

Thomas Jefferson District Board Meeting
Oct. 8, 2010

Board members present: Jim Key, Denise Rimes, Gracia Basham, Rev. Anne Marie Alderman , Fred Anderson, Nato Hollister, Peter Kandis, Rev. Jennifer Ryu , Pam Whistler

Board members absent: Cyndy Bailes

TJD Trustee: Rev. Jake Morrill

Staff: Annette Marquis, Glenn Johnson, Sue Sinnamon, Donna Sequeira

Committee Chairs: Martin Bauer, Regina Largent, Mary Alm

Guests: Rev. Jeanne Pupke, Rev. Sherman [Logan](#)

8:39 Opening Words by Denise Rimes

Check In proceeded thoughtfully

Process Observers: Jennifer [Ryu](#) and Nato [Hollister](#)

Timekeeper: Fred Anderson

Motion to approve Agenda: Fred Anderson moved, Denise Rimes seconded, approved unanimously

Motion to approve Minutes: Peter Kandis moved, Pam Whistler seconded, approved unanimously

Presidents Report: Jim Key reported that he has been in discussion with the District Presidents of the districts composing the Southland Region regarding the combined meeting for all regional board members, trustees, and staff in December. While it has been challenging to come up with an agenda, we are coming to agreement. Annette Marquis is representing the staffs of the four districts and Rachel Christensen (DP Florida District) is representing the District Presidents.

District Executive's Report: Annette Marquis reported that her duties as Lead DE for the Southland Region are now clearer. She reported efforts for coordinating services to congregations throughout the Region and the establishment of a Regional calendar. Sharing responsibilities with other Regional staff regarding training and consulting services is ongoing. Sue Sinnamon will be taking over managing the consultants in the District. Annette is the point person for the Association on Racial and Social Justice work. She recently met in Boston with the Social Justice staff with Donna Sequeira attending, and she is very encouraged with the direction this work is going in.

Vice-President's Report: Denise Rimes reported that planning the Anti-Racism Conference has filled her time. The District Staff is connecting to the Clusters and the UUA is connecting to the churches so Denise is concerned that none of this becomes overwhelming to our congregations. Denise and Jake will be working on this. Denise is working on by-laws and will report on that at our February meeting. Jake

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Morrill added that he and Denise would be working in concert on linkage (to congregations) strategies.

Treasurers and Finance Committee Report: Martin Bauer reported that income is ahead of spending because revenue is ahead of schedule. We have built up funds in a credit union account opened originally for the Knoxville Relief Fund and is being received for flood relief in Nashville and Kentucky. The Chalice Lighter Fund is being hit with high transaction fees and the Finance Committee approved moving the funds [from that checking account](#) to the [District-regular](#) account to save on fees.

The Kingston Fund has one position to be filled on the Board; it is anticipated that open positions will be filled in early 2011. A strategy meeting is planned for February in Greenville, NC to do some visioning with stakeholders from East of I-95 in North Carolina on how the fund might be used to grow Unitarian Universalism in that geography. Jake said that a Pastoral lens needs to [be](#) used as we support the Fund stakeholders in their visioning of the use of the funds. Ann Marie shared that the former Kingston members felt they were being very generous and following the original intent of the Fund. Therefore, we need to recognize that in any decision.

Chalice Lighters Fund Report: Regina shared that there is a lack of congregations applying [for grants](#). Chalice Lighter participation is down to 21%, and it is difficult getting people in every congregation to promote and inform their congregations. There seems to be a lack of publicity. Chalice Lighters usually becomes more popular in a congregation who receives a grant. The committee established policies and procedures with three-year terms for its members. They are working to have a board with diversity of large and small congregations and from geographically diverse areas. The committee welcomed a new member, Rev. Mitra Jafarzeda from West-~~S~~side [UUC](#) in Knoxville.

