

Great Lakes Unity Region
Board of Trustee Meeting | January 22, 2025
Minutes

Attending: Rev. Kathy Harwood Long (President), Nancy Berdasco (Vice-President), , Rev. Debra Carter Williams (Treasurer), Rev. Diane Robinson (Regional Rep and Outreach Ambassador), Sandra Higgins-Smith (LUT), and Rev. Liesa Chase.

The meeting was called to order by Rev. Kathy Harwood Long.

The meeting began with the sharing of prayer requests.

Approval of Agenda:

The agenda was approved with the following additions:

Family Leave request from Cassidy Meeks, YFM Consultant

Salary increase for the YFM Consultant

Social Media Team proposal

Reimbursement for Annual Summit fee for the regional president

Nancy Berdasco moved to accept the revisions to the agenda and Liesa Chase seconded. Motion passed.

Minutes:

The December minutes were approved. The November minutes will be approved next month.

Treasurer's Report:

Nancy Berdasco, treasurer, shared that there were recent problems with an employee's payroll check, but that the issue was resolved. Kathy and Nancy are working with Chase Bank to get the signatories approved. The following are proposed as signatories on all accounts:

Kathy Harwood-Long (president), Nancy Berdasco, (vice-president), and Debra Williams (secretary). Liesa Chase moved to accept the listed signatories and Nancy Berdasco seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Staff and Department Reports:

Rev. Diane Robinson presented her report. Recently, 18 people participated in the leadership call. As Diane attempts to reach out to ministries, she is finding that the UWM information is out of date. This is helpful information for the region and UWM.

LUT Report:

Susan Liddell will submit an article to the regional newsletter regarding the importance of LUTS to the region.

YFM Report:

Cassidy Meeks submitted a report (see attached). There is discussion between regional leadership about interregional collaboration.

Conference Team Report:

Kathy is working with the regional administrator to get the word out about what is happening regionally. The outdated rosters for ministers and leaders do not support effective and engaged communication. The conference will be discussed later in the agenda.

Marketing and Promotion Team:

There is now a monthly call to share ideas and best practices.

Regional Advisory Committee:

The meetings/calls are all about collaboration.

The regions are advised to make sure a cover letter accompanies any disaster relief contributions and that they are clearly marked "Disaster Relief."

Earth Care Team:

There is work being done in the region to promote sustainability and several centers are hosting "Sustainable Fashion Shows."

Unfinished Business:***Conference***

The recent regional conference survey was engaged by 55 participants, 20 of which were identifiable ministers. Of the ministers, 12 wanted one location and 8 preferred the hub model.

It was agreed that the one location model was wisest for this year and would allow the region to build more energy for the hubs.

The 2025 regional conference will be held at the Stoney Creek Inn in Moline, Illinois and will be shortened in duration, beginning on September 23rd. The memorial and business meetings will be separate events held on different dates. Currently, the date for the business meeting is October 23rd (online), and the Memorial Service will be held on November 2nd.

The Conference Team is currently working on the programming for the September Conference.

New Business:***Family Leave Request***

The board discussed a family leave request for Cassidy Meeks. After a lengthy discussion, the board approved a package for her keeping the need to hire coverage for rallies and events in her absence.

Scholarship Request

Two requests were received. One was from Carrie Poston Johnson from Unity of Louisville for toward LUT training, and the other was for Michelle Coles from Unity Spiritual Center in Westlake, OH to offset expenses for ministerial school. Liesa Chase moved to extend \$250 scholarships to both candidates and Nancy Berdasco seconded. The motion passed.

Social Media Team

A proposal was discussed to gather people who are interested in upgrading their ministries social media presence.

Administrative Items:

Liesa Chase will write up the proposal for Cassidy Meeks' family leave and present it to her.

The regional performance reviews were completed with staff. As part of the self-evaluation, the regional administrator shared an intention to sharpen her technological and bookkeeping skills to better serve the region

Unity of Minneapolis invited Kathy Harwood-Long to lead a public Earth Care event. The board discussed possibilities for funding her expenses since she will be training staff and other ministries in the area.

Kathy Harwood-Long adjourned the meeting after a motion and a second.