



**Unity Worldwide Ministries (UWM) (DBA)
Association of Unity Churches
Minutes of Convention Business Meeting - June 28, 2023**

The 2023 annual business meeting of Unity Worldwide Ministries (UWM) was called to order at 9:06 AM Central Time on Wednesday, June 28, 2023, at the Sheraton Hotel & Conference Center in Overland Park, Kansas with UWM Board Chair Rev. Doris Hoskins presiding. Keeper of the Flame, Rev. Diane Scribner, gave the opening prayer.

Members, delegates, lay delegates participating as voting members, and global attendees were welcomed. Also acknowledged were the Unity Worldwide Ministries' Board of Trustees, UWM Leadership Team, and central office staff. The convention Parliamentarian Deborah Underwood was introduced. The following persons were appointed to the positions indicated: Rev. Diane Scribner, liturgist; Celia Holman, timekeeper; Rev. Valorie Gunsch, Rev. Mark Hicks, and Rev. Linda McLeod as the committee to read and approve the 2023 business meeting minutes.

1. **Establishment of Quorum.** The quorum was established at 296 voting delegates total attending both virtually and in-person.
2. **Approval of Standing Rules and Agenda.** Chair Rev. Doris Hoskins presented the standing rules. Rev. Sylvia Sumter moved approval of the Convention Standing Rules as printed. The Convention Standing Rules were approved by the required two-thirds vote. The proposed agenda was approved as published and the 2023 Convention of UWM was declared in order and ready to transact business.
3. **Approval of the 2022 Convention Business Meeting Minutes.** Chair Rev. Doris Hoskins indicated the 2022 committee to review the minutes has approved them and they have been published. No further action is needed.
4. **Election of Board of Trustees Members.** Chair Rev. Doris Hoskins announced the Chair of the Leadership, Recruitment, & Development Team (LRDT) LUT Ellen Fannin to present the nominees selected for UWM Board service. After a brief description of the team's charter, LRDT Chair Ellen Fannin announced Certified Spiritual Educator Miranda Baker had to withdraw from the slate of candidates for board service due to being accepted into the ministerial path for ordination.

The slate of nominees for election to the UWM Board of Trustees for four-year terms are Rev. Kyra Baehr, Rev. Roxanne Graves, Rev. Russell Heiland, and Rev. Valerie Mansfield (current board member running for re-election to a 2nd term). UWM Bylaws offer the opportunity for nominations by petition no later than April 30th; none were submitted for consideration. Balloting then took place.

5. **Election of Leadership, Recruitment, & Development Team Members.** Leadership, Recruitment, & Development Team (LRDT) member LUT Ellen Fannin presented the slate of nominees for

election to the LRDT. The nominees for the following open positions are Rev. Jackie Hawkins for the “minister opening”, and LUT’s Carla Palmer and Deni Ralston for the open position of “licensed Unity teacher”. The positions of “minister” and “licensed Unity teacher” will both serve four-year terms.

According to the bylaws, the floor was open for further nominations. There were no nominations submitted. Since there was only one nominee for the open position of “minister” Rev. Jackie Hawkins was elected by acclamation. Balloting then took place for the open position of licensed Unity teacher.

6. **Financial Report.** Chief Financial Officer Consultant from e2E Dave Deitzer reported the financials for fiscal year 2022 with total revenue of \$3,362,149, total expenses of \$2,761,820, and a net operating income (NOI) of \$600,329. Financials for 2023 through April 30th were shared with total revenue of \$538,029, total expenses of \$817,478, and net operating income (NOI) of a deficit of (-\$181,776). UWM Restricted Funds for 2023 through April 30th were Helping Unity Grow (HUG) Fund at \$449,312, Scholarships at \$160,284, Templeton Funds \$17,119, Youth & Family Ministry (YFM) \$37,472, and Ministry Planting Fund at \$303,997, Special Projects \$12,385, and the Ministry Sustainability Fund (Investment) \$1,802,633. No action is required regarding the financial reports; they will be placed on file.

