

AGENDA for Governance Working Group Meeting in Boston, Oct 15-16, 2009

Author of this agenda: J. Blevins

Meeting time: Thursday evening, 7-9 pm, 8-10 am Friday morning

Attending:

Trustees: Blevins, Shanti, Wooldridge, Loughrey, Harrison

Consultant: Susan Stratton-Radwan (8pm to 9pm only)

Possible Guests: Mary Ellen Morgan, President of DPA

Agenda:

1. Welcome guests and observers, intros
2. Brief Check-in
3. Opening reading
4. Determine the AR/AO/MC Process Observer for the meeting
5. Review this agenda and change priorities if needed.
 - 5.1. Decide if we want to join the Linkage WG in a joint meeting from 8-9pm.
 - 5.2. Decide when and how much time we need with Stratton-Radwan on Friday morning.
6. Finalize summarized Trustee assessments of staff monitoring reports for distribution to everyone.
7. Review and finalize time for Friday afternoon with full board.
 - 7.1. **Hour 1:** Review Monitoring Assessment reports, Q&A re monitoring. Monitoring training as time permits.
 - 7.2. **Hour 2:** Senior staff discussion. Q&A and general discussion with senior staff about monitoring process, interpretations, data reporting, and next steps.
 - 7.3. **Hour 3 (first 30 minutes):** Briefing the Board on the planned agenda with DPA in Nov. Developing our clear message to DPA, and being aligned with Peter.
 - 7.4. **Hour 3 (second 30 minutes):**
 - 7.4.1. Make **Board assignments** re self-monitoring of Section 3, Gov Process policies, so that each can report out on Sunday (Noon?).
 - 7.4.2. **Call for "Process Checks"** and questions re governance by everyone during Sat/Sun meeting.
 - 7.5. **Hour 4: Linkage work** led by Linda Laskowski & Linkage WG
8. Finalize any prep work needed for the open forum on governance and linkage on Saturday night, Oct 17th. Are there materials we want to prepare for this discussion?
9. Finalize plans and materials need for Friday afternoon monitoring work.
10. Review and finalize the **Charge to the Gov WG**, for reporting out to Board.

Current draft is:

Charge to the Governance Working Group (draft, 21 Sept 2009)

 - Guide the Board's transition to the policy governance model as adopted in April, 2009.
 - Guide the Board's cultural change called for by regular self-assessments.

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- Arrange for necessary continuing education and mentoring on governance principles and methods.
 - Develop a system for the Board to use in receiving, individually assessing, and compiling the results of staff interpretation and monitoring reports,
 - Monitor the relationship of governance policy to UUA Bylaws, General Assembly, and the District President's Association (DPA), and bring forward for Board consideration any items needing review or action.
11. Review our thinking on how the Board should handle the **Responsive Resolutions** from GA 2009. Info on this topic is in the Appendix below.
 12. Other business?
 13. Closing - Process observation

APPENDIX TO GOV WG AGENDA FOR OCT, 2009

Responsive Resolutions, From GA 2009 (from the Minutes)

Five resolutions in response to the reports of officers were passed by a vote of two-thirds or more. They are:

Resolution #1) Responsive Resolution on Article II

The 2009 General Assembly of the UUA strongly urges the UUA Board of Trustees to facilitate a continuation and further deepening of the discussion of the Principles and Purposes begun by the review conducted by the UUA Commission on Appraisal, and that such discussion should continue throughout all levels of the Association, at least until such time as further revisions to Article II may be presented to a General Assembly.

Possible Board Action:

a) Decline the request.

- a. The CoA made a strong, legitimate effort to lead this discussion, and it is waste for resources to restart this process immediately.
- b. To “continue at all levels until further revisions come forward” is too ambiguous, and would lead to “make busy” work (wing flaps), rather than productive engagement.

b) Honor the request.

