

RMCUCC Board of Directors Meeting

Saturday, September 26, 2015

RMC Offices, Denver, Colorado

The meeting was called to order at 9:12 a.m.

Present: Sue Artt, Erin Gilmore, Gage Church, Jan Hepp, John Rostykus, Rebecca Kemper Poos, Martha Sullivan, Max Michalec, Karen Winkel, Martha Jones, Judy Baillie

Absent: Nate Miller, Matt Huntington, Courtney Dobbins

Staff: Tamara Boynton, Cory Kibler, Lisa Callahan

Guests: Joyce Alms-Ransford, Executive Director, Archway Housing and Services (left the meeting after signing three-way covenant); Pat Riddell, Community Spirit Church, joined by telephone during discussion regarding New Church Start Funding

OPENING:

Erin opened the meeting with check-ins with each member, and offered the opening poem/prayer.

The Agenda was amended by consensus to allow time for member check-ins.

Minutes from the August 22, 2015 meeting were reviewed. John Rostykus moved to accept the August 22, 2015 Minutes; Jan Hepp seconded; MOTION APPROVED.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

Motion to accept Chip Cole to the La Foret Board. John Rostykus moved, Jan Hepp seconded, MOTION APPROVED.

Motion to accept Kirk Huggins and Randy McCall to the Archway Housing Board. John Rostykus moved, Jan Hepp seconded; MOTION APPROVED.

ARCHWAY HOUSING AND SERVICES INC.:

- Joyce Alms-Ransford gave a brief presentation regarding Archway's mission and goals, and their desire to become a member of the UCC Council for Health and Human Service Ministries (CHHSM).
- Among the benefits for Archway joining CHHSM are access to discounted group insurance purchase opportunities for staff and facilities, discounted group purchase power in entities already used such as Home Depot, and connection with other organizations.
- **Motion to enter into a three-way covenant with Archway, CHHSM and RMC. Gage moved, Jan seconded, MOTION APPROVED. Sue and Joyce signed the Covenant; it will be forwarded to Michael Readinger at CHHSM.**

FINANCIALS:

- Jan presented the Treasurer's Report in Matt's absence.
- There are several line items on the Statement of Activities that need to be adjusted. Steve Haskins will work with Lisa to make these adjustments. After all adjustments are made, the net loss is really \$939 – not \$17,675.
- With respect to the Balance Sheet, there will be an adjustment to undistributed income that will go into MAD funds.
- OCWM is ahead of budget for 2015.
- Neighbors in Need - Jan explained the history and how the money is distributed: RMC keeps \$10,000 and sends anything over that to National UCC. RMC is the only Conference that does this. The \$10,000 is sent to DICEP and Crossroads (\$5,000 each). The Board asks the Finance Committee to submit a proposal on how to phase out this special use of NIN dollars, noting that we will need to give DICEP and Crossroads ample notice of our intended change.

CAMP/RETREAT FINANCIALS:

- Tamara reviewed the camp numbers for 2015: we had roughly \$82,000 income and \$103,000 expenses, creating a shortfall of approximately \$25,000.
- Tamara reported that we did not do as well as last year largely due to new camps booked but no registrations. She is in conversation with La Foret on how to support new initiatives.
- There were no registrations for Pit Stop and Minister Study Week. We will do Pit Stop again, but need to rethink Minister Study. Rebecca thinks the Minister Study problem was due in part to the date it was scheduled.
- Kid camps did okay.
- Adult camps had lower numbers than last year. Camper registrations for some camps dropped, mainly Grandparent & Me and Family Camp. Other camps saw an increase in registrations.
- Camper scholarships totaled \$5,695.00.
- Retreats are breaking even right now.
- Tamara intends to do all of the kid camps next year. Adult camps will include Contemplative, Pit Stop, and Grandparent & Me. Family camp is too expensive at La Foret for the numbers registered, so she may do something somewhere else. Members in Discernment is held every other year.

