

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

BOARD MEETING MINUTES - APPROVED

Thursday, January 16, 2024 – 4pm

**The RMC is a network of diverse local churches across UT, WY and CO
equipping, supporting, and inspiring one another
to embody the love and justice of Jesus
in our local and collective contexts.**

Present: Brent Gundlah, IMA; MaryEllen Beltracchi, Vice Mod; Sarah B. Linn, Moderator; Hunter Baker, Treas; Karen Caton, WA; Adam McCoy, Pers, Emerson Hauber, SEA; Erin Gilmore, TCM; Eleanor Downey, NMM

Absent: Marta Fioriti, PV; Laura Gurney, LLL; Allyson Stauffer, CJL; Peter Sawtell, MDA; and Ian Wrisley, RJ

4:04 **Declaration of a Quorum – Sarah**

4:05 **Centering Moment – *Star Thrower* - MaryEllen**

4:10 **TCM Updates – Erin**

Intends to give verbal reports at monthly meetings, with written TCM report quarterly. No objections.

COM: Leslie Etheredge has held over 20 meetings with committee members and has begun to gather different groups for mutual support, starting with MID's. She has also proposed simplifying the structure: combine SOS and Accountability Team, making 2 teams instead of 3: effectively forming a group focused on pre-authorization and the other on post-authorization.

Discussion re: process of hiring Leslie Etheredge for temporary, part-time position emphasized urgency, ensuring MID's and others in transition were not left hanging for a months-long process, the board's authority to hire staff as needed, generally, and particularly to bring in outside input and experiment with new structures, per the transition plan approved by the conference.

Mark Pickett has agreed to serve as FAS chair.

Erin is continuing to work on a case statement for the conference, to be posted on the website and elsewhere, re: reducing expenses while cultivating generosity and would like board discussion on drafts.

Erin and Hunter met with Andrew Warner (Cultivating Generosity) – and discussed 2 options for a church leader training program (hopefully in teams from participating churches): 1. A 12-week online only course (6 live sessions on Zoom and 6 asynchronous sessions) that could run from the end of Feb. to middle of May. 2. A hybrid presentation plan with 4 live online sessions and one single day in person (say, at the AC).

Discussion: benefits of each option and possible cost structures for individuals and the conference. **By consensus, the board supported Erin/Hunter approaching Andrew re: his availability to offer both formats: the hybrid option before AC (on the 24/25 FY budget), then the longer format after AC (on the 25/26 budget).**

Erin and Personnel Chair Adam McCoy are working on staff performance evaluations allowing for reflection to each staff member while soliciting their observations on the conference, CM, board progress, etc. A 3% COLA to each staff member was provided in the budget, as of January.

Our transition timeline: At the 2026 AC, we'll need to form a search committee. This requires developing a search profile ahead of time. It might be advisable to initiate reflection and conversation at the 2025 AC about who we are as a conference and what we need in a leader to get us where we need to go.

4:50 AC 2025 Update – Sarah/Erin

Details coming together. Scheduling the business meeting at beginning of AC so the programmatic piece doesn't get broken up. As a theme, asking, "What does covenant mean to us? How do we live into various covenants?" Presenting wide-open invitation to ministries across the conference to share presentations/workshops/conversations about how they are living into one or more of the UCC's Just World covenants. Emphasizing connections and practical collaboration – particularly considering where suffering is found and how we might help alleviate it in our various contexts. As we did last year, we are planning a youth track. The AC planning team is now meeting twice monthly.

5:00 Treasurer / Finance Committee Report – Hunter

Current income/expense report – doing well: We are 50% through the year; 40% on COM expense, STC ahead as well; We have \$8K for boards and committees that haven't been drawn

on at all yet. We've allocated \$55K on transition and have spent \$17K so far. We remain relatively on budget. As budgeted, we expect a roughly \$150K shortfall, at the end of the FY.

FC Proposal: Revised investment plan:

Maintain balance in checking: \$50K

Maintain First Bank liquid assets account: \$465K

Invest \$1.1M in Cornerstone according to the following schedule:

- one-year note due Jan. 26, 2025: \$300K (@ 3.75%)
- one-year note on Mar. 26, 2025: \$300K
- one- or two-year note Jun. 26, 2025: \$250K
- one- or two-year note Sep. 26, 2025: \$250K

Motion: Board support for the FC Proposal, as presented, with quarterly re-assessment. (From committee, no 2nd required; approved.)

Report on Budgeting Process/Timeline: re-wrote the memo from December (see the meeting folder) and added a page of key individuals that Hunter, Erin, and FC will check in with concerning needs, sustainability, etc.

Upcoming work: Insurance renewal (D&O coverage); retained David Mitchell for outside financial review; considering ways of promoting giving to the conference and helping members know the benefits.

5:32 **Motion:** Approve DRAFT December 19, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes (MEB/Karen)
Approved.

5:34 **Update/Announcements:**

- Ian and Allyson are in conversation about how RJ/CJL intersect and how they might include the conference in that conversation, fostering integrated engagement, etc. Allyson and Ian need to coordinate with their teams.
- Brent/IMA – Anticipating full-scale assault on human rights as the brief UT legislative session begins; prayers welcome.
- SEA meeting right now.
- Karen: WA is updating their Association by-laws.
- Next Board meeting: 4pm on February 20 (centering: Brent; next time, we'll pick someone who wasn't at this meeting!)

5:42 **Transition Progress Discussion**

Discussed positive progress (COM, Personnel, networks of groups forming, etc.) and areas of concern (racial justice team activity? communication to membership).

By consensus, the board expressed strong support for having a staff person at board meetings to help connect what's discussed by the board to what's needed among RMC ministries.

5:58 Closing Blessing: MEB

6:00 Meeting adjourned