

Minutes of Governing Board Meeting – 1st March 2022 (Amended, 5th April 2022 - italics)

Attendees: Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey, James Chavis, Clare Coughlin, Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston, Rev. Elder Diane Fisher, Mark Godette, and Chad Hobbs

Staff: Tammy Rabon-Noyce

Apologies: Rev. Alberto Najera

Establish Quorum: Meeting commenced at 5:05 pm US Eastern / 9:05 pm UK GMT / 4:05pm US Central

Opening Prayer: Rev. Elder Alejandro Escoto

Brief Check In: Check in from all present

Consent Agenda:

- Minutes of February Meeting
- Moderator's Report

Motion to accept the minutes of the February meeting and the Moderator's Report.

Moved: Rev. Elder Diane Fisher

Seconded: Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey

Passed

Discussion Agenda: New Business

Strategic Planning Update - Workgroups have been formed around the five strategic aims: Spirituality, Presence, Diversity, Leadership and Resources. A followup session has been scheduled for 21st March 2022. Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston shared that staff are looking to balance the working groups and welcomes your input into the strategic vision dreaming.

Annual Report - Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos (Resource Development Team Lead) has been working on the Annual Report and has sought input before publication.

COVID-19 Update: Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston

We continue navigating the impacts of Covid-19 and monitor its global impact. Some churches have gone back to virtual services.

General Conference Update: Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston

Staff members Mike Haase and Rev. Lauren Bennett (Co-chairs of Global General Conference Core Team) are working on a communication that will go out shortly and will open registration.

On 11th February 2022, Governing Board members met via Zoom with the General Conference Core Team to assess the status of viable meeting options for 2022 General Conference. Governing Board members present included Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey*, James Chavis, Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston, Rev. Elder Diane Fisher, Mark Godette, Chad Hobbs, and Rev. Alberto Najera.

Apologies: Clare Coughlin, *Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey left at 2:08pm before the vote

Motion - Move to have General Conference part 1 (1-3 July 2022) entirely online and encourage congregations around the world to have watch parties so they can gather safely and engage in live events and participate in the programming.

Moved: Rev. Elder Diane Fisher

Seconded: James Chavis

Passed

Governing Board Nominating Committee Appointment –

Electronic Motion - Appoint Tijuana Gray to the Governing Board Nominating Committee

Moved: Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston, via email on 4th February 2022

Seconded: Mark Godette, via email on 4th February 2022 Passed - of those eligible to vote, Unanimous approval with final vote on 7th February 2022

***Current Governing Board members seeking reelection abstained from voting due to a potential conflict of interest*

Eligibility to Vote

We are pleased that there are so many churches in compliance and we are communicating with churches regarding their status. Rev. Elder Diane Fisher and Chad Hobbs have been working on communication to those eligible to vote as well as to those ineligible to vote as of 1st March 2022. For those ineligible to vote, Governors are offering assistance (138 churches are eligible for voting).

Financial Report: Chad Hobbs

Finance Dashboards from January 2022

Chad Hobbs gave an update of the January finances via the dashboard, which is available on the MCC website after the meeting.

Motion to accept the January Dashboard as presented

Moved: Rev. Elder Diane Fisher

Seconded: James Chavis

Passed

Networks and Bank Accounts - UFMCC is responsible and accountable for money held by networks. Staff and the finance committee will work with network leaders to ensure this takes place.

Electronic Motion to provide financial support - Ukraine - The Russian invasion of Ukraine has shocked the world. LGBTQI people are particularly at risk if Russia takes over. Following contact with Florin Buhuceanu with ACCEPT, the following motion was made to support safe passage of individuals out of the Ukraine:

Motion to make US\$1000 available to the organization “ACCEPT” immediately from the Disaster Relief Fund and then start a fundraiser to enable other people fleeing from Ukraine to be supported and resettled.

Moved: Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston, via email on 24th February 2022

Seconded: Chad Hobbs, via email on 24th February 2022 Passed (Marie Alford-Harkey on bereavement leave)

Amending Governing Board Policy Handbook Gifts Policy #20

Motion - amend current policy to allow the Finance Committee to distribute funds (up to \$50,000 US) according to the prioritized needs of MCC. Amounts over \$50,000 US require a Finance Committee recommendation to the Governing Board who will approve the distribution of funds (*to be inserted into Policy #20*)

Moved: Chad Hobbs

Seconded: Rev. Elder Diane Fisher Passed

Accounting Manual Update: Chad Hobbs

Work is ongoing; due to some delays, there is new effort to bring this to completion.