NEW CHURCH START FUNDING:

- Proposal from Community Spirit Church in Montrose for operating expenses. Pat Riddell of the Leadership Ministry Committee from Community Spirit, joined the meeting by telephone regarding Community Spirit's need for funding:
 - Community Spirit is a body of approximately 30-35 people who feel there is a real need for their ministry in their community, with guidance provided by Pastor Karen. They have been busy as a faith community, and are looking at opportunities for sustainability, and collaborations that work for social justice and other forms of support, not just ministry.
 - Community Spirit is requesting \$14,400 for 12 months starting as soon as possible (\$8,400 to underwrite 2015/16 building use, and \$6,000 pastor benefit package).
 - They have explored a grant from the New and Renewing Church Grant program, but the timing is premature. They need to do more visioning to find their place before they can apply for the New Church Start Grant next spring.
 - Phone call with Pat ended.

- Discussion by the Board regarding Community Spirit's funding request:
 - Minutes from 2010 show RMCUCC supported Parker's new church start, so Community Spirit's request is not unprecedented.
 - Community Spirit is the single church in that community raising a progressive voice, with energy to support their mission but not the financing.
 - The congregation – not Pastor Karen - take responsibility for fundraising, including raising funds for the building they meet in, in partnership with four different entities that use the building.
 - They look to Karen to build connections within the region and with other organizations.
 - They are currently dealing with the shortfall by using funds dedicated for other uses.
- Karen left the meeting while the Board discussed Community Spirit's proposal.
 - The Board is leaning toward supporting Community Spirit for two years – not one - with the understanding other grants and opportunities will be pursued.
 - The Conference will need to make a commitment for them when they apply for national funds in September 2016.
 - Sue suggests we give them one year of support through December 2016 (granting would start in January 2017), starting Oct. 1 2015 through December 31, 2016, for a total of 15 months. They would need to report (provide a final draft of the grant proposal) to the Board in June of 2016, and would need to pursue other funding opportunities.
- **Motion to fund Community Spirit Church's \$15,000 funding request to be paid quarterly from October 1, 2015 through December 31, 2016. The church will provide a draft of the UCC Testimony grant proposal by June 1, 2016. John moved, Jan seconded, MOTION APPROVED.**
- Karen returned to meeting. Rebecca will write a letter to Pat Riddell regarding the Board's decision. Karen thanked the Board for their support.

10:45 Break and hanging of the UCC Synod Moderator Banner in the Conference offices. This banner hangs in the home or office of the current UCC Moderator.

11:00 Reconvened

SOCIAL JUSTICE PROPOSAL:

- Anne Dunlap submitted a proposal to create a new full-time position within the Conference: Community Minister for Racial Justice and Solidarity. Rebecca reviewed the discussions from the August 22 Board meeting.
- Sue had conversations with national regarding this proposal and noted that Racial Justice is a key focus for the UCC in coming months. There is also a yearning in the Conference to raise social justice issues – we saw that at the Annual Meeting.
- At present RMC has two acting conference ministers that are stretched to the limit.
- Until we have Settled Conference Ministers in place, we are not in a position to name a new position in the Conference. We need to put our energy into this in the future but cannot do it at the Conference level at this time. We want to support Anne but we cannot add a full-time position with benefits at this time.
- John stated we could find ways to support this position with travel benefits, etc., but not a salary.
- New church start monies were originally set for traditional churches. We need to determine how other emerging ministries fit into these funds.

- Erin will let Anne know the Conference is not in a position to provide support at this time because:
 - Not all churches are willing to provide support.
 - The Conference needs to settle the Conference Minister positions first.
 - Other groups are requesting funding from Conference.
 - If there is a community grass roots desire for this work, please bring it back to the Board, but a full-time, paid position with benefits is not possible anytime within the next year.
- Erin will also let Anne know she may go directly to churches to seek some sort of a partnership arrangement, but some churches are waiting to see if the Conference will support this program. Please convey to the churches that the Conference is in support of something happening in the racial justice area, but need more people behind us.
- **The Board has considered this request and considers it to be an emerging ministry. It is the Board's position that it should be nested in the local churches.**
- **MOTION: The RMC Board of Directors are enthused and optimistic about providing a bold, prophetic and progressive voice for justice in the West. While we are not at a point at which we can commit to any new full-time, fully-funded staff position, we will continue to consider what is possible as we form a structure and vision for our Conference staff. In the meantime, we encourage those Conference members who are called to justice activity to work together in finding new and promising directions at the "mission seeds," grassroots level. Gage moved, John seconded, MOTION APPROVED.**
- Erin will send a letter to Anne informing her of the Board's decision.

