

**Outdoor Ministries Association
Board of Directors Meeting
January 24th 2014
Marriot Grand Vista, Orlando Florida**

Opening worship provided by Ryan Gackenheimer. The meeting was then called to order by President Glen Svetnicka.

Members Present:

Natalie Becker, Bill Bourdon, Ryan Gackenheimer, Ann Hughes, Mollie Landers, Gigi Nauer, Joyce Oyler, Glenn Svetnicka and Neal Washburn.

Welcome: Natalie Becker from Camp Adams in Oregon and Gigi Nauer from Pilgrim Point Camps & Retreats in Minnesota were welcomed as new board members.

Agenda:

Glenn reviewed the agenda and additions were made. Minutes from the last meeting were reviewed.

M/S/P to accept the minutes. Neal posted them on the website.

Updates: Site, regional and some personal updates were shared. Some site assignments for board members were reassigned and are listed were updated on the website by Neal. There are Universal Talking points to help board members in conversation with their assigned sites. See minutes of January 31, 2013 under Site Reports.

Governance: For the new members, Glenn reviewed the OMA Governance (Constitution, Bylaws / Mission Statement), and read the Mission Statement aloud.

Nominations / Officers:

The duties for the office of secretary were discussed and Gigi agreed to try to fill that position. Glenn suggested that an additional position of OMA chaplain be created to support OMA members, and that it begin with Ryan. Ryan accepted. The bylaws will need to be amended. Glenn also encouraged the board to think about the succession of president and treasurer as the current terms end after 2015.

Glenn Svetnicka – President
Bill Bourdon – Treasurer
Gigi Nauer – Secretary
Kim Harris - Program Chair
Neal Washburn – IT / Communication
Neal Washburn – Deering grants.

Mollie presented the slate of officers. No second was needed. **M/P**

Planning Teams:

2014 PG Planning Team = Kim / Anne / Mollie

2015 Consult Planning Team = Joyce / Anne / Natalie

2014 Virtual Professional Gathering planning (webinars) = Ryan / Gigi

Financial Report:

Bill presented the treasurers report which encompassed numbers beginning with 2012 and projections into 2015. He explained that every other year, the report shows a loss due to cost of Consult. The years without Consult show a surplus. Bill recommends a 2015 audit and that the dues of \$250 be kept the same. Ann suggested a *gratitude rate* opportunity to open the possibility of members paying more than the dues amount.

M/S/P to accept the financial report.

Deering Grant Recipients:

Neal posted the Deering Grant recipients on the OMA website. Bill said the checks were cut and sent to those recipients. Neal will use the OMA blog for confirming that the checks were received. **Neal** will gather information from grant recipients about how the grant helped them. He will also ask them for pictures, post them on the Web and share them at Consult. Bill suggested that in addition to other uses, Deering Grants be available as scholarship funds as part of OMA Member Benefit Program (see below) for professional development events like Compass, The Connection and Cert School etc.

There was further discussion about Deering funds and how they are distributed by the national office of the UCC. To insure OMA input into this distribution, consistent communication will help as changes occur at the national level in the future.

Outdoor Ministry Connection:

Glenn described the ecumenical OMC as the evolving group following the dissolution of Committee on Outdoor Ministries through the NCC. The buying group opportunity should be communicated to OMA members as part of the Member Benefits. **Bill** will follow up with Kaila who helped originate this idea, and Neal to get it on the web site. Wendy from Silver Lake is our OMA representative working on/ proofreading the Chalice Press camp curriculum. OMA will cover Glenn and Kaila (as an individual OMA member) attending the OMC event scheduled for March 11-13 in NY, and Silver Lake will cover Wendy.

M/S/P with one abstention.

Member Benefit Program:

Bill along with Kaila (as an individual member) will continue to work on the OMA member benefit program. **Bill** will follow up with Neal to post the benefits on the website. As discussed earlier, applications for Deering Grants can be applied to the professional development opportunities. The benefits will include the following:

Compass Points:

This opportunity for professional development is a certification program for camp and conference leaders. It is provided through the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association, (PCCCA). Bill will be presenting at the next Compass Points event and described the topics. Their next planning session is 4/28 to 5/1.

