

## **REPORT OF THE BOARD OF GENERAL MINISTRIES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Jim Wolfe**

***The March meeting of the Board of General Ministries Executive Committee was scheduled to meet in Charlotte, NC March 19-21, 2020. Due to the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic precautions were taken to hold the meeting via conference call instead of in person on March 19, 2020.***

**At the March meeting the following actions were taken:**

**The ABCUSA Budget section of the November 2019 minutes was amended:  
"Through actions taken by unanimous consent on November 22 and December 9, the Executive Committee later modified the UM distribution for 2020 by increasing the allocation to ABHMS from \$0 to \$7,500 and increasing the allocation to IM from \$0 to \$7,500, while reducing the allocation to ABCUSA by \$15,000."**

**Unanimous approval was granted to extend compensation to Judith Christiansen for Human Resource consultant services rendered to the Office of the General Secretary.**

**The adoption of the Employee Handbook was moved unanimously approved with changes.**

- ☐ Sick days will be paid out at the end of an employee's term of employment at a rate of  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the per diem rate for each accrued day.**
- ☐ Employees may use sick days for preventative health care and doctor's appointments in whole days or in increments of  $\frac{1}{4}$  day (i.e.,  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a day).**
- ☐ Employees will be required to use all sick days and vacation days before long-term leave begins.**
- ☐ Employees may carry over a maximum of ten vacation days from one year to the next. In exceptional circumstances, and with prior approval of a supervisor, an employee may carry over additional days.**
- ☐ Section 3-13 was removed from the Employee Handbook.**

**Paul Higgins, Budget Review Officer presented highlights of the financial report for the year that ended December 31, 2019 as previously submitted by Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary/Treasurer/CFO. Particular emphasis was placed on the net loss of \$789,000 and the primary factors that contributed to that loss.**

**President Karen Podsiadly appointed Josué Gómez-Menéndez as Chair of the Credentials and Caucus Committee for the 2020-2021 Biennium.**

**The following meeting dates for BGM were approved:**

**November 4<sup>th</sup> – 7th, 2021 BGM Meeting in King of Prussia at the Crowne Plaza facility.**

**November 10th– 13th, 2022 BGM Meeting in King of Prussia at a facility to be confirmed.**

***The June meeting of the Board of General Ministries Executive Committee was scheduled to meet in Green Lake, WI June 14-15, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic precautions were taken to hold the meeting via conference call instead of in person on June 15, 2020. The scheduled Board of General Ministries meeting for June 15-17,2020 was canceled as well.***

**Budget Review Officer Paul Higgins presented a synopsis of ABCUSA's financials, drawn from the 2019 audited financial statements, to fulfill the disclosure requirements of New York's Nonprofit Law. In particular, he presented the assets and liabilities as of December 31, 2019; the principal changes in assets and liabilities for 2019; and the revenues and expenses for 2019.**

**Paul highlighted the year-to-date (through April 30) net loss of \$3,346.27 and compared it with the net loss of \$147,023.11 a year prior. This is an improvement, particularly considering the decrease in mission giving attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting inability of churches to hold worship gatherings in-person. While overall revenue has decreased, expenses have also decreased substantially, leading to an even smaller loss than at this point last year.**

**Paul commended the staff for obtaining a loan from the Paycheck Protection Program of approximately \$620,000. Today, this amount is shown on our books as a loan, a liability. Once forgiven, however, it will be recorded as income, potentially making up for the loss in United Mission support.**

**The November Board of General Ministries meeting will be designated as the annual meeting of the board.**

**The board received highlights of the Interim General Secretary's Report. Jeff has been holding weekly virtual meetings with the Region Executive Ministers (REM) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Resources for churches regarding COVID-19 have been filtered through the REMs to local congregations. Included in those is information for churches to apply for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) which is funded through the government's "Cares Act." their employees during this economic crisis could have 100% of the loan forgiven. Conference calls here have been held with the National Executive Council and the Region Executive Minister Council Officers.**

