL SYNOD.

Anne Dunlap Proposal

This is amazing work, but there’s also a matter of OF funding it. If other churches donate to this position, is this included in or in addition to OCWM? If the Conference would fund more than 20% of this position, we would need more oversight? Also, we are currently pretty stretched; not sure how long Sue can do what she does at the rate she does. Same with Lisa.

Karen = excited, but ambivalent to an extent because this may only affect Denver-Metro experience. Should this be a conversation for Metro Denver Association?

If you’re another Association, how are you involved? Adding another staff member at this point may be superfluous. Grand Valley Peace & Justice is pretty active already in Western Slope.

Maybe we can see how the Mission Seed initiatives grow and spread before we establish a further initiative. Fostering how the social justice mission seed grows may be more important than what we might do with Anne. We need to get more people in the conference doing all this work.

Different part-time ACMs in multiple areas? Spread some more of the leadership out to different areas?

We need to let staff sit for a while to see how it works right now! We will make a decision in September, but we need to have some sort of action item in the meantime. Also, here's a question: What are our staff needs? Vs. Where are our values?

What are our new church-start funds? How can we use THEM? What's the difference between self-sustaining and self-supporting? How does the RMC support people who are doing non-traditional ministries?

Maybe no "yes" or "no" to Anne's Proposal right now. Erin to speak to Sue about Anne Dunlap's Proposal, and then to speak to Anne.

Brainstorming 2015-16 BOD Strategic Objectives

"What does the BOD want to accomplish by June 2016?" From that list and Sue's chart of 2016 priorities, we extracted 8 potential objectives to guide BOD work this coming year. We then worked on more clearly defining 3 items (A, B & H), including how to measure success.

Note: "cluster gatherings part deux" were on our brainstorm list, but we did not spend time exploring more detail - we need to do that at our Sept BOD meeting to determine the purpose/content of those gatherings.

8 potential strategic objectives for the 2015-16 BOD:

- A. Increase attendance at 2016 AM by 50%
 - *further refinement in separate notes*
- B. Seeds are Sprouts - Seeds sown at the 2015 AM have grown
 - Figure out how we spend BOD designated funds to support conference mission(s)
 - Grow into the new Ministry Task Force model
 - Address gaps between previous Ministry Team model and new Ministry Task Force model
 - *further refinement in separate notes*
- C. Long term plan for La Foret/Outdoor Ministry (*Sue's chart*)
 - Collaborate on La Foret Summit
 - Clarify RMC staffing/resource long term roles
- D. RMC Clergy priorities (*Sue's chart*)
 - What will the Conference do/not do e.g. racial justice, from vivid description list, etc.
 - Staffing structure w/called CM - Associate(s)? Lay vs. clergy position(s)?
- E. Association Alignment (*Sue's chart*)
 - Intentionally connecting to Associations
 - Leadership training
 - Sharing vision
 - Association leadership is living our vision
 - Revisit RMC delegate designation (also related to AM attendance objective)

- F. Infrastructure efficiency/effectiveness improvements (*Sue's chart*)
 - Data repository - too many locations and access methods
 - Accounting - complete transition to independent bookkeeper
 - Website redesign - in process w/Cory
- G. Social Justice Voice (*Sue's chart*)
- H. RMC Vision has been presented to ALL members of our Conference (electronic, print, verbal, video, etc.)
 - Presence of Conference leadership (BOD members & Staff) @ events throughout the Conference (e.g. church celebrations)
 - Conference communication/RoMoCo articles are available to paste into bulletin insert/newsletter/website (by local churches)
 - Tip sheet for what a local church can do to better inform who we are (UCC & RMC)
 - Livelier communication methods - like effectiveness of Sue video vs. written report
 - "Things you need to know as part of RMC..." push bullet/blurb list to all churches on a frequent/regular basis.
 - Continue working into our vivid description

At 1:45 p.m. , Cory gets kicked out for the Search-Committee talk.

At 2 p.m., we tentatively scheduled the meetings for the next year:

- Saturday, Sept. 26 from 9 to 3 (Conference Office)
- Saturday, Nov. 14 from 9 to 3 (Conference Office)
- Saturday, Jan. 23 from 9 to 3 (Remote Meeting--Conference Call)
- Saturday, March 12 from 9 to 3 (Conference Office)
- Saturday, May 7 from 9 to 3 (Conference Office)

At 2:15 p.m., we started discussing a few of the objectives for the next year.

Summarization of Group Discussion

Objective H: "Spreading the Vision": Spreading the Vision in different ways to congregations to let them share the information how they see fit; videos, church bulletins, newsletter inserts, etc. Make them funny and engaging and hilarious, and give the autonomy to Associations to let them share info in the way that makes the most sense for them."

Objective A: "50% Increased Attendance in Annual Meeting": Getting the word out EARLY, EXCITEDLY, and get planning early to share the theme in November/December. Help people understand that it's not about delegates, it's about shaping the Conference. Everyone's welcome, this is for everyone. Annual Retreat 2016? Can still go to the meeting without attending the MEETING-meeting. Different tracts? Inspiring worships! ENTERTAINMENT! T-Shirts for EVERYBODY! Tattoo booth. Hype it up early and often. Raffle a car. Local congregation worship piece/sermon packet. Great accommodations, comfortable

facility. Board members calling people is huge. Find out the churches who sent no one last year and give them a special personal invitation. NOW, we can send a save-the-date to last year's registrants to ask them to be an ambassador. They get a sticker if they successfully recruit someone. "Annual Retreat: Home of the Two-Hour Business-Meeting!" Install the new Conference Minister?

Objective B: "Seeds Sprouting": 1) to have a minimum of four groups from the Mission Seed groups up and running by the end of the year that have engaged leadership, active participation, and can identify their purpose and objectives. 2) To address the gaps between the past and the new mission. How do we resource (and possibly fund) these groups? Signs of success: Something on the calendar. Something in the calendar. Having a full plan. (Our 2016 Revised Budget aligns with this shift of Ministry Teams to Mission Seed teams.) Erin's role: how to give them a plan, directing them on objectives, finding out resources.

Further notes from Judy Baille on Objective B:

Mission Seeds Goals

Beginning with the identification of a Board of Directors Liaison position, The Rocky Mountain Conference Board of Directors will communicate with and provide guidance and resources to the 11 Mission Seeds teams by supporting the identified Mission Seeds liaison (Rev. Erin Gilmore) in helping, if needed, each Mission Seed team develop its purpose and goals. Such purpose and goals shall be aligned with the identified vision of the Rocky Mountain Conference.

2) By November 1, 2015 a minimum of four Mission Seed teams will identify the responsible party (convener) from their team who will provide initial group leadership and who will be responsible for communicating with the Conference. The Mission Seed team will report the name and contact information to the BOD liaison.

3) By June 1, 2016, a minimum of four Mission Seed teams will show clear and engaged leadership and active and regular team member participation by being able to identify and clearly articulate their purpose and will have developed related objectives. At least one such objective will be development of a plan to expand participation within the Mission Seed group. The purpose and objectives of the Mission Seed will be clearly aligned with the RMC vision.

In order to accomplish the above goals, the following must be addressed (Key Questions for BOD):

----Funding for the above named goals;

---- -2016 budget alignment with this shift;

---Address gaps between past (Missions; Faith and Nurturing) and new Mission Seeds teams.

----How much of this is organic? Do we “force” some issues?

What do we need to have to do in September?

- Cluster Gathering
- Annual Meeting Beginnings
- TBD...

Courtney Dobbins does a Closing Prayer at 3 p.m. 😊