Buying Group: Through the Outdoor Ministries Connection

Focus Groups: Regional events through the OMC. Kaila is seeking a host sight for an OMC regional Focus Group for the Fall of 2014. Estimated participation is 20 to 30 people.

Certification School: Through the Minnesota Conference of the UCC and Vibrant Faith Ministries, Cert School helps individuals who work in ministry settings with youth, children and families, develop a ministry plan specific to their individual setting.

Chaplain Services: To support outdoor ministry leaders.

Gratitude Rate: On opportunity to contribute to OMA.

National Church Update:

In conversation with the National UCC office, the OMA was charged with describing a vision for the future of Outdoor Ministry in our denomination. As a result of this charge, a National Outdoor Ministry Strategy will be developed. Seeking information from our membership about that vision, the board would then consolidate it, use it as a focus for our Professional Gathering and simultaneously create an OMA response to the charge.

Membership Meetings:

Virtual PG (Ryan / Gigi): Through Webex, webinars will take place to introduce the concept of National Outdoor Ministry Strategy and invite input. In seeking a larger perspective, some possible questions include:

- Where do you see Outdoor Ministry heading in five years, ten years, fifteen years?
- What are our unique offerings that only camp can do.
- What regional attributes can be accessed as part of an outdoor ministry?
- What is the vision you see for your ministries in relation to conference/national/regions/outdoor ministry as a whole.
- How could you be a regional site
- What would your outdoor ministry look like if there were no site
- How could you serve as site for Conference that has no site
- Do we have models of being a regional or national sites
- How do you serve a broader denominational community

The Webinars will be Tuesday, May 6th at 11:00 AM Eastern time, Wednesday, May 7th at 2:00 PM Eastern time and Thursday, May 8th at 5:00 PM Eastern time. These early dates will allow for additional dates to be added if needed. **Ryan** will follow up with Neal about getting this on the website, and creating a blog or facebook page for this ongoing conversation, and with Tim about the use of Webex.

OMA PG (Natalie / Mollie / Anne)

PG will be held in October of 2014. With the initial Virtual PG conversations, ideas will be collected and Outdoor Ministry participants prepped to continue the discussion, helping to craft the National Strategy for our Outdoor Ministries at PG. Jeremy was contacted regarding Moval as a possible site for PG and Jody Oates of Kaleidoscope was contacted as a speaker.

OMA Board Meeting / Meeting with Conference Ministers (Bill / Neal / Joyce / Glenn)

In November 2014, the OMA board will meet in Cleveland and refine the National Outdoor Ministry Strategy. The hope is to schedule the OMA board meeting to coincide with the meeting of Conference Ministers, with the goal of working together in supporting conferences and outdoor ministries alike. A letter was crafted and emailed to the current chair of the Conference Ministers group to find out when they are meeting and to ask to be included on their agenda. We would then present the National Outdoor Ministry Strategy.

Open Issues:

- Chaplain Services from OMA – Stipend position or chaplaincy fund to provide support in OMA settings and at OMA meetings. Bill and Mollie are authorized to handle fund. **Ryan** will compose a letter to members encouraging them to “let us know” if there are problems.
- Developing an OMA Board Manual – **Bill** along with **Anne** and **Mollie** will work on this
- Leveraging Our OMA Family / Expertise (Fund Raising, Volunteers, etc.)
- Helping People / Conferences without Sites – Idea for Consult.
- Communication Styles to Boards / Conferences – Idea for Consult
- Marital Counseling for Co-Directors – resources for how to work together as a couple. Possible workshop for Consult.
- Managing Non-Profit Boards (Leadership Class with Compass Points in November)
- Ministering to Camps in Crisis – Chaplains role along with OMA board
- Adapt Compensation Guidelines from ACA – Anne / Bill
- Membership Letter (Due in March) -- Bill
 - Dues Renewal - with added Gratitude Rate
 - Upcoming Events
 - Member Benefit
 - Chaplain Services
- Consult
 - Targeting Pilgrim Pines
 - November 2015

OMA Conference Calls

The question was raised as to whether conference calls are useful. The unanimous response was yes. The conference calls are scheduled for the second Wednesday of each month starting with February 12th and running through May. at 8:30 AM Central time.

Closing

Ryan offered a closing prayer.

Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Gigi Nauer – OMA Secretary