

The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
Commission on Appraisal



March Meeting, 2009
Boston, MA

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March 27th, 2009

Present: Tom Owen-Towle, Don Mohr, Bev Harrison, Jacqui Williams, Pete Fontneu, Orlanda Brugnola, Barbara Child, Michael Ohlrogge

UUA Board Ends Statements

The Commission reviewed the recent draft of the UUA Board's ends statements. The Commission agreed that while it is important for us to be aware of what is happening with this, it is not useful or relevant for us to comment on it or relate it in any substantial way to our work.

What we're Hearing about the Revision

The commission discussed what we've heard from people in response to the revision, the UU World article on it, etc. The Commission recognized that there are a lot of other things on people's minds (UUA presidential election, the economy, etc.) and it's not to be unexpected that this isn't at the top of everyone's mind. Furthermore, this document, unlike the previous one, didn't come out of a big controversy like the last one.

Workshops led by Commission on Revision

The Commission made plans for several commissioners to visit different district assemblies and congregations to lead workshops inviting reflection on the revisions. All commissioners will work on contacting district executives within 10 days to update them on the status of the project and ask their help in informing their districts about the vote to consider the Commission's proposal at GA this year.

Questions for Reflection:

The commission gave input on the questions for reflecting on the revision and planned how to format them. The Commission clarified that the questions will go out to the congregations immediately following GA, provided the delegates vote to consider the Commission's proposal.

Preparing for GA:

Our Big Forum:

Our presentation is right before the Service of the Living Tradition (Friday). 6:45 – 8:00. SOLT (starts at 8:30). Public witness is 5:30 to 6:15. Programming ends at 5:00 beforehand.

Orlanda will contact Gini to confirm that Gini will moderate the discussion.

Promoting the process:

The Commission made plans to meet with various people and groups ahead of the vote in the Commission's suite to give these parties a chance to dialogue with the Commission about the Commission's proposal.

Presidential Election:

-We'll try to reach out to the candidates. We'll invite them to meet with us briefly during GA so that we can brief them on the process. We'll also just let them know that this is happening and that we would appreciate it if they would be able to speak positively of the review at some point.

Process Suggestion:

The Commission decided to include in all future agendas, a time at the beginning to review the agenda and for members to have input as needed.

Outreach to Delegates:

-Megan will create a flyer advertising our plenary discussion.
-Jacqui will see to the flyer's distribution over the email lists (presidents and ministers in particular) and in the electronic congregational packet.

Booth at GA:

-We will share a booth with the Nominating Committee.
-We're not planning on staffing the booth.
-The booth will have a computer to collect thoughts and suggestions for next topics of study.
-The booth will not address our current Article II project.
-We'll need a sign, instruction sheet, and computer.
-We can use Survey Monkey to collect people's suggestions. We can also then post the link to the Survey Monkey on our website and distribute it via email, soliciting input for future topics. We can create also do a version of the Survey Monkey in Spanish.
-Megan will create handwritten sign for the GA booth.
-We'll need a brief explanation of how the new topic selection process works and what will happen to people's input. (this can include the context of the past 5 reports and their topics). Also include a description of the Commission's charge.
-We will also have postcards at our booth that people can pick up and go to the web address for our Survey Monkey.

Vote at GA:

-Board member makes the motion to introduce this.

- We would like to have Orlanda be the first person to speak in favor of the motion. If the Board decides that they would like to be the first to speak in favor, then Orlanda would maneuver to be the first regular person to speak at the Pro-Mike. We would all stand with her.
- All of the commissioners who are delegates should be prepared to speak favorably towards the motion, if necessary. We will make strategy decisions ahead of time at the meeting after the SLT and on the floor during the debate itself.

Orientation of New Members:

- We could spend some time going around the table and having each Commissioner introduce themselves and tell about themselves, their background, strengths, etc.
 - Mentorship relationships between new and current members. Jacqui will be Erica Baron's mentor, Don will be Nana Kratochvil's mentor, Barbara will be Megan Dowdell's mentor.
 - We'll have a group building experience at October meeting with outside facilitator. It will last a day.
 - Preferable to get October meeting in P&E.
 - Need to let new folks know about October meeting.
 - Institutionalize orientation into the handbook.
 - We will have a session at GA, with the new people, after Tom and Orlanda leave.
- Saturday Dinner 5:00 – 7:00: send-off of outgoing Commissioners
 -Brunch on Sunday 10:45 – 12: 30 Welcome New People. Hopefully in Suite, if it has no table, then it would be at a restaurant.
- NomCom should be informed that we're looking for people who can be caring towards other members and to be good, supportive, team members.

Report to GA

- We can shorten the January Board report and update it with what we've done since then (crafted questions, prepping delegates, etc.).

GA Discussion / Presentation:

- Commission starts with giving history, background, process. This is pretty brief, about 3 min at most. Orlanda will write and deliver this.
- Commission lets Gini know ahead of time that we're not expecting to engage in questioning or exchanges with the big group. Orlanda will be available on stage with Gini in the rare event there is something Gini deems important for someone to respond to.
- We meet again after the Service of the Living Tradition at the Hilton Suite. We process what we heard from the delegates and discuss how that impacts how we'll handle the voting the next day.

Reaching out to District Executives & Presidents

We should put on our website an announcement about the big discussion before the SLT.

The Commission gave input to Pete on minor revisions to his materials for reaching out to District Executives and Presidents.

Other Materials to be Available to Congregations after GA:

Materials for Website:

- Orlanda will work on getting Charlotte Cowtan's thesis on the Western Unitarian Conference RE.
- Don's 30-page summary of the Survey Monkey input

Some other potential materials:

- Sample newsletter articles for congregations to use.
- Worship suggestions, RE suggestions (we could talk to LREDA, or LFD at the UUA, we can also talk to the musicians network)
- Perhaps the CoA could create a pamphlet on our principles midrash.
- More in-depth history piece, showing previous drafts, etc.
- Maybe a book on the story of how the current version was created. It would be the new Warren Ross book.
- Another brochure that is the story in miniature, it is promotional, it is marketing.
- Older versions of the "Principles" type document.

Website Issues:

- Need pictures on the website, pictures of meetings, commissioners
- Perhaps could do the layout in a blog-type style.
- Don has a friend who is a professional website-designer.
- Any changes we make need to fit into certain UUA criteria for website design.
- Jacqui will check with Julie on new requirements for UUA Website formatting. She will also provide resources for accessibility of websites.
- Need to make the website work with visually impaired people.
- Could get bios for the Commissioners up on the webpage.
- Need to update Orlanda's email address

Election & Nomination of Officers:

-The Commission discussed the process and procedures for elections and nominations, agreed that they should be clearly stated in the handbook (which currently they are not). This will be brought up in October for clarification and codification.

Treasurer's Report:

-Budget for this fiscal year is \$34,000

-As of this point, with all expenses in, we have spent \$24,533. This leaves us \$9,476.10 for GA. GA Registrations are in here, housing and travel are not in here.

-Budget for next year is the same, \$34,000 (only difference is now there is \$0 for printing).

-Apparently, based on the handbook, the treasurer is to submit the budget in October. Jacqui is uncomfortable with just letting the board make all the decisions.

Election of Officers:

Nominations by Nominating Committee:

Chair: Barbara

Vice-Chair: Jacqui

Treasurer: Don

Chaplain: Pete

Secretary: Michael

Bev moved to accept the slate as presented, Megan seconded. Everyone voted in favor, no nays, no abstentions.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michael Ohlrogge, Secretary
Commission on Appraisal