

**Rocky Mountain Conference UCC
Regular Board of Directors Meeting via Zoom
November 18, 2020**

Board Members Present: Sue Artt, Judy Baillie, Deborah Barnard, Lee Berg, David Bristow, Shelly Dunham, Mark Dutell, Ken Ingram, Wendy Kidd, Ben Konecny, Mark Long, Andy Nielsen

Others Present: Erin Gilmore, Martha Jones, Tracey Dawson (present for the HMR report), Pedro Silva (for Tributary Fund report), Robb Lapp and Sebastian Corradino (for the Archway Housing discussion)

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Rocky Mountain Conference UCC was called to order by Moderator Judy Baillie at 9:04 am on November 18, 2020. The minutes of the September 30, 2020 meeting were accepted as written. The agenda was approved. David Bristow provided a reflection and check in followed.

Conference Minister's Report

Sue updated the Board on several items:

- The Board was updated on several real estate items.
- Sue discussed recent communications to the churches in light of increased COVID cases throughout the conference. She said that she has urged churches to find alternatives to meeting in person during this time, the most perilous we've experienced to date with the pandemic.
- Sue is writing a letter of affirmation to churches to say how much they are appreciated for their willingness to adapt in these difficult times. She will encourage churches to share the letter with their congregations.
- The conference held two conversations via Zoom for church leaders after the presidential election.
- The conference has received a Conference Recovery Grant of \$10,000 from the national UCC to develop mediation capacity and conflict resolution in our churches. Sue discussed the need for this training and briefly described the training model. Sessions will be scheduled for spring.

Personnel Report

ACTION: Upon motion and second, the Board unanimously approved the following 2021 housing allowances for clergy on the RMC staff: Rev. Sue Artt – 45% of salary; Rev. Erin Gilmore - \$25,000.

Mark Dutell, informed the Board of the current work of the Personnel Committee: updating personnel policies, reviewing the process and content of the performance appraisal for the conference minister, and reviewing the clergy compensation guidelines.

Finance Report

Shelly updated the Board on the current work of the Finance Committee, which includes drafting a policy for gifts, donations, and other income (perhaps to be called “God sends”) which will be presented at a future Board meeting.

Update from Platte Valley Association

Ken Ingram, as representative from the Platte Valley Association, reported that Faith United Church of Christ in Windsor has voted to withdraw from UCC effective October 4, 2020. He also reported that the Platte Valley registrar has been informed by email that the Zoar Congregational Church in Prospect Valley has closed and reopened as a Baptist church. Ken informed the Board of procedures the association is taking to release these two churches from their covenants. Members have been informed that they will be welcomed at other UCC churches in the area if they want to retain their membership in the UCC.

Moderators Report

Judy discussed work to develop a description of the role and responsibilities of association representatives on the Board. Deborah has helped lay the groundwork for this work by interviewing each representative.

ACTION: By motion and second, the Board unanimously approved authorizing a team with David Bristow as the lead to develop expectations for association representatives, with a written report presented at the February meeting of the Board

Judy discussed the format and expectations for the special meeting on December 2 to discuss Board members’ strengths assessments.

Healthy Ministry Relationships Report and Rethinking RMC Structures

At this time Tracey Dawson joined the meeting to present a report on the status of the Healthy Ministry Relationships (HMR) program. The report described the structure of the HMR team, the training modules developed and presented, future modules being planned, the need to have consistency and Board support for this program across the conference, and recommendations for Board action. The report raises concerns about inconsistency in HMR training between associations and the location of a group such as the HMR Team within the RMC structure as defined in bylaws.

Sue shared a report she and the executive team developed: “Rethinking RMC Structures to Promote Emergence of New Ministries.” She discussed the historical development of the geographic model for associations and the inadequacy of that model for addressing the emergence of groups and new forms of ministry that benefit churches in cross-regional ways. The report recommends definition of structures beyond the current four ongoing committees and the ministry teams – specifically task forces and wider ministries. Sue explored with the Board some of the possible characteristics of wider ministry structures related to governance, funding, and relationship to the conference. Extensive conversation followed.

The Board discussed the need to support the current and future work of the HMR team as the Board continues to work to define the relationship of HMR and similar groups within the RMC structure.

ACTION: Upon motion and second the Board unanimously approved forwarding the following to the associations: The RMC BOD has reviewed the report of the HMR team and recommends to the Associations that the HMR team training would be an effective way to do training for laity and for fulfilling their HMR training requirements for authorized ministers and ministers in discernment.

Sue will promote this recommendation with the associations and representatives are also encouraged to take it to their associations. The remaining action items requested by the HMR team will be deferred until such structures are redefined, as addressed in the following resolution.

