



CANADIAN UNITARIAN COUNCIL
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
MAY 20, 2016
VANCOUVER BC

1. Welcome and Acknowledgement of First Nations Territory

President Keith Wilkinson welcomed everyone and acknowledged that we are meeting on unceded, traditional x^wməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) land.

2. Invocation and Chalice Lighting by Rev. Carly Gaylor

3. Recognition of International Visitors

Executive Director Vyda Ng recognized CUC staff, and the following honoured guests:

- Stan Jewett, Pacific North West District
- Sheila Petzold, USC Canada

Ng also welcomed several members from Nelson, BC, an emerging congregation.

4. Notice of Meeting

In accordance with CUC by-laws, the notice of Meeting was mailed out in the required timeline.

5. Report of Credentials Committee

We welcome – for the first time – our on-line delegates (8).

The Chair of the committee reports more than 30 delegates from at least 8 societies and from all 4 regions are registered. Quorum is present. The meeting is properly constituted.

The credentials committee:

Gail Rappolt - Hamilton
Sarah McEwan - Westwood
Jane Ebbert - Calgary

6. Call to Order and Recognition of On-Line Delegates

The 56th Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Unitarian Council was called to order at 9:11am by Chair Keith Wilkinson.

7. Rules of Procedure

Roberts Rules of Order were outlined by the Chair Keith Wilkinson. To include the on-line delegates, the chair will alternate between speakers from the floor and on-line. For voting, time will be taken to count and include the votes from on-line delegates.

8. Youth Participation

The CUC Board moves that the usual rules of procedures will include allowing any youth present at the 2017 Annual General Meeting the same privilege to speak to the assembly as currently exists for delegates, ministers, CUC board members, and official representatives. This allowance does not extend to voting privileges, unless the youth is a designated delegate from their congregation. CARRIED

9. Adoption of Agenda

Motion to adopt the Agenda by Forrest Smith (Victoria). Duly seconded. CARRIED.

In the event that a Sunday session between 5 and 6 is required, notices will be posted.

10. Introduction of Parliamentarian

The parliamentarian's role is to advise the chair on rules of procedure and points of order.

Bill Fulton, Parliamentarian, was introduced by the Chair Keith Wilkinson.



11. Introduction of Timekeeper

Neal Cameron was introduced as timekeeper by Chair. 20 minutes are allowed for discussion for each motion. Each speaker is limited to 3 minutes.

12. Approval of Minutes of Previous Annual Meeting (2015 Ottawa)

Some corrections were noted.

Motion to accept the 2015 AGM minutes as amended by Leslie Kemp (Vancouver). John Slattery (North Shore) seconded. CARRIED.

14. Motion to receive Annual Report

Margaret Kohr (Toronto First) moves to accept the annual report. Kathryn Childs (Montreal) seconds. CARRIED.

15. Youth Report

Neal Cameron is our Youth Observer to the Board (YOB), elected at CANUUDLE youth conference following the May 2015 Annual General Meeting. Cameron has carried on with the previous YOB's project to create a national group, with one representative from every active youth group in congregations (24 across the country). Helping to create a national youth movement. Cameron also connected with youth at regional fall gatherings to gather feedback for the national vision. Youth are very supportive of the new vision. Next steps are a collective social justice action, perhaps bringing forward a resolution for the next ACM that arises directly out the youth movement. Cameron thanked Asha Philar and Ariel Hunt-Bronswin (CUC Youth and Young Adult Ministry Development staff) for all the support they have provided to the YOB and the emerging youth movement. Cameron has also cultivated relationships with Unitarian Universalist Association YOBs which has also been really helpful.

The YOB election includes an on-line process. Oliva Hull (Vancouver) noted that it was very valuable to have YOB presence at regional fall gatherings.

16. Report of the Nominating Committee and Election of new Board and Nominating Committee Members

Bunty Albert (PEI), past chair presents:

The following CUC Board members will continue their terms during 2015-16:

Name	Region	Term
Jaime Dunton (Ottawa)	Eastern	3 rd year of 1 st term
Lorna Weigand (Don Heights)	Central	3 rd year of 1 st term
Susan Ruttan (Edmonton)	West	2 nd year of 1 st term
Jane Ebbern (Calgary)	West	2 nd year of 1 st term
Kristina Stevens (Victoria)	BC	3 rd year of 2 nd term
Keith Wilkinson (Vancouver)	BC	2 nd year of 1 st term

The following are Nominees for the CUC Board:

Name	Region	Term
Carol Cumming Speirs (Montreal)	Eastern	1 st year of 1 st term
Tanya Cothran (Toronto First)	Central	1 st year of 1 st term

The following CUC Nominating Committee members will continue their terms during 2015-16.