MISSION SEEDS:

- Erin checked in with all conveners this week, and heard from all but two.
- They are proceeding, but need to coordinate all the different groups, including Congregations Alive.
- Need to promote the Mission Seeds groups in RoMoCo and other communications. These groups are open to other members!
- **The Board and staff will explore how to disseminate the information regarding the mission seeds.**
- The current operating budget has \$4,000 available to support mission seeds through 2015. **We encourage any mission seed teams to bring requests to the Board for support.**
- There is a need to explain the purpose and goals of the mission seeds replacing mission teams – not everyone understands. We could have retreats, etc. for people to meet and to get this going, such as cluster conversations (radical road trip connections). This is a strategic goal for 2016.

12:00 break for lunch and executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Sue, Tamara, Cory and Lisa are excused):

The Board of Directors extends thanks to the members of the Search Committee for crafting the Conference Profile and affirms its use for both the Conference Minister search, as well as the search for Associate Conference Minister.

12:55 – Sue, Tamara, Cory and Lisa return to the meeting

STATUS OF THE CONFERENCE:

- There are 46 churches in some form of transition/vitality. Most are not listed on the website. Of particular note:
 - Chadash closed August 14, 2015.
 - First Congregational in Boulder called a new pastor, Christine Braudaway-Bauman, to start February 1, 2016, upon Martie McMane's retirement on January 31, 2016.
 - Cal Kemper (Northglenn UCC) will be returning to the pulpit in October.
 - Sue's role/goal for RMC is to ensure the health and vitality of local churches and that is how the Conference work is centered. With so many churches in transition, the Conference has their hands full.
- Rebecca requested that Sue and Tamara let them know if they need assistance.
- Cory discussed the proposed new logo/watermark for RMC. There are three proposals in the kitchen, and he requested feedback. The new logo would be used on our website and conference documents such as a camp flyer, among others.
- Sue will be signing a contract to redevelop our website to contemporize it.

PNEUMA REQUEST:

- Robbie Carlson submitted a request to attend the PNEUMA/Western Christian Educator's Conference in California in October.
- The Conference has historically honored PNEUMA requests through Partners in Education Funds. We no longer have funds in those accounts, so funding would come from Strengthen the Church (Matt's recommendation).
- Sue requests that if we sponsor Robbie, he will need to come back and share what he learned through a newsletter or other conference program.
- **Motion to approve a \$350 scholarship for Robbie Carlson to attend PNEUMA from the Strengthen the Church designated fund, with the expectation Robbie will share what he learned in at least one conference setting within a year. John moved, Jan seconded, MOTION APPROVED.**
- Rebecca will follow-up with Robbie.

CONCLUDING MINISTRY TEAMS:

- The plan in place is to officially end the Ministry Teams at the end of this year as elected teams.
- For those Teams that are ending, we need to take some appropriate actions to thank those people, and bring closure to what has been a long history.
- **Global Partners** and the **Conference Inclusion Team** are not ministry teams that are voted on or elected.
- **Mission Partners:**
 - This group take applications for missions and makes decisions on what programs to fund. They meet in the fall, usually by conference call. Martha Gentry is the chair.
 - Tamara stated that we have scholarship pieces to add to this. It would be nice to have a group that addresses the giving of funds in the variety of ways that the Board asks us to handle.
 - Sue stated we need to rethink our missions and how we want the money allocated. We need to ask this Committee to continue.
 - Tamara stated that culturally, non-faith based organizations receive more money than faith-based groups. This team, as it exists, will complete this year's work and will continue through this year.

- **Justice and Peace Ministry Team:**
 - This team has not been very active for several years. John will contact the group to communicate to this Team that we still have a commitment to justice and peace in the Conference in the new form, but it is not an elected position and anyone can join through mission seeds.
 - If there is something this Team is passionate about, we will support a new mission seed if we are not already doing it.
- **Growth Ministry Team:**
 - This team is not active. John will work with Karen to prepare a letter thanking the team for what has been done, and directing them to move over to the leadership groups.
- **Faith Nurture Committee (Outdoor Ministry):**
 - This team has met four times since Tamara has been here regarding camp and scholarships.
 - The Conference needs some sort of outdoor ministry team.
 - The Outdoor Ministry team's priorities are the relationship with La Foret and priorities of the Conference, one being outdoor ministries. John and Tamara will call the Faith Nurture Committee and explain our new model/mission seeds before the end of the year, and get their input on how they want to continue.

