

Great Lakes Unity Region
Board of Trustee Meeting | February 26, 2025
Minutes

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

The meeting was called to order by Rev. Kathy Harwood Long at 2:45 EST

The meeting began with the sharing of prayer requests.

Approval of Agenda:

The agenda was approved with the following additions:

Scholarship Application

Paychex payroll system review

QuickBooks Purchase

Safety Protocols

Nancy Berdasco moved to accept the revisions to the agenda and Jeff Berry seconded. Motion passed.

Minutes:

The January minutes were approved. The November minutes were also approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Nancy Berdasco led a discussion about the regional accounts at Chase Bank. There was also a report from the bookkeeper, sharing the current financial status of the region (see report).

Staff and Department Reports:

Rev. Diane Robinson forwarded a report to the board (see report) which included some confidential items.

LUT Report:

Susan Liddell reported that there are 12-15 participants on the online meeting. She expressed gratitude for the LUTs in the St. Louis area who always show up.

YFM Report:

Cassidy Meeks submitted a report (see attached). She shared that there is an inter-regional leadership training scheduled in June in Sawyer, MI. She is also making contacts to find support for events while she is on leave. The board discussed financial arrangements for her salary while on leave, including additional support for regional YFM events.

Finance Team Report:

A report is attached.

Conference Report:

A report was submitted by the team. Planning is underway for the conference in Moline, IL in September. Jim Blake, CEO of UWH, will attend as a presenter. Debra Williams will serve as board liaison.

It was suggested that we use the conference to promote the HUBs model and to support an organizational team to get everything in place for 2026.

Kathy Harwood-Long suggested an extra night at the regional conference to accommodate a visioning session for the board and staff.

Communications Report:

President, Kathy Harwood-Long reported that at the UWM Annual Summit there was continuing discussion about merging UWH and UWM. The board discussed how this might impact the region and the overall educational programs and processes.

The board also discussed the promotion of events and classes from outside the region.

Regional Advisory Committee:

There will not be a convention in 2026.

Earth Care Team:

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

Additional Agenda Items/Business:*Payroll Processing/Banking*

Nancy Berdasco shared information about fees for payroll processing. Currently, the region uses ADP at a monthly cost of 210.95. Paychex quoted 77.00 per month. Given the difference in the monthly fees, Nancy Berdasco will look deeper and bring back more information to the board for review.

The board discussed the possibility of a regional credit card through Chase. More information will be needed before the board can approve this.

Security Protocols/Document Retention

The board discussed using Google Workspace to retain reports as well as other online safety protocols

Scholarship Grant Request

Unity of Minneapolis requested \$250 for an upcoming EarthCare/Sustainability workshop. A motion was made by Nancy Berdasco to approve the request and it was seconded by Liesa Chase. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned by the president.