Report on General Assembly 2011: Mary Alm reported that the District needs to find four Coordinators from the Charlotte area ([Ambiance, Local Information, Service Project Coordinator and Evening Programming/Special Events](#)). Mary will serve as the liaison to the GA Planning Committee and the local Charlotte effort. If the District wants to provide a welcome at the airport or provide local tours or help it will be welcomed. Official GA Volunteer applications will be available on March 1st. The GA planning committee would like to see a Service Project that would help a Social Justice program grow. A District choir will be singing for the Opening Celebration, which the Musicians Network is organizing. Karen Armstrong is the Ware lecturer. The 50th Anniversary Committee will sponsor two Services. There will be 50 minutes of UU songs in 50 minutes before the Ware Lecture. Nick ~~page~~ [Page](#) and the New Epiphany Revival Show will highlight the Bridging ceremony. Robert Fulghum will give a keynote and there will be a link to the local Mosque during ~~f~~the Public Witness, which is coordinated by the Social Justice Staff. There will be a keynote [o](#)in Immigration whose speaker will be found by President Peter Morales.

ARAOMC Monitoring Committee Report: Peter reported on bringing himself up to speed on the district's ARAOMC history. He will have a report on what he has learned at the Feb meeting. Annette reported that the co chairs of the DRUUM [M](#) group met to organize the Feb. 24-27th meeting and those invitations will go out this week. They want to identify every person of color within our congregations to invite to participate in this group. LUUNA will be invited to join.

District Trustee Report: Jake Morrill shared that we are in a faith movement that is in its second year of decline, both by numbers of adults and youth. A number of key issues are being discussed by the Board:

1. We have a very large segment of white leaders in a diverse country. Our country has a large segment of the 'unchurched' and many of their religious activities are happening online and on places like ~~facebook~~Facebook. We need to do some discernment about the future and direction of what we need for good governance and what ~~is only~~communication portals are used specifically because of habit or ease.
2. The UUA Board is leading an investigation into our relationships between the many levels of our Association so we have something of worth to leave to our children.
3. The UUA Board continues in the work of reducing the size of the Board.
4. In November there will be a DPA meeting and early December the multidistrict meeting will be held in Orlando.
5. At last year's GA, the delegates voted for a Justice GA in Phoenix that will have only minimal business done, so this has given the Board a way to revision GA.
6. A sample of congregations has been selected to test linkage and how congregations want to be in association with the national Board. The UUA Board will meet in both Tucson and Phoenix in February to talk with locals UU's. Linkage is the essence of engaged democracy, which is foundational for us.
7. Jake has seen a need for Tennessee people to have a chance to be more informed on Immigration and think and process this information. Jeanne added that there is some skepticism on the changes within the UUA Board by congregants and Jeanne sees a need for District Board Members to bring a positive voice and some forward-looking voices within the Districts to become a prophetic voice on this issue.

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Nominating Committee Report: The Board named Andy Reese to fill one position and the Nominating Committee approved this. One more name is needed to appoint to the committee and the board deferred to Annette and Jim to come up with a person of color or young adult.

Old Business:

- The Board accepted with pleasure a letter received from Lee Barker ~~which~~ on the [TJD Legacy](#) Scholarship Fund for Meadville Lombard Seminary.
- Nato has done research on the 2020 report and the different attitudes of Young Adults and what they are looking for in faith communities. He spoke of a ministry called Micah's Porch and the attraction by young adults of expanding the religious community to more than just attendance on Sunday morning. Nato will continue to do research and will access Sue Sinnamon for topics. Jim suggested that Nato give each of the Board something to read or study to help the Board go

forward in the multiple-generational direction we wish to go. Jeanne said she appreciated the way the Micah's Porch project held up a much higher bar for involvement and support by its young members.

- We were unable to use Rev. Susan Ritchie's 'History of the Districts' video. Jim encouraged the directors to view it on YouTube.
- A discussion on the recently adopted Policy Manual ensued to assess its relevancy and identify any needs to revise. Jennifer said that our District was the most important in historically working for Anti-Racism and we have more of a vested interest in holding up this important issue because of our unique history and unique culture on supporting this group of marginalized people.

