



## METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

18 December 2013  
4:00 - 5:30 p.m. EST; 21:00 - 22:30 GMT/UTC

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### **UFMCC FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN (2014-2018) Breakthrough Objectives:**

- 1. Global Growth:** Become a growing multi-cultural, international, spiritual community.
- 2. Justice:** Boldly claim our prophetic role as a justice movement for the 21st century.
- 3. Congregations and Ministries:** Expand the number of healthy, vibrant churches and ministries.
- 4. People:** Cultivate, nurture and deploy lay and clergy leaders that are equipped and empowered to carry out our global mission.
- 5. Finances:** Build a culture of generosity to achieve our vision and mission.

### **OPEN QUESTIONS FOR 2014:**

*What will it mean to be MCC in 2023?*

*What is our vision of MCC as a culturally diverse, international movement?*

### **ATTENDEES**

Rev. Elder Dr. Nancy Wilson, Moderator; Rev. Onetta Brooks, Vice Chair; Kareem Murphy, Secretary; Gail Rissler, Treasurer; Raquel Benítez-Rojas; Sarah-Jane Ramage; Rev. Dr. Robert Griffin; Rev. Dr. Carol Trissell; Rev. Clinton Crawshaw; Barbara Crabtree, Director of Operations; Linda Brenner-Beckstead, Staff Support.

**The record will note the following email vote completed on December 5, 2013.**

**GOVERNING BOARD MOTION 130512.1: Motion to approve a \$1,000 (net) 2013 year end bonus for Moderator Rev. Elder Dr. Nancy Wilson from 2013 net operating income before write-offs (which translates to year-end surplus operating cash), made by Onetta, seconded by Carol. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **I. Consent Agenda (Nancy)**

- Minutes of 21 November 2013 meeting
- Moderator's Report
- Director of Operations Financial Reports
  - Profit and Loss Statement
  - Balance Sheet
  - Budget Summary
- 2014 Housing Allowances for Staff Clergy

**GOVERNING BOARD MOTION 131812.1: Motion to approve the consent agenda made by Robert, seconded by Gail. MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY.**

## II. Finance Committee Update (Gail)

Gail noted that there are three motions for consideration and first pass at the 2014 budget. The Budget has already been reviewed by the Finance Committee and it is in the process of being amended by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Kareem applauded the work Gail and the Finance Team did in continuing to improve on financial reporting.

Gail reviewed the proposed change to Governing Board Policy 19 (Operating Reserve Fund Management Policy) that is designed to move MCC toward a more stable operation, give the Director of Operation a smoother cash flow, and create less stress at that point, and focus on operations. She noted that this would amount to an operational culture shift.

**GOVERNING BOARD MOTION 131812.2: Motion to approve the changed to Governing Board Policy 19, made by Robert, seconded by Clinton. MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY.**

Gail presented the second proposal, which covered write offs of assessments due to MCC but not yet paid by churches. She noted that it was being submitted as a motion and not as a policy. Based on the model, it includes significant write-offs in 2012 and smaller amounts in 2013.

There was discussion of recusals from this vote because of Governing Board member connections with some of the churches affected by the motion. Robert noted that there was discussion about this matter via email. Clinton said that he was going to abstain because his church is on there for an amount, and he added that he did not think that this was required ethically.

**GOVERNING BOARD MOTION 131812.3: Motion to adopt write offs of assessments owed and unpaid for accounting purposes, made by Kareem, seconded by SJ. Kareem-Yes, SJ-Yes, Carol-Yes, Gail-Yes, Onetta,-Yes, Raquel-Yes, Robert-Abstain, Clinton-Abstain. MOTION PASSES.**

Gail provided an overview of the draft 2014 budget and noted that there would be no decisions made on it today. There is a category-based spreadsheet and an accompanying narrative document that details expected revenues and proposed expenses. There is also a document that explains the proposed use of investment funds for additional programming needs, per the Strategic Plan.