Governance:

Bylaws Proposals - None from individuals nor churches and the deadline has now passed; three bylaw proposals have come from the previous COE/current COE and those will come forward for the April 2022 meeting. There is also work being done on a bylaw proposal for church disaffiliation policy.

Business Meeting Planning Update -

The committee has begun meeting and will set the procedures for the General Conference 2022 online Business meeting and will bring forward for the GB approval.

Board of Pensions Policy Addendum-

Preceding the motion consideration, there was a question of where the BOP and Governing Board intersect.

Motion to *amend* Governing Board Policy 16 (to be titled Assessment and Board of Pensions Payments - It is the policy of Metropolitan Community Churches that each affiliated church in the United States shall report to the BOP monthly membership totals and make a financial contribution to the Board of Pensions (USA) based on that membership total. Typically this contribution is made quarterly. The rate to calculate the church's per-member, per-month contribution is determined by the General Conference. When a local congregation in the USA is one or more quarters in arrears on its assessments to the Board of Pensions (BOP), the BOP will notify the Pastor and the Board of Directors of that church. Because all contributions due to the Pension Fund are the collective property of all eligible clergy, no BOP contributions can be forgiven. If a church neglects to report and pay their BOP contributions, the BOP *will recommend* the church's lay delegate(s) and clergy delegate(s) *not be seated at* General Conference. If a church continues to be unwilling or unable to pay their BOP contributions, further steps may have to be taken by the BOP in accordance with the Policy on Self-Suspension. (<https://www.mcccchurch.org/files/2021/10/Policy-for-Churches-in-Self-Suspension.pdf>).

Moved: Chad Hobbs

Seconded: Clare Coughlin

Passed

Staffing Update: Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston

Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston provided a staffing update. For a trial period, we have expanded our contract for external communications as we further explore the area of raising MCC's voice.

Church Updates, Closures and Disaffiliations: Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston provided an update.

Commissions: The Work of the Commissions is ongoing – all need to be thinking about reports for the 2022 General Conference, and there will need to be time for translations, so probably an April deadline so the reports are brought to the Governing Board for its May 2022 meeting.

- **Commission on Communication:** Governing Board Liaison Rev. Alberto Najera provided an update. Work is ongoing and there has been a meeting with the Community Development Team.
- **General Conference Commission:** will continue its work after 2022's General Conference and use this experience to inform future recommendations.
- **Assessments Commission:** Rev. Elder Diane Fisher as Governing Board Liaison. They will write up a status for this as it has been delayed.

- **Commission on Rites and Sacraments:** Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey stepped down from her role as Co-Chair and will remain as Governing Board Liaison; Rev. Dr. Axel Schwaigert will continue as Chair and Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston will work with him to find a Co-Chair.
- **Commission on Pathways of Healing and Reconciliation:** Clare Coughlin as Governing Board Liaison. Update provided tonight by Rev. Dr. Roland Stringfellow

Judiciary Process Working Group: Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston indicated the work is ongoing, but the group has completed its review of the policy and will send it for review by the attorney.

Motion of appreciation to Tammy Rabon-Noyce for her support of the Judiciary Policy and work on the various policies for the Governing Board.

Moved: Chad Hobbs

Seconded: Rev. Elder Diane Fisher

Passed

Racial Equity, Diversity & Inclusion:

The Moderator attended the PAD: TNG ritual ceremony and also participated with a video of her hopes for the future of this group. A letter of apology has been sent for the lack of GB representation at the ritual ceremony. The GB remains committed to increasing racial equity, diversity and inclusion.

Congratulations to everyone who was involved with the ritual ceremony.

Governing Board Representation At Key Events: Discussion on how to ensure the Governing Board is presented and shows support for key events hap[ening around the denomination.

Ongoing Items:

Governing Board Policy Manual – Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston, work is ongoing to ensure all of the policy changes authorized by this and prior boards are reflected in the policy document.

Future Agenda Items:

April - Bylaw proposals

May - Commission reports to Governing Board

Future Meeting Dates:

Tuesday 5th April 2022

Tuesday 3rd May 2022

Tuesday 7th June 2022

Tuesday 5th July 2022

Tuesday 2nd August 2022

Tuesday 13th September 2022 (changed from 6th due to World Council of Churches)

Tuesday 4th October 2022

Tuesday 1st November 2022

Tuesday 6th December 2022

Close in Prayer: xx closed the meeting in prayer at 6:37pm US Eastern / 12:21 am UK GMT / 6:21 pm US Central.