

**IOWA CONFERENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
AUGUST 22-23, 2008**

Members Present: Lof, Lange, Eastin, Howie, Noer, Boege, Darmour-Paul,  
Altenbaumer, Stonebreaker, Jares, Sargent, Guffey-Lewis, Hanon.  
Members Absent: Benda, Douglas, Schmidt, Wenzel  
Also Present: CM Pleva, ACM Eslinger, ACM Stoik

The meeting was held at the Pilgrim Heights Camp and Retreat Center.

**August 22, 2008**

Prior to the formal call to order, ACM Eslinger led the Board in an outdoor worship service, which was followed by dinner in the Pilgrim Heights dining hall.

Chair Laura Lof formally called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. She opened the meeting with a note of welcome to the new members and a short discussion of the role of the Board in the life of the Conference. This was followed by introduction and orientation of the new members by CM Pleva. As part of the orientation, the entire Board participated in a brainstorming session in which the future role of the Conference was considered. The exercise was concluded at 8:30 p.m. and the meeting was recessed for the evening.

**August 23, 2008**

Chair Lof called the meeting back into session at 8:50 a.m. Rev. John Noer gave the opening prayer.

**Announcement of New Team Structure**

CM Pleva announced to the Board that he intended to present a proposal for implementation of a new team structure. In order to conclude the business currently before the Board, however, he requested that the Chair keep the present team structure intact temporarily and that members be assigned *pro tem* to the existing teams. The Chair made the following appointments:

1. Finance and Property Team: Hanon (chair), Darmour-Paul, Noer, Altenbaumer and ACM Stoik (staff support).
2. Personnel Team: Eastin (chair), Boege, Guffey-Lewis, Sargent and CM Pleva (staff support).
3. Planning, Visioning and Coordinating Team: Howie (chair), Jares, Lange, Lof, Stonebraker and ACM Eslinger (staff support).

At 9:10 a.m., the Chair recessed the meeting to allow the teams to meet. At 10:50 a.m., she called the meeting back into session.

## Approval of Minutes

**BOD 2008-35.** Lange/Guffey-Lewis to approve the minutes of the Board of Directors' meeting of June 13, 2008. Approved unanimously.

## Team Reports

1. *Finance & Property Team.* Treasurer Hanon presented the report of the Finance & Property Team.

**BOD 2008-36.** Hanon/Altenbaumer to authorize Conference staff to place the Conference's property and casualty insurance program with the United Church of Christ Insurance Board at such time and under such terms as the Conference Minister determines proper. Approved unanimously.

**BOD 2008-37.** Hanon/Darmour-Paul to change the rate at which the Conference reimburses volunteers for mileage to the greater of the following amounts (as they are at the time the mileage expense is incurred): (a) one-half the IRS standard rate for deducting the cost of operating an automobile for business purposes; or (b) the IRS standard rate for deducting the cost of operating an automobile for charitable purposes. Approved unanimously.

**BOD 2008-38.** Noer/Altenbaumer to authorize the Conference Minister to take all steps necessary or helpful to effect the transfer of Pilgrim Heights Camp and Retreat Center to Our Sacred Space, Inc. in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Transition Agreement between the Iowa Conference and Our Sacred Space, Inc. Approved with all directors voting "Aye" except Howie and Eastin, who abstained.

**BOD 2008-39.** Hanon/Darmour-Paul that the \$300.00 gift from the United Church of Primghar be given to Peace United Church of Christ in Waverly to help that church recover from damage received in the 2008 flooding. Approved unanimously.

**BOD 2008-40.** Hanon/Altenbaumer as follows:

1. To repeal the existing Fiscal Policies and Procedures of the Iowa Conference;
2. To replace them provisionally with the Fiscal Policies and Procedures attached, under which the Conference shall operate until final revised Fiscal Policies and Procedures are approved; and
3. To direct the Treasurer to prepare final revised Fiscal Policies and Procedures to present to the Board for action at its next regular meeting.

Approved unanimously.

The Finance & Property Team also made the following recommendations, but no formal action was taken on these recommendations by the Board:

1. That the Conference consider purchase and not just leasing in selecting space to replace the existing Conference headquarters building; and

2. That no action be taken at this time on the Conflict of Interest policy.

2. *Planning, Visioning & Coordinating Team.* Secretary Stonebraker presented the report of the PVC Team.