New Business

- Annette invited us to attend the Living Legacy Pilgrimage 2011. Additionally, she spoke of the what it means to be an intentional multi-racial, multi-cultural congregation. The Board watched a video that reviewed the story of the Annapolis congregation. Annette believes that this is an intentional effort that people of color need to be included in our worship services and we need to have antiracism and white privilege training. We need to look at our music, our services, and our programs to ensure they include cultural diversity. The Board discussed four congregations who are intentional in their efforts toward becoming multicultural: Memphis, All Souls Durham, and First UU in Richmond. Jeanne shared that people are seeing the difference between being a monoculture and being multicultural.
- Annette spoke on how we can support our UU people of color at training and the Southland UU Leadership Experience. Opportunities should be given to people of color from each congregation to support those who can be leaders in our churches. Jake shared that there is a shift in theology; we used to have goals of reaching out, but we need to learn to include other cultures without asking them to change. Rev Sherman warns us that we need to welcome people of color but not expect them to change their culture or 'act white'. Annette would like to invite the congregations to keep learning and suggested the Haw River event to learn more about multiculturalism. Williamsburg, Beaufort, and Tennessee Valley have held discussions beginning this effort and trying to plan for increasing there-their efforts on becoming multi-racial and multi-cultural. Annette shared that GA was a wonderful example of being able to watch multiculturalism at work. Jim shared that mentoring was very powerful in his life in a corporate setting and we may have people who are trained in this more tolerant view of life sitting in our congregations that may be a resource. Annette stressed the importance of diversity on the Nominating Committee and on the UUA Board. She asked the board to support allocating money to support assisting congregations that are actively moving toward becoming MRMC. We discussed adding training for the next Board meeting and building personal development plans in this area. We agreed to read *Salsa, Soul and Spirit* in preparation for that meeting.
- Nato lifted up Small Group Ministry as a way of the future for ministering to young people.

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- Paul Raynor will be speaking at Williamsburg on multiculturalism.
- The book *The Death of José line* *The Death of Josselin (what is correct title?)* is suggested as a reading on Immigration.
- Policy Governance discussion on sections 1-7: The agenda called for a full discussion on these sections to assess how we are performing against them, and if we should consider changes or metrics. The discussion was cut short due to time limitations and will be carried over to the next meeting. Jennifer raised the issue of anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multi-cultural language in our policies. She posited that if we did not have a DE as focused as Annette on these initiatives, would the policies sufficiently guide future DEs--? This will be explored more fully when we resume our policy discussions in February. The Board was asked to send any immediate thoughts or comments to Jim via email.
- Jim's report proposed four motions, all of which passed after a full discussion. Martin pointed out that our fiscal policy will not be changed. Jim said that our Staff is so professional that we can take a bit more risk on trying new things because of the trust between the Board and Staff. Jeanne believes that because we are a strong District on a leadership level, we can lead the way on visioning what it means to be a District, a Cluster, a Region and an Association. Annette shared that our District is in a better place than most and our financial footing is stable. Other Districts have had financial challenges or cut Staff and so it makes sense that we lead the way in innovation.

Discussion was held on what these section changes could mean to us. We do take the risk that our DE would be employed by the UUA and they could decide to send her elsewhere.

Moved: Suspend Sections 2 and 3 of the TJD Board Policy Manual, Vision and Global Ends, for a trial period of approximately two years and embrace the UUA Board of Trustees' Global Ends.

During this period while the TJD Global Ends are suspended, the Board will be in dialogue with the congregations we serve, the UUA Board of Trustees, the District Presidents' Association, and other district boards on the risks and benefits of having a shared vision and global ends throughout the Association.

It is anticipated that this period of dialogue and discernment will conclude at the TJD Annual Meeting in 2012 with a recommendation from the Board to the delegates to permanently adopt the UUA Global Ends as the TJD Global Ends or revert to those accepted by the delegates to the TJD Annual Meeting in 2010.

Motion to approve by Denise, seconded by Peter, passed unanimously.

Moved: Suspend Section 8 of the TJD Board Policy Manual, Board/Executive Linkage, for a trial period of approximately two years and defer to the UUA as the singular employer of the DE and other co-employed staff.

