

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES**  
July 17, 2004

**PRESENT:** Sam Wormley - Chair, Eric Severson, Gina Dugan, Shari Leighton, Suzanne Owens-Pike, Mildred Larson – Annual Conference Working Group Coordinator, Barbara Hubbard (05 Local), Julie Handberg (05 Local), Maura Williams (05 Local), Sharon Merritt (05 Local), Peggy Houston (06 Local).

**MINUTES TO:** Nancy Heege, Phillip Lund, Sarah Greene.

**REVIEW MINUTES OF APRIL 24, 2004 – Minutes approved.**

**INTRODUCTIONS AND CHECK-IN**

Welcome to our new committee members, Shari and Suzanne and welcome to our guests from local arrangements 2005 and 2006!

**UPDATES FROM PROGRAM COUNCIL**

Good news! An exception was made to extend Nancy Heege's contract beyond the current term limit. In addition, the UUA Board voted to discontinue term limits for all district executives. In place of term limits there will be an intensive annual review process. In Prairie Star District, it will be conducted between the PSD Board and Nancy Heege.

In late August, the PSD board and program council meet jointly in a retreat in southern Minnesota. Mildred asked that any issues this committee would like brought to the PSD board, be sent to her in time for this August meeting. Next meeting of the PSD board is November.

Awards are currently under discussion. There is a proposal to consider adding a new award, the Heritage Award. There are questions about how to fund award costs in the future; currently the conference budget includes covering the registration fees for award winners. Questions the Awards Committee will ponder include: Should this practice continue? Should every award be given every year? Is it reasonable to ask congregations to pay registration fees/hotel for their award recipients? What about rotating awards each year? How many congregations submit nominees each year? When is the best time during the conference to give out awards? The noon luncheon is the largest attended event during the conference. Eric suggested in the future a photo session occur with the award recipient's banner in the background.

**REVIEW OF 2004 CONFERENCE**

Conference profit of \$1950; conference books are now closed. Follow-up with workshop presenters who did not register for conference was not fruitful. Beth Atkinson passed conference planning notebook to Anne McCleery. Anne will update and then pass it to 2005 Local Arrangements.

Debriefing of conference: Local Arrangements Chair should have no other tasks! We recommend the Local Chair designate point people to head up such tasks as conference registration, bookstore, hotel communication, recruit point person for registration, budget/treasurer, bookstore, hotel interfacing, etc. These people would then recruit committees as needed. Anne could have used more volunteers and back-up volunteers so volunteers could rotate attending parts of the conference. The question was asked, "Can free time be added into the conference schedule?" Not easily.

Observations: Meals at conference vs meals on your own (meals are a necessary part of hotel contract), meal set-up in a space that doesn't create a bottleneck, awards at noon or night banquet pros and cons, vegetarian option Friday night, water available in workshops, combination hotel/church space use for conferences. For the record, this committee discourages activities that switch back and forth between hotel and church space, creating difficult accessibility issues and losing cohesiveness of conference. An exception was made in Kansas City due to close distance between church and hotel. The labyrinth could be a Saturday only activity; can hotel accommodate a space large enough for it? If not, can there be a labyrinth sponsor to pay for the additional room needed?

Both positive and negative comments on speakers and workshops. Overall the comments were positive.

## **REVIEW OF PROGRESS 2005 CONFERENCE**

April 8-10, Unity Church, St Paul, MN

Theme: *Unity in Diversity: Source of Hope and Courage.*

Keynote: Rev. Dr. Michael Schuler from First Unitarian Society, Madison, WI.

Judy Lecture: Rev Rosemary Bray McNatt

Backup Speaker: Sam will contact Victoria Safford

Space needs:

- PSD Board meeting
- Youth space, hotel room
- Childcare space, hotel room
- Workshops – Best Practices Track
- Labyrinth
- Large meeting room for speakers
- Dining space
- Bookstore
- Annual Business Meeting – allow 1.5 hours

Volunteer needs: Chair, committee and job descriptions

- Hotel
- Publicity
- Registration
- Exhibit
- Bookstore
- Hospitality
- Budget/Treasurer
- Entertainment
- Visual Arts including banners, flowers, aesthetics,
- Worship Team, Friday, Saturday-youth planned, Sunday

Friday needs:

- Registration table & packets
- Banner parade organization and communication to participants, requirements for display
- Music coordinator
- Welcome/conference announcements

- Keynote speaker introduction
- Question & Answer time
- Worship

Local Progress Report: Timeline- Julie.