Name	Region	Term
Ben Robins (Toronto First)	Eastern/Central at Large	2 nd year of 1 st term
Bunty Albert (PEI)	Eastern	2 nd year of 2 nd term
Rev. Lynn Harrison (Neighbourhood)	Central	3 rd year of 1 st term
Joanne Green (Regina)	Western	2 nd year of 1 st term
Connie Wigmore (Vancouver)	BC/Western at Large	3 rd year of 1 st term

The following are nominees for the CUC Nominating Committee:

Name	Region	Term
Rev. Debra Thorne (Beacon)	British Columbia	1 st year of 2 nd term

Nominating committee gave notice more than 60 days prior to the AGM, no additional nominations were received up to 30 days prior to the meeting.

The Chair declared the nominees to the CUC Board and the Nominating Committee to be elected by Acclamation.

17. Motion to Continue

As we are ahead of schedule, the chair invites a motion to continue with agenda. Moved by Betty Donaldson (Comox Valley). Seconded by Ellen Papenburg (Grand River). CARRIED.

18. Update on Canada Revenue Agency audit

The audit of the CUC by Canada Revenue Agency began in March 2015. After more than a year reviewing the information, CRA issued a Compliance Agreement to the CUC in mid-April 2016. Part of the agreement required a rewrite of our charitable purposes. Our original articles were established in 1961, and the language no longer matched current guidelines. The CRA requires purposes to match current CRA guidelines. We revised ours in 2013 but did not check them with CRA, as we were not aware this was necessary. The language of “working for justice” was deemed too broad and vague, and CRA required more clarity.

With the help of Jennifer Leddy at Carters Charity Law, the purposes have been amended and were sent to congregations ahead of the AGM.

Discussion:

- Concerns expressed about the loss of justice in the purpose.
- The new purposes allow us to continue to do international work as allowed by CRA, as well as working for justice and new rights within Canada, because our principles speak to these values. The Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice are an independent organization that are not bound by the same guidelines as charities
- Concern was expressed about the process and the timeline of amending the purposes, with the board not allowing amendments from the floor, for such a key document. Ng noted that the board had to submit the amendments to the CRA within their deadline and so had to make the decision quickly. The board did revise the wording.
- Butt noted that within the motion, the board is removing the subject to approval to the CRA as the CRA has already accepted these purposes.
- Concern expressed about the grey area between being a charity and doing political actions, don't want to lose sight of our leadership in activism. We do have a lot of leeway because our principles speak to justice, which makes many actions within Canada part of our charitable purpose.
- Dying with Dignity had their status annulled, but are now in new negotiations with CRA. There is a need to be vigilant.
- Reminder to support CUSJ.
- Ng noted that this situation with the CRA has done us a favour, has helped us focus, consider who we are. Important that the actions we take are consistent with our religious beliefs and values.



- Suggestion that a task force take time to review the wording, especially item 4. Like to see some commitment from the CUC Board to allow those interested to work on it.

Motion to extend discussion by 10 minutes. Forrest Smith (Victoria) Ellen Papenburg (Grand River). CARRIED.

Break

19. Credentials Committee confirmed quorum is present.

20. Vyda Ng welcomes Audrey, a representative from the UU-UNO in New York.

21. Motion by the CUC Board on Revised Articles of Amendment

Therefore, be it resolved that, the Canadian Unitarian Council's charitable purposes be amended as follows:

The Statement of Purpose of the Corporation is to promote Unitarian Universalism, Unitarianism and Universalism, in Canada and internationally, by:

1. Affirming and promoting the principles, practices, and traditions of the Unitarian Universalist, Unitarian and Universalist faiths;
2. Supporting the development and growth of Unitarian Universalist, Unitarian and Universalist religious communities;
3. Nurturing, supporting and enhancing religious communities and other groups to work together on mutual concerns for the benefit of the community; and
4. Providing basic necessities of life, including food, clean water, clothing, medical and dental care and supplies, shelter, and education, tuition and school supplies to those in need.