**BOD 2008-41.** Stonebraker/Lange to approve the August 2008 Draft Policy for Iowa Conference UCC Board of Directors Organization attached. Approved unanimously.

**BOD 2008-42.** Stonebraker/Jares to select “Dreaming Dreams, Seeing Visions” as the theme of the 2009 Annual Meeting with Acts, Ch. 2 as the text referent. Approved unanimously.

**BOD 2008-43.** Stonebraker/Lange to authorize the Iowa Conference to contribute \$500.00 in each of the years 2008 and 2009 to the Interfaith Alliance of Iowa and to recommend that the Administrative Team include a contribution to this organization in some amount in the draft budget for the year 2010. Approved unanimously.

**BOD 2008-44.** Stonebraker/Jares to authorize the Iowa Conference to contribute \$1,000 to the United Church of Christ to help pay the cost of airing the Steeples ad on national television. Approved with all directors voting “Aye” except Noer, who abstained.

**BOD 2008-45.** Stonebraker/Lange to authorize the Iowa Conference to contribute \$1,500 to the United Church Foundation Endowment for the Reverend Dr. Héctor E. López Scholarship for Latina and Latino UCC Seminarians. Approved unanimously.

**BOD 2008-46.** Guffey-Lewis/Noer to authorize the PVC Team or its successor, the Program and Planning Team, to appoint the Annual Meeting Task Force for the 2009 Annual Meeting. Approved unanimously.

3. *Personnel Team.* Eastin gave the report of the Personnel Team.

**BOD 2008-47.** Eastin/Boege to amend §A(2)(d) of the “Compensation” section of the current Conference Personnel Policies to read as follows:

**A. Salaries:**

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2. Associate Conference Ministers: The Board of Directors is responsible to set compensation for Associate Conference Ministers and will do so in consultation with the Conference Minister. In so doing the board will give balanced consideration to several factors and variables:

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- d. All ACM's will be paid a salary no less than 60% of, nor more than 90% of that paid the Conference Minister.

Approved unanimously.

**BOD 2008-48.** Eastin/Guffey-Lewis to direct the existing Personnel Team to continue working on the revision of the Personnel Policies; and, if they are unable to finish their work before the reorganization of the Board, to direct them to continue working as an *ad hoc* committee for such purpose. Approved unanimously.

**BOD 2008-49.** Darmour-Paul/Guffey-Lewis to appoint David Nelson as a member at large of the Board of Directors to serve the unexpired portion of a 3-year term which expires in 2011. Approved unanimously.

**BOD 2008-50.** Guffey-Lewis/Jares to appoint Kenneth Wells and James Ritters to full terms as delegates to General Synod. Approved unanimously.

#### **Conference Minister's Report**

CM Pleva presented the Conference Minister's Report. A copy of this report is attached to these minutes.

#### **Financial Report**

Treasurer Hanon present the financial report for the period ending July 31, 2008.

#### **Other Reports**

Other reports were presented as follows:

1. ACM Eslinger presented a report to the Board concerning the work he does for and on behalf of the Iowa Conference.
2. Written reports from the United Church of Christ Insurance Board and CUE were received by the Board.

#### **Next Meeting**

The Chair announced that the next regular meeting of the Board of Directors will be on November 22, 2008, beginning at 10:00 a.m. If the Conference is still occupying its present headquarters building, the meeting will be held there. If not, the location will be announced.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

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Mary Stonebraker, Secretary

FISCAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
Iowa Conference of the United Church of Christ  
Revised May 1985 - *Proposed Revisions August 2008*

Outline

Introduction

Policies and Procedures

- A. Year-End
- B. Fiscal Management
- C. Accounting Standards
- D. Audit
- E. Investments
- F. Income Designations
- G. Budget
- H. Reports
- I. Authorizations
- J. Implementation, Review, and Revision

INTRODUCTION

These policy statements and procedures are the established basis for the conduct of the fiscal affairs of the Iowa Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Additions, deletions, or revisions to these policies may be authorized only by the formal action of the Conference Board of Directors.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A. YEAR-END. The year-end of the Iowa Conference shall be December 31. All financial records and reports shall conform to this year-end.
- B. FISCAL MANAGEMENT. The day-to-day fiscal management of the conference shall be the duty of the Conference Minister.
  - a. The Conference Minister must work within the guidelines of the approved budget and other limitations or restrictions approved by the Board of Directors.
  - b. It is expected that the Conference Minister will seek the approval of one or more Board of Directors members when confronted by decisions that are unusual due to amount in terms of dollars, that are for a capital purchase that is not budgeted and that costs more than \$2,000, that may be controversial or that are unusual in some other character.

