

2019 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING OF THE UUHHS
MINUTES
12-1:30 pm July 30, 2019
First Church in Dedham

Attendance: John Buehrens, Phoebe Cos, Patrice Curtis (via Zoom), Gail Forsyth-Vail (via Zoom), Mark Harris, Mark Hicks, Earl Holt, Richard Kellaway, Nicole Kirk, Josh Leach, Stephanie May, Dan McKanan, Kathy Parker, Connie Simon, Rali Weaver, Tisa Wenger.

Financial Report

John Buehrens reported in his role as outgoing treasurer of the UUHHS. During 2018-2019, we took no draw on our endowment, but stayed afloat using the funds raised for the Conrad Wright endowment, which now stands at a bit more than \$15,000. We hope this will eventually grow to \$25,000 or \$30,000. After this meeting, we will send \$15,000 of Wright money to be invested as a restricted endowment. We will also draw \$14,000 from our unrestricted endowment, which corresponds to a 4% draw for both 2018-2019 and 2019-2020.

We are also the fiscal agent for UU History Convo. We received \$6,000 in grant support from the UU Funding Panel, rather than the \$16,000 we requested. The \$6000 included only \$2000 in scholarship funds; the UUHHS has agreed to add \$2000 to the scholarship fund.

Last year, we resolved to begin a membership campaign but did not do so. Our membership has dwindled, not because of a lack of interest, but because we have not been systematic in asking people to renew. John and Nicole have now begun this work, which was also delayed because of a temporary problem with our connection to Paypal. We have a backlog of 200 lapsed members who should be willing to renew. Josh Leach will also lead our effort to solicit memberships from laypeople who are serving as formal or informal congregational historians. He has done similar work in his job at the UUSC, so should be well-prepared for the work.

The board has also been doing very significant re-visioning about how we make our work relevant for contemporary Unitarian Universalists. For example, Mark Hicks and his colleagues at Meadville Lombard have prepared resources to help congregations grapple with their historical complicity in white supremacy; the UUHHS can help make these resources more widely available. Similarly, Connie Simon will succeed Jim Nugent as editor of the Dictionary of UU Biography, and she will begin by leading a team of people to think about ways to prioritize the biographies most relevant to our movement's contemporary needs.

For the coming year, we are budgeting \$7000 in dues, which represents a significant increase. We will also solicit donations from people who are in a position to make a contribution above the membership cost. We will also continue to raise funds for the Wright endowment, and we will not take the annual draw on that endowment until just before the time of the lecture.

Introductions

We did a round of introductions for the benefit of the members attending the meeting.

Election: We elected the following officers:

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President: John Buehrens

Vice President: Nicole Kirk

Treasurer: Rali Weaver (to complete John Buehrens's term)

Board Members: Tisa Wenger (new member), Connie Simon (new member), Josh Leach (new member), Patrice Curtis (re-elected), Mark Hicks (re-elected)

Note: Dan McKanan (secretary), Phoebe Cos, and Gail Forsyth-Vail are continuing their service. We recognized Earl Holt, Mark Harris, and Barbara Coeyman for their long service to UUHHS. Also, Kathy Parker has completed her service as an elected board member but will continue ex officio as long as she serves as journal editor. The full roster of the board is as follows, with the newly elected or re-elected marked with asterisks:

**President: Earl Holt completes his service; John Buehrens nominated (term ends 2021, term limit expires 2025)*

**Vice President: Mark Harris completes his service; Nicole Kirk nominated (term ends 2021, term limit expires 2025)*

**Secretary: Dan McKanan (term ends 2020, no term limit/began serving 2014)*

Treasurer: John Buehrens completes his service; Rali Weaver nominated (term ends 2020, no term limit/began serving 2018)

Phoebe Cos (term ends 2020, term limit expires 2022)

Kathy Parker (ex officio)

**Patrice Curtis (term ends 2021, term limit expires 2023)*

**Mark Hicks (term ends 2021, term limit expires 2023)*

**Josh Leach (term ends 2021, term limit expires 2025)*

**Connie Simon (term ends 2021, term limit expires 2025)*

**Tisa Wenger (term ends 2021, term limit expires 2025)*

Journal Report

Kathy Parker, who has served since 2009 as editor, reported on the *Journal of UU History*. We are in the process of shaping our vision to reflect the broader work underway in Unitarian Universalism. The next issue will feature a Channing anniversary address given in Baltimore by Fred Wooden, who urged that our "permanent" work is mission-oriented, while our buildings and other accoutrements reflect the "transient" dimension of Unitarian Universalism. We will invite a demographical diverse set of contributors to add reflections on his address. We have a number of book reviews underway. We also decided to create a forum within the journal for congregations to share reflections on how they are grappling with the work of overcoming white supremacy in the way they tell their histories. This is a feature that may extend over multiple issues.

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Stephanie noted that the Convo grant request included funds for publishing papers, but this was not funded. Kathy clarified that we will still be able to publish suitable essays in the journal, and post other Convo materials on the website.

Convo Report

Stephanie May offered a report in her role as Convo program chair. She indicated that for the first time since she has been doing this work, we had to reject some submissions. We have twenty strong papers, along with two special panels—one on the Berry Street Essay and one on the emerging history of BLUU. We also have a white supremacy workshop, some performance and worship experiences, and two keynote speakers, Chris Cameron and Mark Harris. Currently we have about twenty people registered, and are ready to really make a push for registrations. We seem to be on track for about 100 participants, about the same we had last time.

For the pre-conference, we have clusters of tickets reserved for the Native American and African American museums at the Smithsonian (for Thursday afternoon). After the conference, a group will proceed to Murray Grove for the night.

Remembrances

We offered brief remembrances of Dorothy Emerson, David Johnson, and Alan Seaburg, all very significant UU historians who died during the past year.

Conrad Wright Lecture

Nicole Kirk reported that we had a very successful Conrad Wright lecture this year with Kathryn Gin Lum, speaking on the history of the category of “heathenism.”

Thank Yous

We offered a hearty round of thanks to Rali Weaver and First Church of Dedham for their gracious hospitality.

We adjourned the annual meeting at 1:25 pm ET.