November 2003	Sign hotel contract
Summer 2004	Conference budget, create logo, and recruit volunteers for committees
August 2004	Prelim budget to Program Coordinator for consultation, final budget to PSD board for approval (8/27-28), article to PSD for Sept newsletter (8/23)
September 2004	8.5 x 11 poster for churches to post – to PSD office, electronic version for PSD website, reduced size version for church newsletter editors
October 2004	Draft of registration brochure to PSD Program Coordinator for feedback
November 2004	Registration brochure to PSD office for approval
December 2004	Brochure to printer, submit conference promotion to PSD newsletter, on-line registration ready
January 2005	Meet with Conference Program Committee, mail brochure to individuals and congregations, deadline 1/14/05
March 2005	Registration early deadline - March 1
April 8-10, 2005	Annual Conference

Summer Mailing – Gina and Suzanne

Three parts include cover letter, workshop application, and flyer. Barbara offered the use of Unity's folding machine and space to compile the mailing. Gina, Barbara and Julie will work out a date to meet in early August. Barbara will organize Unity volunteers to assist. Gina will prepare letter and workshop application, arrange for labels/envelopes with Sarah Greene and work with Suzanne to pass on the process for next year. Maura will work on conference logo and flyer.

Conference Evaluation Form – Mildred

Mildred will update this for the 2005 conference.

Workshops – Eric and Shari

Return completed workshop applications to Eric. Eric and Shari will be listed as contacts on the application.

Sam shared Phil's email regarding "best practices". Discussion - how to solicit best practices, examples discussed were "websites" and "intergenerational programming". Utilize Nancy and Phil as resources and references for who has best practices. Possibility – reserve 3 workshop slots for best practices. Question – aren't all workshops a showcase of best practices? Will labeling create hard feelings? How to address

the issues for small, medium and large congregations or select topics that apply to all congregational sizes? Input from Nancy and Phil is needed to help clarify. There is specific interest in following up on Peter Morales' talk on growth, hospitality and membership.

Committee was in agreement on using workshop tracks again. Suggested categories include:

- \*Religious Education
- \*Outreach
- \*Financial
- \*Diversity
- \*Membership
- \*Growth
- \*Media
- \*Youth
- \*New – History/Heritage track

Workshop Presenter's Dilemma:

Discussion of payment of conference fees for workshop presenters. Increase clarity in summer mailing cover letter. Deny workshop to past non-payers. Encourage full participation in the conference.

Registration Fees:

Families of award recipients may attend the luncheon/awards presentation. Have early and late registration fees only plus a contingency plan for special considerations.

Guidelines for Local Arrangements:

Sam will pull together a summary of strategies to help conference success.

### **REVIEW OF PROGRESS 2006 CONFERENCE**

Continue to fine tune timeline draft and begin recruitment for committee chairs. Thank you to Peggy for driving up from Iowa City to join us today!

Conference Theme: Brainstorming activity

Iowa sisterhood, heritage, how to be a good neighbor, stewardship of one another, world citizen, communities we belong to, spirituality of stewardship, spiritual ethics, international citizenship, religion is what we care most deeply about, caring and stewardship, imply some sort of action, the heart of stewardship, stewardship from the heart, interdependence, soulful journeys, world community

\*Recommendation: "The Heart of Stewardship"

Sam will talk to Nancy and Phil about theme and speaker suggestions.

### **BETTER ANNUAL CONFERENCE PUBLICITY - Earlier**

Methods of distribution:

1. PSD Newsletter – info to Sarah Greene, deadline 9/23. Barbara will do.
2. Summer Mailing – Gina and Suzanne will do.
3. Brochures – distribute through denominational affairs person.
4. Youth Contact – Shari work with Phil.
5. Church Newsletter Information Items – October, February and March distribution

6. PSD Liaisons
7. Email Lists – talk to Nancy about what is available and the best way to use. Who?
8. Congregational Contacts – need a point person in each congregation to share conference information, start with denominational affairs person, minister, president, dre, newsletter editor, denominational affairs contact, youth contact.

**EXPENSE REQUESTS**

Mildred can approve/sign outstanding requests today. Questions about forms, ask Sam.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Saturday, October 23, 2004 at Unity Unitarian Church, St Paul, MN. 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Recorded by Gina Dugan