- C. ACCOUNTING STANDARDS. “Generally accepted accounting principles” (GAAP) for not-for-profit organizations will be followed in the maintenance of financial records and reports. In matters of unresolved questions, an independent CPA firm will be consulted.
- D. AUDIT. As soon as practical, following the year end, an audit of the financial statements of the conference shall be made by a certified public accountant selected by the Audit Committee selected by the Board of Directors.
- E. INVESTMENT. Liquid assets (cash and savings) of the conference, other than those required for cash balances and operations of the conference, will be managed by the Conference Minister.
- F. INCOME DESIGNATIONS. Funds received by the conference from a donor that are designated for a specific purpose (donor-designated funds) shall, to the extent reasonably practicable, be used for that purpose. Donor-designated funds that cannot reasonably or legally be used for the designated purpose and all other money and property received by the conference shall be managed by the Conference Minister and used for conference purposes.
- G. BUDGET. The conference operating budget will be:
- Recommended by the Board of Directors
  - Adopted (rejected) at the Conference Annual Meeting
  - Managed by the Conference Minister.
  - Reported to the Board of Directors and at the Annual Meeting
- H. REPORTS. The Conference Minister will be responsible to see that monthly financial statements (statements of assets, liabilities and equity and statements of income and expenses) are prepared by the Conference’s accountant and delivered to the Board of Directors. An annual financial report will be provided at the Annual meeting of the Conference.

I. AUTHORIZATIONS.

1. Regular Checking Account. Conference funds shall be deposited in a single checking account held in an FDIC insured bank. This checking account (as well as all other FDIC insured accounts owned by the Conference) shall not be closed at the end of any business day with a balance that exceeds the insured limit.

All conference disbursements, including transfers to savings and investment accounts, shall be made through this checking account and be supported by invoices and/or vouchers approved by the Conference Minister or his/her designee.

2. Investments. At the direction of the Conference Minister, cash may be invested in FDIC insured saving or interest bearing accounts or other U.S. Government-backed accounts.

3. Authorized Signatures For Conference Accounts. Authorized signatures for cash accounts of the conference will be designated by the conference Board of Directors and will include only persons not directly involved with the accounting duties for recording the receipt of income and/or accounting duties for recording payables or receivables.

4. BORROWING. For emergency cash flow purposes, the Board of Directors authorizes the Conference Minister to secure short-term loans, not to exceed \$20,000 cumulative.

5. HONORARIA AND PROFESSIONAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS. Honoraria or professional expense reimbursements received from anyone or any entity by an employee, while acting in his or her capacity as an employee of the Conference, will be remitted to the Conference.

6. VOUCHERS. All requests for disbursement of conference funds shall be made by written voucher indicating the fund from which payment is to be made and shall include the signature of the authorizing person. Vouchers shall be accompanied by receipts and/or any supporting documentation. The Conference Minister shall designate individuals authorized to approve such vouchers. Standing vouchers may be authorized for ordinary and recurring expenditures. The Conference Minister may also authorize the use of conference credit and debit cards by employees and establish rules for the use of such cards and the documentation of expenses incurred with them.

J. IMPLEMENTATION, REVIEW AND REVISION. The fiscal policies and procedures of the Board of Directors are to be implemented by the Conference Minister.

The Board of Directors will provide for an annual review of these policies and procedures.

These policies and procedures may be revised only by actions of the Board of Directors.

Adopted by the Board of Directors: November 21, 1978

Revised: March 6, 1980

Revised: February 25, 1982

Revised: May 3, 1985

Revised: August 23, 2008

## **DRAFT POLICY**

August 2008

Iowa Conference, UCC Board of Directors Organization

The Board of Directors of the Iowa Conference understands the need to organize itself in ways conducive to the fulfillment of its corporate mandate, that is:

- To exercise effective leadership for the conference;
- To carefully plan for the conference's future;
- To provide the resources necessary for our common work;
- To facilitate evaluation of our mutual ministry.

Therefore, the Board of Directors will organize itself into three teams as described below.