During this period while the original Board/Linkage section is suspended, the Board will be in dialogue with the congregations we serve, the Director of Congregational Life, the UUA Board of

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Trustees, the District Presidents' Association, and other district boards on the risks and benefits of moving to a single employer model. Additionally, the TJD President will consult with the DE and the Director of Congregational Life to develop a Service Level Agreement. This Agreement envisions the DE as an employee only of the UUA but as the Relationship Executive to the TJD Board. Moreover, it is suggested that the UUA Board and Executive staff will take up the issue of expense sharing between and among districts to resolve the inequities of the present system of negotiated cost sharing formulas.

It is anticipated that this period of dialogue and discernment will conclude at the TJD Annual Meeting in 2012 with a recommendation from the Board to the delegates to permanently adopt a single employer model or revert to the co-employment model assumed in Section 8 of the TJD Board Policy Manual accepted by the delegates to the TJD Annual Meeting in 2010.

Motion to approve by Denise, seconded by Peter, seven in favor, none opposed, one abstention.

Moved: Enter into discussions with boards of those districts contiguous with our border, e.g. Mid-South and Florida to consider the risks and benefits of consolidation of two or more of the districts. It is anticipated that this period of dialogue and discernment will take several years so no specific end date for this discussion is anticipated at this time. Moreover, it is assumed a working group will be formed to develop project, communication, and monitoring plans. This working group will include district board members, district staff, and others.

During the period of analysis and review, it is essential for these activities to be transparent to the congregations we serve with the intent that whatever emerges as possible new entities will be put to a vote to the congregational delegates to our annual meeting. The review will focus on reducing the costs of governance, freeing resources to better serve congregations, supporting more efficiently district staffs, strengthening cluster organizations, and growing Unitarian Universalism in the South. It assumes that delivery of services to congregations would be improved with the identification of subject-matter specific staffing, e.g. Social Justice, Emerging Congregations, Stewardship, Youth and Young Adult, State Legislative Advocates, etc. that would be geography wide. Moreover, it assumes the present DE position(s) would be that of Relationship Executive(s) for a specified geography and would be singularly employed and directed by the UUA staff.

Activities that might be considered during the period of discernment include but are not limited to:

- Joint board meetings
- Combined annual meetings
- Combined conferences
- Town-hall webinars
- Teleconferences with board, trustee, staff, cluster, and congregational
_____ representation

Motion to table by Fred failed for lack of a second.

Motion to approve by Denise, seconded by Peter, six in favor, none opposed, two abstentions.

Moved: Support the UUA Board of Trustees as it works to enable and monitor the Linkage policies of the Association. The TJD Board commits to be the UUA Board's partner in linkage initiatives. The District Trustee will be the champion for the UUA Board and the Vice President will be the champion for the District Board. It is anticipated that these two positions will collaborate and bring proposals for both boards to consider that will connect our congregations to each other, the District, and the Association as envisioned by the framers of the Cambridge Platform. It is further envisioned that this work will strengthen and support existing cluster groups and encourage the formation of other cluster groups.

Motion to approve by Denise, seconded by Ann Marie, unanimously approved.

There was general agreement that these four proposals would create a space for discussion within the UUA, the DPA, Southland Districts, staff, clusters and congregations.

Annual Program Fund Report-Jeff [Clark](#), our new APF [Chair Representative](#), spoke on how our faith changes lives. APF is the major way we support the UUA and Jeff gives his thanks for supporting this effort.

Jennifer did process observation that we stayed mostly on time. We were a little slow on energy at the beginning. We had very clear reports and presentations. Jennifer said that Regina asked the Board a question on advice but we ran out of time to answer. She said that our Secretary found it impossible to take Minutes and be engaged in the discussion. Perhaps we should change this process so the Director can be more involved.

Nato observed that our multicultural lens could be broadened to most of our discussions.

Closing Reading by Denise

Recessed into Executive Session at 4:30 pm

Adjourned at 4:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Gracia Basham