- a. Form and fund a high-level task force (much like the CoA) to engage congregations, districts, board and staff in this discussion. Repeat what the CoA just tried to do.
- c) Form a TF to investigate why we did not obtain the desired level of knowledge about this issue in the congregations, and have them report to the Board in 2010 about their findings, and identifying strategies to gain board involvement next time.

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- d) Invite an existing body (UUMA, DRUUMM, ARE, JTWTC) to conduct the next examination.

Resolution #2) Responsive Resolution on Article XV

WHEREAS the Commission on Appraisal submitted a proposal to amend Article II after a period of study and review as allowed by Article XV section C-15.1.(c)(4), a process begun in 2006, while Article XV C-15.1. (c)(3) prevents such a proposal from being amended, and

WHEREAS there was an apparent confusion around the application of Article XV section C-15.1 (c), all sub-sections, during the Plenary of the 2009 General Assembly,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 2009 General Assembly submits to the Board of Trustees a review of the entirety of Section C-15.1 (c) in order to clarify the process and limitations of a proposal to amend a bylaw in Article II.

Possible Board Action:

- a) Provide necessary funding (if any) to GAPC to produce the report.

Responsive Resolution on Inclusion (#3)

Resolution #3) In response to the changes to Article II reported by the Commission on Appraisal and subsequent discussion of those recommendations at this General Assembly, the **delegates request** that the UUA Board of Trustees place a motion to substitute the recommended language of Section C-2.4 "Inclusion" for the current bylaw C-2.3 "Non-discrimination" on a General Assembly agenda as soon as possible.

Possible Board Action:

- a) Board WG or TF decides on a course of action.

Responsive Resolutions on Inclusion (#4 & #5)

Resolution #4) The Commission on Appraisal report on Article II of the UUA Bylaws includes section C-2.4 entitled "Inclusion." This section calls us to do all we can to replace barriers for persons and groups with particular identities, ages, abilities, and histories with ever-widening circles of solidarity and mutual respect. This section also expresses a covenant among our congregations to strive to truly welcome all persons and commit to structuring congregational and associational life in ways that empower and enhance everyone's participation.

In response to this section of the Commission's report, be it resolved that:

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1. the delegates at this General Assembly are urged to act upon the pledge and covenant expressed in proposed Section C-2.4; and further that
2. the congregations represented here report to the UUA Board of Trustees before the 2010 General Assembly on their actions in response to this charge.

Possible Board Action:

- 1) Decide who (what body) should do the “urging” of congregations to act. UUMA? DPA? Congregational leaders? Board?
- 2) Board issues a call for all congregations attending GA 2009 to report on their actions.

Resolution #5) Responsive Resolution on Barriers to Inclusion in Outreach to African UU and Other Progressive Religious Congregations

WHEREAS the Opening Worship at the 2009 GA reported on President Sinkford’s Pilgrimage to Africa and celebrated a new outreach to African UU congregations, as represented by 3 male Africans from UU congregations in Africa; and

WHEREAS the International Convocation for UU Women, held early in 2009 in Houston, Texas, invited and funded scholarships for 8 women leaders from Africa to attend the conference, and despite heroic efforts, none successfully obtained visas to attend the Conference; and

WHEREAS—although it can be argued that visa requirements are complex and depend on individual circumstances of each person—these results raise questions about the justice of the U.S. system of granting visas and possible gender bias; and

WHEREAS the response given for denial of visas to the women was in some cases lack of bank account and/or assets, which more often affects women in Africa than men,

THEREFORE this resolution asks the appropriate UU body to contact the office for women’s advocacy or other appropriate staff in the State Department and/or the Office of the Presidency of the United States and urge consideration of two actions:

- a) an inquiry into the reasons for denial of visas for these female leaders for access to the U.S. for attendance at a UU religious conference; and
- b) consideration of the longer term issue of whether the criteria for granting visas for such religious and/or broader educational events needs to be reviewed, to prevent in the future such apparent unequal access.

Possible Board Action:

- a) Board delegates to staff and/ or CSW.