Except for those persons who serve on the Administrative Team by virtue of office, the teams will be formed by appointment of the Chair of the Board on an annual basis in advance of the first meeting after the Annual Meeting of the Conference. No member will serve on more than one team. Each team will be staffed by a member of the program staff of the conference. Each team has the authority to co-opt up to two additional members with experience and expertise valuable to the work of the team. These additional members will have voice, but not vote in the proceedings of the Team.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM (Ad Team)**

#### Composition:

The Ad Team will be composed of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board, the Conference Treasurer, the conference Moderator and Assistant Moderator, and two other members of the board, appointed by Chair of the Board. The Ad Team will be staffed by the Conference Minister.

#### Responsibilities:

The Ad Team is responsible to:

- Cooperate with the Conference Minister to formulate the General Operating Fund budget and any other necessary budgets, doing so in consultation with staff and other committees and entities of the conference, and recommend same to the entire board for eventual adoption by the Annual Meeting of the Conference,
- Monitor the finances of the Conference and report same to the entire board and Annual Meeting of the Conference,
- In light of changing situations, consider revisions to the budgets of the conference and recommend same for adoption by the entire board,
- Serve as the Audit Committee of the Board,

- Formulate investment policies for adoption by the entire board and oversee the implementation of same,
- (Serve as the Iowa Conference Nominating Committee, - *this would require bylaw change*)
- Initiate annual review of and recommend compensation for the Conference Minister,
- Regularly review the Conference Personnel Policies and recommend changes as deemed appropriate,
- Recommend appointments to Conference Committees and task forces and recommend appointment to vacancies on the Board and other conference committees and task forces, except as indicated otherwise below.
- Work with the Conference Minister and the board to establish, evaluate and adjust the overall mission and vision of the Iowa Conference.

## **PROGRAM AND PLANNING TEAM**

### Composition:

The Program and Planning Team will be composed of members of the board appointed by Chair of the Board according to their abilities, experience and interest. The Team will be staffed by an ACM assigned by the Conference Minister.

### Responsibilities:

The Program and Planning Team is responsible to:

- Recommend the theme, date, major presenters, and location of the Conference Annual Meeting on a rolling schedule at least two years in advance of each meeting. In addition, the Team will be responsible to annually recommend to the full board the appointment of an Annual Meeting Planning Committee which will implement the overall program direction of the team.
- Serve as liaison between the CenterLearnSearch Oversight Committee and full Board of Directors.
- Serve as liaison between the Commission on Ministry and the entire Board. The Team will receive the annual Compensation Guidelines recommendations from the Commission and recommend same to the full board for recommendation to the Annual Meeting of the Conference.
- Recommend other conference wide program as may be deemed important to the implementation of the mission and vision of the conference.

## **FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

### Composition:

The Financial Development Team will be composed of members of the board appointed by the Chair of the Board according to their abilities, experience and interest. The Team

will be staffed by an ACM assigned by the Conference Minister.

Responsibilities:

The Financial Development Team is responsible to:

- Create, recommend to the board, and oversee a financial development strategy sufficient to fund the mission and vision of the conference, placing emphasis on the development of support from both churches and individuals,
- Work with Financial Development staff (if any),
- Create a strategy for the encouragement of generous OCWM support from congregations, including a communication plan, the establishment of goals, and other strategies by which to maintain a healthy and constructive financial relationship between the conference and its member churches.

Iowa Conference, UCC  
Conference Minister's Report  
Board of Directors

22 August 2008

It is a pleasure to report on several important matters in the life of the conference:

- We are well into a search for a new ACM to serve in the eastern part of the state. Telephone interviews have been conducted and the committee hopes to conduct face-to-face interviews in September and make a recommendation for call shortly thereafter. The hope is that this new staff person might be able to start toward the end of this year, allowing at least some overlap between his/her start date and Ron's retirement. We may need to talk about the mechanics of how we will extend the call, since you do not meet again until in November, and I hope the call can be finalized long before then.
- The search for the ACM for Youth and Young Adult Ministries is also progressing. The position description and profile have been completed, and we are in the process of advertising the position and receiving applications.
- The Pilgrim Heights mortgage has been satisfied and with your authorization at this meeting we will effect the legal transfer of the property to Our Sacred Space, Inc.
- We have entered into an agreement to sell the conference office building to a local developer. The prospective buyer is now in his due diligence period and closing could happen as soon as sometime in October (though, as we all know, these kinds of things have a way of taking longer than what is usually anticipated). The agreed upon contracted price -- \$525,000 -- is better than the earlier offer, and the broker's fee (4.5%) is less than what we would have otherwise paid. The purchaser is willing to rent back to us for a time after purchase. That may be an option we will want to take advantage of.
- I have been working with our broker, Kent York, to identify new office space in which to house the Des Moines based staff. I've looked at a fairly large number of spaces, and while no decisions have been made, we will certainly have no trouble finding a space adequate to our needs. There still is the possibility that we could purchase or build new space, but I'm not terribly enthusiastic about those two options.