Discussion on amended motion:

- Clarification around "other groups" in Item 3. Would it allow us to give space to a non-charity? The CRA is clear that we cannot provide goods and services to a non-charity.
- Is this a special resolution? The parliamentarian notes that in the rush that this was presented as a special resolution, but it is in fact a motion of the board.
- We are not changing the principles - these are our legal purposes registered under the societies act with the federal government.

Motion Carried

22. Executive Director's Report Pt 1

Ng noted that no motions on social justice items were brought forward for presentation. Keith Wilkinson and April Hope (CUC Social Responsibility Coordinator) will speak to the state of current resolutions. Wilkinson noted that climate change is at the forefront of our minds. Affordable housing is also a key issue. Noted that the many years of resolutions and actions plans provide a platform for activity.

April Hope, Social Responsibility Coordinator, noted that last year's motions included clean air, water, and soil rights, fossil fuel divestment, abortion rights, and truth, healing and reconciliation. She provided updates on the status of each action plan/monitoring group. Will continue to work to support individual, community and national actions.

Since September 2015, as a Sponsorship Agreement Holder, have put in 50 applications for refugees, 17 have now arrived – 70 people. Direct and indirect involvement in sponsorship from 38 congregations across the country. Several congregations have also made connections with other groups in sponsorship. As well as Syria, we have brought in refugees from Iraq, Somalia, Eritrea, Burundi. All our allocations for 2016 have been spoken for.



Butt thanked April for her remarkable achievements in sponsorship.

Discussion:

Betty of the UUWomen's Federation (?) noted that they spoke out about and wrote letters in support of PEI women having safe access to abortion.

Noted that we did not speak about refugees at all at last years AGM but look at all that has been accomplished.

Board motion to continue Executive Director's Report at this time. CARRIED.

23. Executive Director's Report Pt 2

Vyda Ng spoke to finances, noted that a substantial deficit was created, a commitment was made to reduce the deficit and go back to a balanced budget. It has been difficult, and required a lot of reductions in resources. As part of this attempt to manage staff time and resources, the staff focus on four areas of congregational engagement.

The board priorities help shape the direction of congregational engagement.

Ng thanked the Active Democracy task force for helping to get the CUC researching and finding an on-line platform for AGM voting, as well as available for congregational and affiliate meetings. ZOOM is our platform.

Website created in 2010, aware that needs updating and need more resources for congregations.

See ED Report in Annual Report

Ng noted that Rawaa Shubar is the new office administrator and apologized for leaving her off the staff list.

Lunch Break

24. Chalice Lighting

Meeting resumed at 1:32pm.

25. Report of Credentials Committee

The Chair of the committee reports more than 30 delegates from at least 8 societies and from all 4 regions are registered. Quorum is present. The meeting is properly constituted. We have 53 delegates present.

26. Executive Director's Report Pt 2

Vyda Ng began second part of report by showing CUC Staff April Hope's appearance on the Daily Show in a segment about Syrian Refugees.

Ng spoke about staff work with congregations, each staff members covers a wide region and travel is expensive. A new experimental initiative has been training 2 facilitators from each region, as a back up for staff, they can act as consultants for congregations in certain situations.

Ng spoke to National Voice, speaking in support in physician assisted dying.

Ng recognized the innovation work of the Northern Lights crowdfunding initiative, which allowed for four special projects to be funded.

April Hope came forward to speak about the Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Reflection Guides, which was the grantee for the traditional Northern Lights grant.

These guides intended to help congregations work through the complex growth work.

A video was shown from Rev. Meg Roberts and Rev. Samaya Oakley highlighting their progress. April Hope, Amber Bellmaire, Marlene Blake-Seale, Leslie Kemp, and Casey Stainsby are also working on this project.

Liz James and Amanda Tarling spoke about a new initiative for a ceremonies.ca website, that connects our lay chaplains. Tarling thanked Vyda and the CUC for creating networking opportunities through the Annual Meetings. She also thanked the Northern Lighters for their funding. They have also received a UUA grant.



A video was shown.

Liz James came up to share a video created by her son Anthony with the help of Canadian Unitarians across the country in support of transgender people.