**Jeff shared that he responded positively to an invitation to engage the issue of anti-racism by Trinette McCray, President of the ABC Black Caucus. The invitation also came to Jeffrey Haggray, Executive Director of American Baptist Home Mission Societies.**

**A request was made to reconvene the ABCUSA Taskforce on Race and Race Based Violence.**

**ABCUSA President Karen Podsiadly recommended that the taskforce reconvene and be renamed to reflect “antiracism” as an action against racism versus stating that racism exists.**

**Karen shared this definition of anti-racism: “as the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices, and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably” (NAC International Perspectives: Women and Global Solidarity).**

**It was unanimously approved to reaffirm the ABCUSA Taskforce on Race and Race Based Violence with a focus on anti-racism.**

**The Credentials & Caucus Committee was called to order to discuss caucus funding. After discussion and consideration regarding caucus funding, the committee recommended deferring a decision on allocations for caucuses until a future meeting.**

***Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, precautions were taken to hold the September meeting of the Board of General Ministries Executive Committee via virtual platform instead of in person September 10-11, 2020.***

**Paul Higgins referred to the financial report prepared by Alan Musoke, highlighted in the year-to-date (through July 31, 2020) net gain of \$133,000 with the Biennial. Net revenue compared to last year is down \$503,000. Expenses as compared to last year are lower by \$1,030,000.**

**Total United Mission is \$3,378,116. This is a decrease of \$547,383 from the prior year. This represents a reduction of 13.94%.**

**ABCUSA President Karen Podsiadly shared that since the last meeting, she has been working on organizing and implementing the Anti-racism Task Force. She also created a video message for the American Baptist Churches of New Jersey as the region celebrates its 190th Anniversary on October 3.**

**Highlights from the report of the Interim General Secretary Dr. C. Jeff Woods: Jeff Woods worked with Karen Podsiadly to design a “Call to Prayer,” that included various voices of prayer and reflection with over 145 online participants. From that event, there were 37 applications to be part of the Anti-Racism Task Force which is broken down into three subgroups for resources around individuals, congregations, and institutions.**

**Jeff has conducted ongoing calls with regional executive ministers.  
DC Baptist Convention has called DCBC has called Rev. Trisha Miller Manarin as Executive Minister.  
Rev. Doug Harris is serving as the Interim Executive Minister for ABC of Rhode Island.**

#### **2021 BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT**

**“Imagine” is the theme for the 2021 Biennial Mission Summit (BMS). Jeff Woods shared the poll regarding the 2021 BMS that included congregations and regions regarding in-person versus virtual options. Jeff also reached out to board counsel David Knipel, Esq. regarding the laws about holding a virtual business meeting: “New York has adopted provisions to hold meeting partly or entirely virtual.”**

**The following actions were taken:**

**The 2021 Biennial Mission Summit in Puerto Rico will not be an “in-person” event.**

**The 2023 Biennial Mission Summit will be held in Puerto Rico.**

**Biennial Mission Summit in Puerto Rico.**

**The 2021 Biennial Mission Summit will be conducted drawing primarily on virtual technology.**

#### **Credentials and Caucus Committee.**

**The decision was made to allocate the same funding for the caucuses as was budgeted in 2018 with a total budget for 2021 to be set at \$51,594.**

**ABCUSA President Karen Podsiadly was asked to engage caucus leadership in discussions to reinvent the caucus funding process.**

#### **REQUEST FROM AB WOMEN’S MINISTRIES**

**American Baptist Women’s Ministries (ABWM) requested adding an additional staff person from ABWM on the World Relief Committee (WRC).**

**A motion will be presented at the November meeting of the BGM to amend the Standing Rules to include representation from AB Women’s Ministries.**

#### **LEASEHOLD ADJACENT TO FORMER MISSION CENTER**

**An offer letter to purchase the leasehold land (24 acres surrounding the former Mission Center) for \$6.5M dated August 5, 2020 from Brandywine Realty.**

**The offer was declined with the response, “Thank you for the offer, not interested in selling at this time.”**

**The June 2021 Board of General Ministries Meeting will be held virtually.**