Great Lakes Unity Region
Board of Trustee Meeting | August 19, 2025
Minutes

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

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

A discussion was added to the agenda regarding a banquet ticket for employees.

The minutes of the July meeting were approved with corrections.

Treasurer's Report:
The board discussed the process for paying vendors ad well as the importance of sending out the tithes as a priority. The board will consider ways to streamline financial processes. Treasuer's report attached.

Team/Staff Reports:
Diane Robinson reported that she is working with groups in the region who are experiencing conflict.

Susan Lidell, LUT Rep, shared that she will lead another Zoom call with the regional LUTs at the end of August. She has found a speaker for the LUT luncheon at the regional conference in September.

Cassidy Meeks is back from family leave. Increased numbers of youth are getting involved in regional events. Chase share updates and asked how we might serve NextGen Unity group. See report for more details.

President's Report:
Kathy Harwood Long asked the board to consider the implications of the acquisition of UWM by UWH, and how we will function as a region. She also addressed supervision of employees and how that might work more effectively. She stressed the need to look at the organizational system in its entirety. There is room for improvement to better serve the region.

Nominating Team:
Cindy Yamamoto has taken the lead on this. A discussion ensued about current candidates, as well as how the nominations would be made at the annual business meeting in October. Also discussed was the process for the approval of the slate of candidates.

Conference 2025:
There have been substantial sponsorship donations which are being tracked and acknowledged. To date, there are 65 registrations. The partner waiver has made a difference. There was discussion around extending the registration date. The board also discussed how payments would be made to presenters and support staff, and how the necessary tax documents would be collected.

The board discussed the need to look elsewhere for a venue for the next conference. We also discussed who the recipients of the "Heart of the Region" would be and celebrated the CEU opportunities available.

The board approved banquet tickets for staff at the conference. Susan Liddell made a motion and Chase seconded.

The board and staff will begin a visioning session the evening of the last of conference (9/24) and from 9 am –12 pm on 9/25. We will discuss processes and discern next levels of service to the region.

New Business:
The board discussed the possibility of a YFM fundraiser as well as the importance of looking at cost of living and merit increases for staff as we budget for the next fiscal year.

October Business Meeting:
The board discussed items to highlight during the board meeting:

There is new energy and a focus on community
Reimagining regional role after UWM acquisition
HUB experiment was a success
Increasing numbers of youth at regional events
Family Leave for Cassidy
Generosity of the board (partner waiver)
Review of financial tools
Decrease in costs
Communication tools
Social media training
Connection meetings
Thank you letters to ministries and individuals

Next Board Meeting:
The next board meeting will be on 9/15 at 11 AM EST to primarily discuss the conference and annual business meeting

Th meeting was adjourned at 4:35 PM (EST)