27. Board Priorities within CUC Global Ends

As part of our active democracy work, the priorities of the board are approved annually at the annual general meeting. Butt spoke to the priorities, which have not changed from last year. The board moves

Be it resolved that the following Global Ends, with the attendant priorities, be approved for 2016 – 2017:

1. Religious exploration and spiritual growth grounded in the principles, sources and challenges of the Canadian Unitarian Universalist (UU) movement.
2. Congregations and communities equipped with skills and resources required to thrive organizationally, economically and socially in a diverse, multi-generational context.
3. Socially responsible action that brings benefit to Canadian and global communities.
4. Local, regional, national and global networks of collaborative, interdependent congregations and communities.

Out of these Global Ends, the following priorities have been identified, which is the focus of CUC staff engagement with congregations and communities:

- I. Networking and connecting;
- II. Gathering resources for the benefit of our shared ministry;
- III. Developing flexible communications capabilities; and
- IV. Fostering innovation in the growth and development of UU communities.

Butt asked for a motion for a friendly amendment to change “challenges” in Item 1 to “aspirations” to be consistent with the new vision statement. CARRIED.

Motion to accept the CUC priorities for the coming year.
CARRIED.

Discussion

Question was raised about working with international partners. Current focus is on the International Council of Unitarian Universalists (ICUU) and the UU-United Nations Office in New York.

Comment in favour of the motion, like the focus. Reminder to encourage congregations rather than create

Looking for comments from the board about achievements around priorities. Wilkinson noted the priorities remain unchanged since 2013. Staff put into place goals related to priorities, board has deemed work satisfactory, excellent in some places. Still improving measurements. With the new vision, board will consider revising priorities.

28. Report of the Vision Task Force

Fiona Heath presented the report of the vision task force.

The board presented the following motion:

Be it resolved that the new Vision Statement for the Canadian Unitarian Council Association of Congregations is:

As Canadian Unitarian Universalists, we envision a world in which our interdependence calls us to love and justice.



Be it further resolved that the following Five Aspirations guide us in living out our faith:

As Canadian Unitarian Universalists, we are Deeply Connected, Boldly Radically Inclusive, Actively Engaged, Theologically Alive, and Spiritually Grounded.

Discussion

Concern was expressed about the French translation. The board agreed to review the translation.

Kathryn Childs (Montreal) **proposed an amendment** to change “boldly” to “radically”.

Seconded. The chair deemed this an acceptable amendment.

10 votes against. CARRIED.

Motion to accept statement of vision and aspirations with amendment. CARRIED.

29. Report of Credentials Committee

Chair reports Quorum is present.

30. Financial Statements

Kristina Stevens, Treasurer presented the 2015 financial statements.

Stevens noted the assets for 2015 are lower in value this year because of market reductions. Most of the loss was non-realized, as we did not sell any investments.

Noted that on the statement of revenue and expenditures, the management fees for investments are not included in operating budget.

Two congregations have put investment funds into the CUC funds, the CUC provides accounting to keep their funds identifiable. These are endowment funds for long term investments. Allows fund to be professionally managed, all investments follow principles.

Discussion

Question raised about impact on financial statements, identifying congregational investments as liabilities. Stevens will look into this.

Question raised about the description of organization being outdated, Ng will revise for next year in line with new charitable purposes.

A fund has been set up to honour Caroline Balderston Perry, who retired from Religious Education after many years. It will appear in next year's financial statements.

Stevens moved that financial report be accepted as presented. Roseanne Lapierre (First Ottawa) seconded.

Request to look at the unrestricted funds to see how they might be used, in the next two years. Stevens agreed.

Question raised about not spending the entire budget line for youth and young adult. Ng noted that line is maintained at a higher level, in case of special program. CARRIED.

Stevens noted that the auditor report noted that there is no significant weaknesses in internal controls.

31. Revised 2016 Budget

Vyda Ng presented the revised 2016 budget and the preliminary 2017 budget.

Noted that currently running a \$12,000 deficit. Anticipating a smaller revenue in 2017, made some choices to tighten the budget for 2017: making a choice to move Canadian Unitarian newsletter to electronic only. May do a small print run for those who receive the print version. The board will not be attending regional fall gatherings to reduce board expenses. Staff salaries will only have cost of living increase. Professional development expenses have been reduced. Ng noted that we are not fairly compensating our employees.