The third quarter of 2013 was challenging in terms of revenue. But we are current with external debts and in paying ourselves back. We will end year with payables at or below a year ago. The Operating Reserve is intact with an additional \$20,000 due to a planned gift. That is all very good news.

The focus in 2014 will be income, with plans to closely monitor the projections. The 2014 Budget is aligned with the Strategic Plan and this is the approach we will have in future years. It will help track priority spending. There was review of the revenue categories and the programming spending map.

Gail noted that there are not a lot of staffing initiatives. There will not be any new staff on payroll. Many functions will be covered under stipend or contract agreement, such as the Carpenter Grant stipend to build Online Learning, Brazil coordinator, Dean of Garner Institute, etc.

We continue try and shift income to enable the budget to exist on less dependence on assessment income. Strategic Investment will also focus on global initiatives. The income represents 4% in 2014, and 12% in expenses.

Kareem asked a question about the development program funded in the budget and how would things be done differently to better position the effort for success. Nancy responded by saying that they want to hire an outside consultant. Gail added that the actual exposure in the budget (meeting vs not meeting the revenue targets from development) is not that large. The risk is in lack of performance by the Moderator's Circle. 2014 will provide a full year at the current number of giving units which will be better than in 2013. We should also do well with Major Gifts, given our track record.

Barb said that we could go into further detail in the one-on-one sessions in January.

### **III. Strategic Planning Update (Carol)**

Carol noted that everyone had access to the updated version of the Strategic Plan that includes a red-line version. Nancy said that the SLT was deliberate about the language adjustments and changes. Some of it was editing and Priority Actions were more like tactics and were more like work plans. Carol thanked Gail for her service as a consultant.

**GOVERNING BOARD MOTION 131812.4: Motion to adopt updated Strategic Plan (2014-2018), made by Carol, seconded by Robert. MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **IV. Assessment Review (SJ)**

SJ share that the team produced a rough outline of where the Governing Board should be on communication. This is a hearts and mind approach, with the goal to reach more constructive conversation. The team developed a survey for churches to use to determine what they think of assessments. In the course of the work, she said she realized that the assessment system was like the US tax system, which is making it unpopular. SJ began conversations with Tony about what forgiveness and a stick-and-carrot (approaches) might look like.

### **V. Development (Nancy/Robert)**

Nancy shared that she asked Robert to chair the committee this year and he said yes. She said that we would be very successful. They hope to have a development program ready by year-end.

### **VI. Governance (Onetta)**

There will be a face-to-face meeting for the Moderator Nominating Committee, to include the Committee and Barb, Don Eastman and Onetta. If there are not enough applications for the support team (alternates), she will delay the application deadline. Onetta has been in touch with the Young Adult Advisory council to receive help with names for attendance at the March face-to-face Governing Board meeting. She will also work to invite Young Adult graduates of the Leadership Mentoring Retreat to apply).

## **VII. Approval of Awards for 2014 (Nancy)**

Nancy apologized for sending the document without Hector's story about Paula, a transgender deacon outside of Sao Paulo, Brazil who is a mover and shaker at a homeless shelter. Both Cristiano and Rev. Elder Hector recommended her. Not all Board members had been able to review the document. There was discussion about delaying the vote. The vote was delayed, with a date for completely of January 5<sup>th</sup>. Nancy invited questions over email.

## **VIII. Open Questions (Nancy/Robert/Kareem/Onetta)**

Kareem and Robert provided background on where the focus on the future financial model originated. Nancy talked about how churches and ministries in other countries are experimenting with relationships with governments. She referenced OSI and in Africa, where churches and ministries are struggling with few resources. They have begun to shift Florin to wider organizations. More examples are needed. She recalled how previous restructuring involved the use of anchor churches to pilot support. Nancy added that she liked the idea of financial hubs and that financial protocols were needed for operation. She cited Iberoamerica, where we have significant programming.

Carol contemplated what this meant for the discussion of the national church model. Different areas are sufficient. Raquel added that that issue was addressed by the International Task Force (ITF) and no one supported it. (Raquel leaves call.)

