

Pacific Northwest Conference Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, July 1, 2025

Board Members Present: Sandy Wisecarver, Moderator; Leah Atkinson Bilinski; Diana Kutas, Treasurer; Ron Patterson, Scribe; Indigo Brown, Past-Moderator; Morag Stewart; Amy Johnson; Tevita_Fakasiieike; Demontrice Bigham.

Staff: Designated Conference Minister Phil Hodson; Conference Accountant, Andy Warren; Mark Boyd, Camp Director, Pilgrim Firs.

Excused: Talaalemotu “Leilani” Alaelau; Dawn Koloi, Vice-Moderator (Sabbatical); Kendrick Richardson; Edwin Galeai; Ryan Lambert.

Sandy called us to order, noting that Edwin was excused due to a congregation member funeral. She invited Morag to open our meeting with a devotional. Marag spoke about two recent worship services she had attended and shared appropriate scripture readings. She offered words of hope celebrating the Samoan installation on Sunday and memories of a “close of ministry” service at Shalom Richland.

The June minutes were approved by consensus.

Camp Reports

Mark offered a report and noted that he had placed written reports in Basecamp. **N-Sid-Sen** is doing well. They have welcomed many groups, some of which are new. Randy and Linda are offering hospitality and serving in an interim leadership capacity. Other volunteers are helping as well. Warrior Pathh is beginning their program at N-Sid-Sen. A Diabetes camp for children was to have started, but they cancelled due to insurance issues and will pay the cancellation fee. They will return next year. Mark reviewed the cancellation policy briefly. We have lifeguards.

Pilgrim Firs is very busy. They had 61 for a work camp and of the identified 15 projects, 13 were completed. He reviewed some of the outstanding work the volunteers offered. The camp has welcomed several new groups. They are searching for one more summer staff person to add to the six already on board. Mark spoke about the Kitsap Pride event that was held at the camp.

Designated Conference Minister Report

Phil called attention to his written report and spoke about the Search and Call efforts underway. He reviewed his meeting with the Dismantling Racism Group, an informal ministry network in the Conference. They said that they wanted to find ways to engage with the Board and the Conference congregations to collaborate and communicate the ways all are engaged and involved in this important ministry. How are we reaching out

to our churches and asking them to share ways they are involved and engaged? They will involve their group in this effort. Phil had posed a question to the Board inviting them to write for the weekly e-news. He also asked us to take turns doing devotions before Board meetings. Six of us have responded to do devotions so far and Dawn agreed to put together something for the e-news.

Liaison Reports

Ron, who is the Liaison for the COM, noted how well the Samoan installation was planned and what an amazing event it was.

Annual Meeting Location and Update

After the Board suggested at their recent retreat that a three location Conference meeting would be challenging, Phil sought another solution. After reaching out to six possible venues, he presented the one that can do all that we need to have done. The Doubletree Suites at South Center, Seattle can accommodate us, offer hospitality, meeting space and gathering areas for fellowship. Phil shared a draft budget and noted that we should more than break even. The proposed date of March 13-15 is available on their schedule. We will have the run of the property and there is even a place for the Board to meet.

It was moved, seconded passed to empower Phil to move on a contract at this location.

Blessing Discussion

As part of the ongoing work of our recent retreat, Sandy identified one of the blessings we had discussed and led us as we reviewed it.

How do we strengthen the connections between the Board, Conference members and our congregations? What are we as a Board doing to make this happen. We noted that the planned by-law discussion will offer an opportunity for this. Leah noted that the dismantling racism group has asked about ways they can help in communication. How do we help? How many of our pastors have talked to another pastor in the last month? How many pastors are part of Communities of Practice. How many worship together? We talked about visiting other congregations. Morag has been visiting. She is doing this monthly. We need to communicate where we might try to visit since there are places where there could be issues about which we need to be aware. Communication is so important. Staff can guide us. Board members might volunteer for pulpit swaps or do pulpit supply. We could also travel with Phil.

Southeast Region Board Representative

Due to Deborah Tyler's recent resignation as a Board member, Phil asked if we knew anyone in the SE region who could fill this position. Terry Rice, a chaplain in Walla Walla, was suggested. We also suggested the former office administrator in Walla Walla as another possibility. These names will be forwarded to the Ministry Resources Committee for consideration. Amy, as liaison with MRC, will reach out.

Conference Staffing Update

Beth Astarte, our newly hired Registrar/Administrative Assistant, whose time we share with the Central Pacific Conference, has been working with Andy and Arlene to get settled in. She is learning her way around the data base and making connections in the Conference and with the National UCC. Phil invited us to tune into his office hours to meet her.

He also spoke about a staffing proposal for our camps. Rather than the two directors of our two camps, which Phil believes is not a tenable model, he proposes that we hire a single Executive Director whose job would include promotion, fund raising and visioning and that both camps then have a person, an associate director, dedicated to day-to-day operations. He believes this is the best way to ensure the long-term success of these assets which are one of the cornerstones of our identity as a Conference. He is suggesting Mark Boyd for this position.

He requested that the Board affirm this unfolding initiative which is being developed in collaboration with the Outdoor Ministries Committee, the Stewardship Committee and with the Personnel Committee and with members of staff.

The Board reacted with enthusiasm, asked questions and shared further discussion. Mark expressed his opinions and his willingness to accept this position.

This staffing pattern is being developed, and the proposed Visioning Taskforce, being appointed at the present time, will be involved in the development of this idea.

After lengthy discussion the Board voted our affirmation of this ongoing process.

Veradale Loan Request

Details of a request for a \$30,000 loan to the Veradale congregation had been offered in Basecamp by Andy. He provided further information. The congregation, having been the target of hate crimes, applied for and has been awarded a \$150,000 grant from the State of Washington to improve their security. They are seeking a loan from us to get the work underway while the grant money is in process. We would protect ourselves

with a loan agreement and the offer of an interest in their building should the loan default.

Members of the Board, while clearly impressed by the need and its importance, raised a few questions about which answers will be sought. We will consider this request in August or have a remote vote sooner.

Deed Restriction Conversation

Continuing a conversation which began at our retreat, a neighbor at N-Sid-Sen has returned to us, asking us to lift a deed restriction which we had placed on property they purchased from us many years ago. More information and expert advice will be sought. We will return to this question in August.

Updated Constitution and Bylaws

The Board was invited to review the latest edition of the Constitution/By-law revision that was shared by a subcommittee of the Board. We are invited to look at 'process and content', especially Committee structure, as the first step toward its presentation to the Conference. This will involve a series of forums and other meetings with members of the Conference in the coming months. We will return to this in August.

The next meeting is Tuesday, August 5 at 6:30 pm.

Mark closed our meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Patterson, Scribe.

