

Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association
Annual Meeting of the Membership
Thursday, June 25, 1998
Rochester, New York

The Annual meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m. on June, 25, 1998, by President Paul Johnson in the Grand Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency Rochester Hotel. The minutes of the annual meeting of June 19, 1997, were approved as submitted by the consent of the body.

Daniel O'Connell was appointed as parliamentarian. David Sammons was appointed as time keeper. Paul Johnson discussed the rules for procedure: a. No person may speak for more than three minutes on any one item. b. No person may speak for more than once on an item as long as anyone wishes the floor. c. After initial presentation, debate time for each item requiring a vote shall be ten minutes. After ten minutes, a motion shall automatically be put, "Shall debate be extended for ten minutes?" Anytime that a majority shall fail to extend the time debate shall be closed and the question of the floor put to a vote. d. Any proposal by the Executive Committee shall automatically come before the body. The standard rules of procedure were accepted as submitted.

President Paul Johnson gave his final annual report. He mentioned that he was pleased with the UUMA support for the UUA Compensation Consultancy Program. As a result of our efforts, as well as those of other groups, the UUA has increased significantly the funding for this program.

Paul stated that the UUA Administration and Board has been very responsive to ministerial concerns. The UUA and UUMA are in a good position of mutual support for one another. He stated that his administration has attempted to use the written purposes of the UUMA found in our bylaws in our pursuit of ministerial issues. He stated that we need to help parishioners understand the nature of ministry and the skills and duties we perform. This greater understanding will help raise compensation for ministers. Paul is pleased with the support from the Panel on Theological Education and felt that the UUMA should be a regular recipient of their funding so that the UUMA could make long range plans for continuing education programs. He called upon the members to help the UUMA obtain additional funding for continuing education.

Paul mentioned that the UUMA also has a purpose for maintaining clergy support and has made great strides in increasing that support. He used a series of metaphors in the types of support the UUMA gives. One concern he had was the number of colleagues who were taking colleague to colleague conflict to the Ministerial Fellowship Committee instead of to the Good Offices Persons in the chapters.

Paul stated that he had fond affection for the UUMA because of the support and affirmation that he has received through the years and especially as president of the UUMA. Paul thanked the other members of the Exec for their wonderful work on our behalf. He introduced each of the Exec members and mentioned their portfolios.

He commended his written report to each one to read and mentioned that the UUMA is in a good place fiscally, emotionally, and structurally. Paul Johnson was given a long standing ovation at the conclusion of his remarks.

1998 Annual Meeting of the UUMA
June 25, 1998

At 10:45 it was moved and seconded that the meeting move into a Committee of the Whole for the previously announced informal plenaries: Code/Guidelines Amendment Proposals - Consultation Among Colleagues, Severance; Code/Guidelines Discussion - Confidentiality; Code/Guidelines Discussion - Gender Expression; UUMA Finances - 1998-99 proposed budget; Compensation Issues; MFC; CENTER's Priorities on Continuing Education; Student Concerns; Bylaws Change on Process of Revision of Code of Professional Practice and Guidelines. Approved. Judith Downing gave directions to find the locations of the various plenary groups. Paul reviewed the morning schedule stating that the mini-plenaries would last until 11:45 with the annual luncheon to begin at noon, and the annual meeting to resume at 1:15.

At 1:15 p.m. there was a motion to rise from the Committee of the Whole, seconded, and approved by the membership.

a. Action on Bylaw Change - David Sammons presented the proposed bylaw change to add a new section concerned with the process for amending the Guidelines and Code of Professional Conduct. The motion was moved and seconded. Following a brief discussion, the bylaw was brought to a vote. The question was called and the motion passed unanimously.

***Article XII, Section 2:** A year long process shall be established for amending the UUMA Guidelines and Code of Professional Conduct. Prospective amendments must be submitted by the Executive Committee or by a petition of five or more members filed with the President at least 60 days prior to the UUMA Annual Meeting at which they will be presented. All proposed amendments shall be accompanied by the names of the sponsors or, if proposed by the Executive Committee, the names of the members voting in favor of the proposed amendment. If affirmed for study by a majority vote of the members present at this meeting, amendments will then be remanded to the Guidelines Committee for distribution with supporting materials for a year-long study consideration process by local UUMA Chapters. Prospective amendments shall then be presented by the Guidelines Committee at the next Annual Meeting of the UUMA for discussion and possible adoption following a two thirds (2/3) affirmative vote by members present at this meeting. If, however, discussion on the floor of the Annual Meeting should result in the creation of an amendment which is substantially different from either the existing text or the proposal, that amendment shall be remanded to the Guidelines Committee and subject to the year-long study consideration process by local UUMA Chapters as outlined above.*

b. Nominating Committee Report - Brian Kiely gave a brief report of the Nominating Committee. He introduced the nominees for new offices of President - Gary Smith, Vice President - Kenn Hurto, Secretary - Annie Foerster, Good Offices - Betsy Stevens, Publications - Aaron Payson, and the Nominating Committee - Barbara Davenport and Walter Wieder. Ballots not already mailed in were collected by tellers recruited from the theological students attending. Brian thanked the other members of his committee for the work they did. He mentioned the criteria which the committee considered in finding nominees.