Auditor’s Report. Jody Lurk, CPA, Engagement Partner and Susan Maher, CPA, Audit Senior Manager with UHY, LLP shared a pre-recorded presentation with an overview of the 2022 audit conducted. UWM’s results presented an unqualified opinion which is a clean audit. The audit report was approved by a majority in the affirmative following a motion to accept by Rev. Kyra Baehr and a second by Rev. Monica Driscoll.

Proposed 2023 Budget. Chief Financial Officer Consultant from e2E Dave Deitzer presented the proposed 2024 budget which had been reviewed by the Finance & Budget Team prior to being approved by the UWM Board of Trustees. The 2024 budget calls for revenue of \$2,615,000, expenses of \$2,571,565, a net operating income (NOI) of \$43,435, other expenses - grants of \$100,000, leaving a net income deficit of (-\$56,565). Board Treasurer Rev. Valerie Mansfield made a motion to approve the proposed budget for 2024 and seconded by Rev. Don Barton. The motion was approved by a majority in the affirmative.

8. **Membership Model Policy Draft - UWM Bylaws Amendments.** Board Chair Rev. Doris Hoskins recognized the UWM Liaison to the Bylaws Team Chair Emeritus John McMahon to present the following two proposed bylaw amendments in support of the Membership Model Policy Draft.

Recommended Amendment #1 - Article III, Members, Section 1. Classification of Members.
The Unity Worldwide Ministries shall have two types of members: ministries and Unity leaders.

A. Ministries. *The membership of Unity Worldwide Ministries shall include those Unity ministries operating in accordance with the standards outlined in Unity Worldwide Ministries’ Policy Manual. The Board of Trustees (hereafter referred to as the board) shall determine what constitutes a ministry eligible for membership. Membership may be requested by any applicant ministry upon filing a written request with Unity Worldwide Ministries. Approval may be granted by the board.*

B. Unity Leaders. *The membership of Unity Worldwide Ministries shall also include all licensed or ordained Unity ministers and licensed Unity teachers recorded on the official roster of Unity Worldwide Ministries.*

UWM Liaison to the Bylaws Team Chair Emeritus John McMahon moved adoption of the proposed amendment #1, no second was needed. The amendment was adopted by the required two-thirds vote in the affirmative.

Recommended Amendment #2 - Article VI, Meetings, Section 3. Delegates and Voting.

Section 3. Delegates and Voting. *The delegates to the annual convention body business meeting shall include each **Unity leader** member; a maximum of **two (2)** voting laypersons from each traditional member ministry; and a maximum of two (2) voting lay persons from each eligible alternative ministry. Each delegate to the annual convention body business meeting, when certified by the credentials committee shall be eligible to cast one vote on any question before the meeting when present. Both proxy and absentee voting are specifically prohibited.*

Board Chair Rev. Doris Hoskins read the following proposed amendment to amendment #2: Rev. Lesley Miller (Unity of Montclair) amended recommended amendment #2 allowing for retaining the four voting delegates instead of amending to only two to read “*the delegates to the annual convention body business meeting shall include each **Unity leader** member; a maximum of **four (4)** voting layperson from each traditional member ministry . . .*”; seconded by Dr. Charlotte LeHecka. Rev. Jean-Marie Schweizer called for the question. The amendment to amend recommended amendment #2 was adopted by the required two-thirds vote in the affirmative.

Board Chair Rev. Doris Hoskins then read the **primary** amendment #2 as recommended for a vote allowing for a maximum of **four (4)** voting delegates: “*The delegates to the annual convention body business meeting shall include each **Unity leader** member; a maximum of **four (4)** voting laypersons from each traditional member ministry; and a maximum of two (2) voting lay persons from each eligible alternative ministry. Each delegate to the annual convention body business meeting, when certified by the credentials committee shall be eligible to cast one vote on any question before the meeting when present. Both proxy and absentee voting are specifically prohibited.*”; no second was needed. **Primary** amendment #2 was adopted by a majority vote in the affirmative.