Nancy noted that there is a distinction in organizing national churches and in having financial hubs in other countries.

Gail asked about how coalitions could help with both investment and shared risk. Shared risks and shared benefits take MCC into areas where it's a true partner.

Clinton noted that the national church model approach is problematic when there is not a critical mass, referencing Europe. Partnerships are necessary when you are property rich and people poor (or for MCC, the reverse).

Gail referenced a document that Robert shared about how the Episcopal Church is wrestling with how its financial model supports or enables mission to take place. She emphasized the difference between enabling mission and *doing* mission. What we are doing is creating mechanisms for people to do this.

Carol clarified that when talking about the national church model, she was not talking about a colonizing model. Hearing from Raquel is very important, and from the ITF is important. MCC needs to be a truly local, global organization.

SJ recalled lessons learned from the ITF team. Referring to Jochen, she said we need to understand how different regions view church. There are not enough of us in any one country to make it work. A partnership arrangement could work. It may be difficult to see how it could be MCC. In Spain, it's almost impossible to not have anything but Roman Catholic Church. There are also religious rules about how to fund a religious organization. She said that there needs to be some research on the use of common legislation within the European Union.

The discussion shifted to the second question: How can global model keep pace with global ministry model? Kareem referred to incidences where non-US/Canada people faced challenges with donating to MCC. Gail stressed the importance of the question given the need for accurate financial forecasting. SJ said that we need to understand the structure of non-profit finance where we are looking to invest MCC financial resources. She cited Europe, where the system is heavily regulated but where there is still opportunity. Robert agreed with Gail's point about ensuring that we start now to look at forecasting beyond 2018. Gail responded by saying that having multi-year funding requests from the SLT will help our forecasting. Clinton referred to European models, and those in Asia and cautioned us to not emulate outdated European systems. Kareem encouraged the conversation to keep going by inviting in more conversation partners. Nancy added that we should make a list of people we know or imagine could help move this conversation along. She said the question is one we have wrestled with for years but has become more urgent due to global growth, especially that in Iberoamerica.

#### **IX. Announcement of Moderator Bonus (Onetta)**

Onetta that the Governing Board voted (unanimously) to approve a net \$1,000 year-end bonus for Nancy. Nancy thanked the entire Governing Board for their faith in her service.

**SJ closed the meeting with prayer. It adjourned at 22:21 pm GMT**

#### **Governing Board Meetings**

Thursday, 20 February 2014

6-8 March 2014

Thursday, 24 April 2014

Thursday, 29 May 2014

Thursday, 26 June 2014

Thursday, 31 July 2014

21-23 August 2014

Thursday, 25 Sept 2014

Thursday, 30 October 2014

Thursday, 20 November 2014

Thursday, 18 December 2014

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Finance** – Gail Rissler, Chair; Raquel Benítez-Rojas; Rev. Dr. Carol Trissell; Rev. Onetta Brooks; Liz Bisordi (consultant); Barb Crabtree, Director of Operations

**Development** – Rev. Clinton Crawshaw, S.J. Ramage, Rev. Dr. Robert Griffin

**Governance** - Rev. Onetta Brooks, Chair; Raquel Benítez-Rojas (Policy)

**Strategic Planning** – Rev. Dr. Carol Trissell, Chair; Gail Rissler, Kareem Murphy

**Communications** - Rev. Dr. Robert Griffin, Chair; S.J. Ramage, Kareem Murphy

**AD HOC COMMITTEES**

**Audit** - Rev. Dr. Robert Griffin, Chair; Kareem Murphy, Marvin Bagwell, Marsha Warren

**Moderator Nominating Committee Alternates** - Rev. Onetta Brooks (in progress)

**Task Force for Retirement for Clergy Outside the US:** (tabled)

**HR Employee Manual Review Ad Hoc Committee:** Kareem Murphy, Rev. Onetta Brooks

**Assessment Ad Hoc** – S-J Ramage, Chair; Kareem Murphy, Gail Rissler and Rev. Dr. Carol Trissell