ANNUAL MEETING 2016:

- Discussion tabled until the November meeting.
- Need to decide on our theme, and send out Save-the-Date notices as soon as possible.
- Also need information regarding cost estimates.
- Planning/Design team for content – Judi Baillie, Gage Church, Erin Gilmore.
- Logistics – [need somebody].
- Worship & Music – Karen Winkel and Martha Jones.
- Business Meeting – Rebecca Kemper Poos, John Rostykus, Matt Huntington, Sue Artt.
- Service in a box will be prepared so pastors can attend with ease of knowing their worship is covered.
- Possibility of charter buses to Utah?

Rebecca left the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

RADICAL CONNECTION ROAD TRIPS:

- There was some discussion regarding cluster meetings this year, but the Board chose not to hold cluster meetings because Congregations Alive took their place. We will not be holding Congregations Alive next year, so we will need to do some kind of gathering of people to share the Vision, and work on mission seeds.
 - The Board needs to keep thinking about this, get it advertised, get people thinking about it, and decide how we scale it - original clusters were too many and too small - perhaps by Association?
- Need to keep the Vision in front of the people, and repeat it over and over.
- What is the feedback on what we are doing? The clusters spurred a lot of action in Associations.
- How do we, as a Board, get the information we need to make decisions? Discussion regarding Association roles, and how they relate/interact with the Board.
- We have a great resource in the Associations and should turn to them.
- Expansion of Associations in clergy care, church renewal, and Association decision-making.

- The puppet show at Annual Meeting was a huge success. How can we take that on the road? It's been to Wyoming for cluster meetings and Ft. Collins for their meeting.

2015/16 BOARD WORK:

- With respect to the brainstorming session from the August meeting, the Board took three items and worked on them in groups. Need to share new insights from last month, trim out the fluff, and determine how much responsibility the Board takes on versus expecting staff to take on.
 - The goal is to get every person in the Conference to understand the Vision.
 - Already started the video series posted on You Tube and the RMC website. Cory will send out the videos done so far.
 - To make this happen, need to have a presence of the Conference/Board throughout the Conference. Every member of the Board should commit to attend at least one event this year.
 - Associations and churches need to advise the Association/Conference of their events so they may be put on the RMC website.
 - Our goal is to increase attendance at the Annual Meeting by 50%. Need to make sure everyone knows they are welcome to attend Annual Meeting.
 - Incentives to get people to attend Annual Meeting? Perhaps installation of the Conference Minister at Annual Meeting will generate more interest, although there may be complexities with logistics, etc.
- The remaining objectives from the August brainstorming session:
 - La Foret/Outdoor plan – what is our staffing model for the long-term? John and Rebecca attended the La Foret Board strategic planning retreat meeting where there were many discussions regarding the possibilities.
 - La Foret summit.
 - RMC's commitment to outdoor ministry apart from La Foret.
- RMC Clergy priorities.
- Association alignment.
 - Possibly change this from delegates to everyone come to Annual Meeting, and have limited voting delegates.
 - Association leadership retreat will be held at the end of October at La Foret. Participants include the pastor, moderator, chair, and three others.
- Infrastructure Efficiency/Effectiveness Improvements. This is staff work, but may have Board input later.
- Social Justice Voice – this was discussed earlier today (see Social Justice Proposal). Need to work the mission seed program forward and not impede that.

MEETINGS SCHEDULE:

November 14, 2015 at the Conference Office

(Karen and Gage have commitments on November 14 and will need to call in)

January 23, 2016 at the Conference Office/via Telephone

March 12, 2016 at the Conference Office

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

ASSIGNMENTS FOR NOVEMBER 14 MEETING:

Opening Prayer – Tamara

Timekeeper – Jan

Executive Session Scribe – Nate

Closing Prayer – Martha Sullivan

Gage offered the closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:58.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Callahan
RMC Office Administrator