9. **Business Meeting Separated from Convention - UWM Bylaw Amendments.** Board Chair Rev. Doris Hoskins recognized UWM Liaison to the Bylaws Team Chair Emeritus John McMahon to present the twenty-two (22) proposed conforming bylaw amendments that cannot be divided and must be adopted together to separate the business meeting from the annual convention. The convention body will vote on the first amendment only and if adopted so will the remaining amendments be adopted.

UWM Liaison to the Bylaws Team Chair Emeritus John McMahon noted a housekeeping error on proposed bylaw amendment #22, **Article VI, Meetings, Section 5. Remote Participation**, the word “convention” was not struck through and that has now been corrected.

The following proposed amendment #1 was then presented for adoption allowing the business meeting to be held separately from the annual convention each year as are the subsequent amendments #2 - #22.

Recommended Amendment #1 Article VI, Meetings, Section 1. Annual Convention Body Business Meeting.

Section 1. Annual Business Meeting. *The Unity Worldwide Ministries will hold an annual business meeting. the date and time to be set each year by the board. This meeting can be held physically or on a virtual platform as selected by the board.*

UWM Liaison to the Bylaws Team Chair Emeritus John McMahon moved adoption of the proposed amendment #1 and the twenty-one (21) subsequent conforming proposed bylaw amendments, no second was needed. Discussion was opened on the amendment. After discussion Rev. Tim Lytle called for the question to a proposed amendment made to amendment #1. The call for the question was then seconded.

Board Chair Rev. Doris Hoskins read the proposed amendment to amendment #1 from Thomas Gallagher (Unity of Hawaii): “*Annual Business Meeting. The Unity Worldwide Ministries will hold an annual business meeting, the date and time to be set each year by the board. This meeting can be held hybrid or on a virtual platform as selected by the board.*” The proposed amendment to amendment #1 was adopted by the required two-thirds vote in the affirmative.

Board Chair Rev. Doris Hoskins then read the primary amendment #1 with the adopted word “hybrid”: “*Annual Business Meeting. The Unity Worldwide Ministries will hold an annual business meeting, the date and time to be set each year by the board. This meeting can be held hybrid or on a virtual platform as selected by the board.*” Primary amendment #1 and all subsequent twenty-one (21) conforming amendments were adopted by the required two-thirds vote in the affirmative.

10. **UWM President & CEO Report.** Rev. Shad Groverland presented “What the Heck is Happening to the World?” Highlights of the presentation recapped what has happened in the world since the 2022 convention such as (1) Surgeon General Advisory raises alarm about the devastating impact of an epidemic with loneliness and isolation in the United States and a strategy for social connection, (2) social media promised interconnection, what it delivered was disconnection, (3) the state of Montana banned TikTok on social media devices, two different versions of TikTok are produced, real people are harmed by the algorithms of what they cannot see or understand by the version shipped to the United States, (4) attended a *Managing & Leadership Strategies for Generation Z* workshop and was told you would have to have a psychologist on staff to deal with their depression and social media addiction, (5) Artificial Intelligence - birth of a new God, and (6) ChatGPT. The platform is the message! Are we actively choosing humanity, connecting, and talking about all of this in our ministries?
11. **Video Reports.** The following gave pre-recorded presentations - Unity Urban Ministerial School Director Rev. Sandra Campbell, and EarthCare Team Leader Mike McCord announcing the Greenstar Award winners.
12. **UWM Board Chair Report.** Rev. Doris Hoskins stated, “I was on the UWM Board for eight years, I did it, and that’s my report.”
13. **Announcement of Election Results.** Board Chair Rev. Doris Hoskins announced the results of the UWM Board election, new members are Rev. Russell Heiland and Rev. Kyra Baehr. The LRDT election for the position of “Licensed Unity Teacher” is Deni Ralston, LUT, and Rev. Jackie Hawkins for the position of “minister”.
14. **Adjournment.** Rev. Diane Scribner gave a closing prayer; and, hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned *sine die* at 1:03 PM Central Time. The next convention will be held June 17 - 20, 2024 at Unity Village for *The Gathering Retreat*.