c. Election of New Member to Berry Street Conference - Gretchen Woods was nominated to the Ministerial Conference in Berry Street Committee. No further nominations were received from the floor. Gretchen Woods was elected to the

1998 Annual Meeting of the UUMA
June 25, 1998

Ministerial Conference in Berry Street Committee unanimously by voice vote.

d. Written Reports - Paul Johnson urged the members to read the reports. There was no action taken.

e. CENTER Report - Michael Schuler gave a report on the Center Committee activities of the previous year. He discussed the plans for Center Day, 1999. He mentioned that several new programs are being developed for next year - anti-racism, Creating Safe Congregations, retreat training, and chapter presenters. He stated that there will be fewer regular presenters due to the emphasis on anti-racism training this next year. Michael introduced the other members of the Center Committee, telling about their responsibilities, and thanked them for their hard work. He introduced Beth Miller who will be the new chair of Center. He also introduced Suzanne Meyer, Jane Boyajian, Dillman Sorrells, and Kirk Loadman-Copeland. Charles Ortman and Paul Ratzliff were mentioned as the two new incoming members of Center.

f. Code of Professional Practice and Guidelines - John Weston gave a brief report. He thanked the other members of his committee for their work - Alan Egly, Kate Rohde, Gail Seavey, and Charles Stephen. He introduced the suggested changes to the Code of Professional Practice and the Guidelines. John requested that the Gender Expression Guideline changes be included in the report from the Guidelines Committee. This was approved on voice vote.

The Membership debated changes to Section 2, Paragraph 5 and 6 of the Code of Professional Practice. Motion moved, seconded, and approved. No abstentions.

Code of Professional Practice

Section 2, Paragraph 5.

“The nurture of the relationship between a congregation and its minister is of utmost importance to the strength of the movement and to the integrity of our ministry. For this reason, consultation among colleagues practicing ministry within the same geographic area is essential to promote healthy congregational life. The purpose of such consultation is to reach mutually acceptable understandings about the appropriate roles that ministers in the same geographic area should play. Irreconcilable disputes should be referred to the Chapter Good Offices Person for mediation.”

Section 2, Paragraph 6.

“I will defer accepting any requests for any ministerial services whatsoever from members of any congregation I am not now serving until I have consulted with the incumbent minister. In order to maintain my colleague’s free choice in this matter, I will inform the person requesting my services of the necessity to consult our professional Guidelines. If my colleague asks me to refrain from performing the service, I will comply. Should emergency circumstances make such a consultation impossible, I shall render only limited services and consult with my colleague at the earliest possible opportunity.”

The membership discussed changes to the Guidelines. The Mini plenary from the morning recommended adding the phrase “At the same level” to the recommended change to Article I, Section E, Paragraph 6 following “should continue.” The amendment was moved, seconded, and approved. The motion, as amended, was moved, seconded, and approved.

The suggested changes to Article I, Section E were moved, seconded, and

1998 Annual Meeting of the UUMA
June 25, 1998

approved.

Guidelines

Article I, Section E

“Dismissal, Pressured Termination, and Negotiated Resignation”

Article I, Section E, Paragraph 6.

“Salary, parsonage use or housing allowance, and benefits should continue at the same level during the longer of three months or one month for each full year of service up to twelve months from the date of dismissal or negotiated resignation, or until the minister has found another position if sooner.”

The membership discussed the proposed changes to the Guidelines relative to gender expression. The Mini-plenary decided to include the suggested changes this year and propose a vote upon them. It was also urged to have the chapters continue studying this issue next year. The motion to add *“gender expression”* to the Code of Professional Practice, Section 4, paragraph 6, and to the Guidelines, Article I, Section A, Paragraph 2, Article IV, Section D, Paragraph 1 and 2, was moved and seconded. Several people spoke in favor of the motion or against it. The motion was approved.

John Weston made the motion from the Guidelines Committee *“That UUMA chapters be requested to continue to study the issue of gender expression intensively.”* The motion was seconded. An amendment was made and seconded to add *“and that study materials be sent to all UU ministers.”* Discussion ensued. The amendment was approved.