ACTION: Upon motion and second, the Board unanimously approved the formation of a team to look at wider ministry groups and task forces and bring back recommendations that would allow the Board to recommend changes to the conference bylaws.

The team will include David, Ken, Wendy, and Tracey, with David taking the lead. A preliminary report is to be brought to the Board in February.

Sue thanked and recognized the HMR team for their role in helping to envision and build conference infrastructure for the future.

Tributary Fund Application

At this time Pedro Silva joined the meeting for the Tributary Fund discussion. Shelly presented a proposal from a team authorized to develop a grant process to fund and support new ministries, new churches, or ministry revitalizations brought forth from within the conference. Members of this team included Shelly, Mark Dutell, Ken, Lee, and Pedro Silva.

The report and subsequent discussion included a consideration of the purpose of the fund; the relational, conversational process to be used for discernment of proposals prior to application; the expectations of requests; the application and review process; and the funding cycle and renewability.

The Board discussed the proposal at length, including the need for close collaboration between the conference and these ministries as they evolve, building in accountability processes, and considerations in determining the amount of funding available for this initiative. Sue explained that there are two potential funding sources in Board designated funds – the income from the sale of the 7th Avenue church and funds designated for new church development. (It was noted that these funds are also earmarked for anti-racism work to be discussed later.) The Finance Committee was charged with making a recommendation of the amount to be designated for this initiative in 2020-21.

ACTION: Upon motion and second, the Board unanimously approved moving forward with the Tributary Fund program, with the understanding that determination of funding is

in process, with the Finance Committee to make a recommendation to the Board at the February 2021 meeting and that documents be augmented to include more information on the relational and mentorship aspects of the program.

LUNCH

The Board adjourned at noon for lunch and a relationship building activity.

Archway Housing and 2500 South Sheridan

At this time, Robb Lapp and Sebastian Corradino joined the meeting.

ACTION: Upon motion and second, the Board unanimously approved appointment of the following as members of the Archway Housing & Services, Inc. Board of Directors for 2021.

UCC Members:

Rev. Robinson Lapp, Retired Minister-UCC

Dr. Lee Berg, Minister – Wash. Park UCC

Dr. Jody Huntington, Professor, Regis University, UCC Member

David Nestor, Owner, Urban Lights

Community Representatives:

Andrea Weule, Principle, AC Investment Group

Allyson Noelle Drayton, Transition Services Clinician

Rebecca Theurer, Resident Representative

Paul Herskowitz, Director, Retired Multi-Family Housing Developer

Robb introduced Sebastian Corradino, CEO and Executive Director of Archway since March 2020. Sebastian spoke to the vision and future of Archway and his focus on strengthening the financial health of the organization. He expressed appreciation for the support of and collaboration with the RMC Board and discussed potential development of the property at 2500 South Sheridan, currently owned by the conference.

Racial Justice Discussion and Funding Proposal

Sue and Erin led the Board in discussion of a report from the Racial Justice Discernment Team. Gathered by the Conference Minister in late spring of 2020, the group was charged with discerning the role of the conference in dismantling racism in individuals, congregations, and communities throughout the conference.

The Board reviewed and discussed the team's report, which included background and the faith imperative for doing this work at this time. The report proposed creation of an Anti-Racism Ministry Team and proposed mission, vision, goals and objectives of the team, as well as proposed funding and an assessment model.

Extensive discussion followed. There was discussion of the scope of the proposed work and it was the consensus of the Board that the focus of the proposed work should be specifically on racism at this time, rather than being broadened to include all disenfranchised persons.

Judy shared a proposed letter of appreciation to the members of the Racial Justice Discernment Team members. As the team's work of discernment is complete, it will be decommissioned; an Anti-Racism Ministry Team with broader conference representation will need to be assembled and commissioned to take the work forward.

ACTION: Upon motion and second, the Board unanimously approved the modified letter of appreciation to the Racial Justice Discernment Team and decommissioned the team as of the end of December.

ACTION: Upon motion and second, the Board unanimously authorized the creation of an Anti-Racism Ministry Team with clergy and lay representation from each association in the conference.

ACTION: Upon motion and second, the Board unanimously approved designating a total of \$450,000 total for the Anti-Racism Platform to be spread over three years.

Meeting Schedule

- December 2, 2020, 9:00 – 12:00 – retreat and brief meeting
- February 24, 2021, 9:00 – 3:00
- April 28, 2021, 9:00 – 3:00

All meetings will be via Zoom for the time being.

Closing Prayer and Adjournment

The meeting ended with a reflection shared by Mark Long. The Board adjourned at 2:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Martha Jones, Scribe