Discussion

Concern expressed that not paying our employees fairly. Ng notes that it would be an extra \$85,000 to \$100,000 per year for congregational staff and ED for salary and benefits increase.

Noted that Don Heights has paid APC contributions.

Question about what APC contributions increases are needed to provide fair compensation.

The board makes the motion that the 2017 budget be approved in principle.
CARRIED.

32. Appointment of Auditors

Motion to appoint Grant Thornton LLP as auditor for 2017 by Kristina Stevens (board). CARRIED.

33. Annual Program Contribution

Kristina Stevens presented an update on the APC change. Stevens chose 7% of operating expenditures as the contribution by congregations. It will increase costs for some congregations. Noted that current contribution as a per member pledge has many negative issues. Good conversation at plenary about how to implement new system. Looking at a simple implantation list to help congregations figure out the new system. Noted that has been a steady small decrease in APC over the past 6 years, a worrying trend.

Discussion

Concerns about individual congregation expenditures on spreadsheet. Stevens used data from CRA website for research purposes only.

Wonder if should consider a combined method would work. Think of it as a tax on members and a tax on ministers and staff.

Question raised that actual percentage will make a huge difference.

Noted that Montreal congregation is excessively impacted due to endowment income, could not pay fair share in new model. Stevens noted that Montreal is such an outlier.

Noted that another option is to ask congregations to pledge to CUC.

Comment from Fredericton that per member contribution a problem for them.

Wondering what the process is going forward.

Stevens noted that the hope is to have a vote at the next annual meeting in 2017.

Comment in favour of per member contribution.

Comment in favour of pledge idea based on historical base in a particular year.

Encourage percentage increase each year.

Concern expressed that fellowships would avoid hiring a minister because APC would increase. Have to think of long term implications.

Priority is financial sustainability of CUC.

Sue Sparlin (Beacon) moves that this AGM support in principle that the CUC find a new way forward in APC keeping in mind long term health of congregations, separating from membership, and find a way of calculating fair share payments.

Chair stated that a motion cannot be brought forward on a discussion agenda item.

Frances Deverell (Ottawa Fellowship) moves to extend discussion by 10 minutes. Norm Taylor (Nanaimo) seconded.

16 against. CARRIED.

Discussion

Wondering if small congregations with limited staff could be supported by CUC in rationalizing accounting.



Comment against the pledge system for CUC, concerns about acrimony and reductions. Many people not aware of work of CUC, don't engage in that level. Note that congregational membership numbers don't really impact congregation, but does impact at national level to delegate count – could then inflate numbers. Concern that removing financial link may impact on member counts. Comment that support CUC is about supporting vision, important to think of it that way.

34. Evaluation by On-Line Delegates

Thumbs up!
 Works quite well, getting people to gather is a challenge.
 Very well organized, we felt part of things.
 ZOOM works well. Long live ZOOM!
 Good once sound issues after lunch worked out. Hard to hear for a while.
 Good once we get used to it.

35. Motion of Thanks

President Glenda Butt thanked the departing board members for their service: On behalf of the board, Secretary Fiona Heath thanked Glenda Butt for her tireless dedication and enthusiasm for all things CUC. She thanked the Vancouver Host Committee, the Program Planning Committee, ACM volunteers, the audio-visual technical staff, the parliamentarian and all those who helped with the meeting. She thanked Vyda Ng, ED and the staff. She forgot to thank the CANUUDLE staff and volunteers. Final thanks were given to the delegates, especially the on-line delegates.

36. Motion to adjourn

Chair Glenda Butt adjourned the 55th Annual General Meeting adjourned at 5:04pm.

Announcement of the 2016-17 Board Executive

At the close of the Annual meeting, the Board held an open meeting to elect officers for the coming year. Glenda Butt announced the executive:

- President – Keith Wilkinson
- Vice President - Jane Ebborn
- Secretary – Carol Cummings Speirs
- Treasurer - Kristina Stevens CARRIED.

***ABBREVIATIONS**

AGM	Annual General Meeting
APC	Annual Program Contribution
CUURE	Canadian Unitarian Universalist Religious Educators
DRE	Director of Religious Exploration
ED	Executive Director
ICUU	International Council of Unitarians and Universalists
UUA	Unitarian Universalist Association
UUMOC	Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada
UU-UNO	Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office