Discussion resumed on the amended motion. An additional amendment was made to include *“and that a report on this issue be made from each chapter for the next annual meeting.”* Seconded. After discussion, the second amendment was defeated.

The time allowed for debate expired. The membership did not vote to extend debate time. The question was called. The motion was approved as amended. There was a request that the study materials be of a higher quality than those sent to the chapters this year.

g. Report of the Office of Church/Staff Finance - Paul Johnson introduced Ralph Mero who gave a report on the Office of Church Staff Finances and the Compensation Benefits and Pension Committee. He gave thanks to Sheldon Bennett and Paul Johnson for their work on the committee. He also thanked David Tadesco and Larry Ladd for their work in enhancing compensation issues within the UUA. He mentioned the UUA program which will have a part-time employee who will work on this issue in Boston.

He mentioned that the UUA was moving to consolidate the pension plan into a new program. Each participant will be assessed a small charge to pay for the change which will result in more choices, quicker reports, and improved performance.

He discussed the fact that the medical plans of the UUA are being dropped by Blue Cross. Every carrier approached in the state of Massachusetts has refused to cover the UUA. Retired ministers are also being dropped. He stated that changes in the health insurance industry are forcing all religious organizations to lose coverage for their members. He urged members to support a resolution of immediate witness dealing with health insurance.

A question was raised regarding what would it take to have a self funding program. Ralph stated that it would not be feasible due to the small numbers of

1998 Annual Meeting of the UUMA
 June 25, 1998

participants. Another questioner asked if we could create a program with adequate premiums which would cover the costs of care for our members. Ralph said that the UUA doesn't have the money which it would cost with major illnesses.

Diane Miller was invited to come to the podium and she spoke about the staff team which reviewed the settlement process in the Department of Ministry. There are five different processes within the UUA - Settlement of people of color, extension and new congregations, interim, called settlement. She stated that they are trying to make the system work more effectively.

h. Treasurer's report - Richard Speck presented the Treasurer's Report. The UUMA is in very good shape financially. The income has exceeded projections while expenses have been held down.

He discussed the proposed Budget for 1998-1999 noting modest increases are in account #211, #221, #223, #226, #270, #280, #293, #301, #306, and #309. Chapter subsidies will again be sent automatically this year without any requests being made. He moved adoption of the submitted budget. A motion to approve the proposed budget was made and seconded. The budget was approved as submitted.

		1998-99
Receipts		Budget
101	Dues	\$142,000.00
102	Interest	\$7,000.00
103	Miscellaneous	\$175.00
104	Transfer from Sexual Ethics Reserve Fund	\$2,700.00
105	Transfer from Spirituality Reserve Fund	\$5,000.00
Total Receipts		\$156,875.00
Expenditures		
202	Council Church Staff Finances	\$8,800.00
203	Good Offices, Exec Committee	\$1,100.00
204	Good Offices, Chapters	\$2,300.00
210	Chapter Subsidy	\$6,900.00
211	Chapter Visits	\$8,000.00
221	Newsletter - Printing	\$6,400.00
223	Newsletter - Mailing	\$2,000.00
226	Publications - Other	\$8,000.00
230	Executive Committee Meetings	\$26,000.00
231	Guidelines Committee	\$800.00
232	Nominating Committee	\$300.00
250	President's Travel	\$2,000.00
253	Office/Postage/Telephone	\$8,000.00
254	President's Secretary	\$1,000.00
260	CENTER Committee	\$35,800.00
270	Membership Coordinator	\$16,000.00
280	Miscellaneous Expense	\$1,000.00

1998 Annual Meeting of the UUMA
June 25, 1998

290	Bonding Insurance	\$300.00
293	Audit	\$700.00
300	UUMA Compensation Advocacy	\$5,000.00
301	Grants	\$6,000.00
303	Computer/Fax Equipment Reserve	\$500.00
305	Chapter Leaders Training Reserve	\$6,000.00
306	Consultations/Special Meetings Reserve	\$2,000.00
307	Task Force I	\$100.00
308	UUMA Liaisons	\$1,500.00
309	APF Sermon Award	\$375.00

Expenditures \$156,875.00

i. Report of Election Tellers - Paul gave the report from the election tellers. All nominees were voted into office.

Paul mentioned that 742 people were registered at this Minister's Professional Days which is a new record. A report was given on the status of Nick Cardell. He is doing well as he serves out his sentence.

Paul thanked the outgoing members of the Exec, Carol Ann Taylor and David Sammons. Gary paid a tribute to Paul Johnson for his years of leadership on the Exec. He then made some brief remarks about his goals for his term as president. He urged members to contact him with compliments, suggestions, and complaints.

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The membership approved the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Speck, Secretary/Treasurer