For the first time since I came to you as Conference Minister, I made time to engage in a formal continuing education event this summer. In July I traveled to Louisville Seminary to participate in a week-long continuing education event led by Roy Oswald on the application of emotional intelligence theory to the work of church leadership. It was a fascinating and helpful event, and I have already decided to encourage our ACM's to participate in the same learning event in the future.

My responsibilities in the wider church have also kept me busy and engaged this summer. In late June I traveled to Orlando for a meeting of the Council of Conference Ministers. Late in July I traveled to Cleveland for a meeting of the Governance Follow-up Team (GFT), that body charged with helping the national church find a governance model which will enhance that function at the national setting of the church. Around the same time I was asked to represent the national church on a Church World Service/National Council of the Churches of Christ in the US (NCCC) exchange trip to Pakistan. The current political instability there has just last week

caused a postponement of this trip. While I was disappointed at the loss of the opportunity to be meeting people there and learning more of our common work there, the travel there and back was not something I was looking forward to, and the few days consequently freed will be quickly filled with other work (as it was, I would have missed a subsequent meeting of the GFT in Cleveland, an Advisory Council meeting of the Central Association, a farewell service in a Central Assn church and a staff meeting. By time those responsibilities are added back into my calendar, those days already look full. As you can see, it has not been a slow summer, and other than a few days of break here and there, it has not been a summer which has allowed time for much vacation.

As most of you know, earlier this summer the Ad Team authorized me to spend some funds to engage the services of an executive coach. This work has been very helpful, though it is challenging for me. I know myself well enough to understand that I possess ingrained habits which do not always enhance my executive function. I am easily inclined to overwork and over-function. I am easily frustrated by the failure of other (staff and volunteers) to do as I think they should, but I am not as good at constructively coaching improvement. These are not habits which will be easily changed, but I am working on them. I will continue to report to you my work toward more effective executive leadership. One concrete change that I do intend to effect fairly soon will involve a slight reordering of staff responsibility so that we can employ an additional part-time support staff person whose work will be restricted to administrative support of the conference minister. Our support staff are dedicated and hard working, but some of the particular skills which would be most specifically helpful to me are not well developed in our current staff.

Even though it is still a year away, it may also behoove us to remember that my call agreement grants me a first sabbatical at the conclusion of my FOURTH year of employment. That's only a year away. I've done no thinking about what I might do on this sabbatical, nor have I considered how my work might be covered in my absence, but obviously this will require some attention.

In the meantime, the fundamental work of the conference goes on. I've said nothing, so far, relating to our work with the churches and pastors of the conference. Ron and Tony are doing exemplary work. Tony's learning curve has, of course, been significant, but I am pleased with his instincts for this work and it seems to me that he is building trust and gaining the confidence of the clergy and churches as more and more of them in the NW and SW Associations have occasion to work with him.

I've also said nothing of the extra work that has resulted as consequence of the flooding in June. As you know, two congregations – Peace UCC in Waverly and Eden UCC in Cedar Rapids – have been displaced from their buildings. Gayle Strickler, as our disaster response coordinator has done yeoman's work in working with these two churches and in the other places where persons have been negatively impacted. We will use the receipts of the conference-wide offering to assist these two churches.

In many respects, the short-term prospects for the welfare of the conference are better than they have been at any point during my 3 year tenure, but, to be honest, our long-term prospects continue to be very challenging. I don't claim to have any magic bullet to make our challenges go away, but I will continue to attempt to create an environment in which we can and will experiment with ideas calculated to benefit our churches.

Thank you for your encouragement, your prayers and your financial support. I'm looking forward to working with this newly configured board as together we work to serve Christ by serving and challenging the 179 churches of the Iowa Conference.

Rich Pleva  
Conference Minister