



AUUMM Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes September 15, 2025

Present: Laura Weiss, Jen Hayman, Matt Meyer, Deb Weiner, Bran Lennox, Anderson Manuel, and Allison King (staff). Also Present: Janice Marie Johnson (UUA Liaison), theresa rohlck (Co-chair, Conference Planning Committee), Camille Hatton (Virtual Hymnbook), Erika Hewitt (virtual Hymnbook), Bailey Whiteman (Nominating Committee), and Susan Peck (CPC Member).
Absent: Verdis Robinson

Moderator Laura Weiss called the meeting to order at 2:32 PM.

After a check in time, Secretary Deb Weiner presented the [Minutes](#) from August 2025, which were discussed and approved unanimously.

2026 Milwaukee and CPC needs - theresa rohlck

The CPC has met twice already and will start meeting in teams next month. Natasha Steinmacher and Paul Winchester, Mignon Dobbins and Keith Arnold, Emily Hall for songleading, the Bands group is in conversation coordinated by Carl Kennedy. Elissa Rohde is local host and Tristan Streilitzer is choir director. Mike Halerz continues as tech. Marketing - not sure about a specific spot for that but will consult with Matt Meyer. The CPC will think about whether Marketing should be a part of the CPC. Youth track/focus: CPC is discussing. Yvonne and theresa aren't ready for a full grown track, but wonder about having an 8th through 12th grade offer to attend and cover lunch with a few workshops tailored toward that group. This might increase accessibility for families with teens. (This might be a long term option that occurs starting 2027).

[Policy draft](#) for board reimbursement of expenses at the conference:

What was covered this year was support for the CPC chair (7 nights) and Co-Chair (3 nights) as set up by Bea Ann. Other board members had one or two nights covered. Allison estimates that the cost would be slightly less than in prior years. The President would be under the same guidelines as other members of the board. Bran noted that we should cover people who need it for the Board meeting. Other circumstances (e.g., a board member who stays off site and/or drives to the location), etc. would be addressed on a needs basis. Matt asked if there could be a

table to graph out the different provisions. He and Allison will work on this and a second draft will be presented at the October meeting.

Comments: great that people want to continue, but we need to think about the on-ramp for the areas where there are people continuing, to make sure the energy and momentum continues. And Theresa and Yvonne are also aware that finding successors for CPC co-chairs should be identified.

Another question floated during debriefing was whether Melanie DeMore might be invited to participate in the conference. How would this question be broached? Jen notes that there is interest from Melanie. Jen doesn't think that a conference choir and having Melanie are not mutually exclusive, so we should look into it. Jen suggests her rates are quite reasonable. Theresa also asked about whether there should be a covenant for those who attend the conference - that would be the board's work.

President Jen Hayman - Jen noted that she spoke with Deb and Verdis who have agreed to extend their terms through the end of June, and that a bylaw change is not required to move our election cycle. Jen invited Bailey to speak to questions the NomCom might have. Bailey suggested that it would be helpful to notify the membership that Deb and Verdis have agreed to extend their terms to adjust timing on transitions. Bailey noted that the change also means that other elected members will also be extending their terms by six months. Jen and Allison were working on a message to the membership to explain this adjustment.

Sing out Love-Erika Hewitt and Camille Hatton

Erika shared that more than 600 people have joined the guided tours of the new hymnal site, and they are feeling very enthusiastic about this! Matt and Allison also helped get the word out to get people to come to the presentations. There is a video of FAQs. In under 6 weeks they have received 210 submissions for the hymnbook. Thanks also to Matt for overseeing the workshop series - on December 2nd there will be a workshop to do a deep dive into some of the hymns. 5-7 new hymns are being added each month. We are now in a holding pattern. Summer is when people are sometimes checked out...so they are looking for additional team members. Song selection review team are making their final selection now, and they are back to needing some leadership for this project.

Erika asked to what extent the board wishes to accept or let go of appointing two AUUMM members to the steering council? Erika understands that the first job description she put together felt somewhat vague, and that we have some concerns about spreading our leadership pool too thinly. And Erika and Camille don't want to do this without AUUMM. One person has

applied but indicated that they didn't know what they were applying for (couldn't find the [job description](#)).

Discussion:

Bran: sense was less that we were worried about stripping our leadership reserves but that it is already a challenge to find leaders who have time. We are not trying to hold people on reserve. Also if we could take a look at the new job description that would be helpful. Erika noted that the song submissions have slowed to a trickle so we need more energy in that realm.

Matt asked whether we could reach out to someone on the song selection team (Camille or Everett) on whether certain individuals have submitted. (Yes). The harder position to fill is on the council. On the tours there is anxiety about what songs have been left out, and why. The council in the next year will have to do some things that will require careful relationships and communication.

Bran: The question that comes up for me is explicit or implicit hierarchy that comes up in communication. A difficult issue is about where the hierarchy might be for members of this council. In order to feel secure in recommending or appointing people to this group, it would be helpful to understand these parameters.

Erika: Do you mean there is a fear that Council members would make a decision and that I as lead could override that and so we aren't doing that, or that there is a split decision and that we agree to speak with one voice.

Bran: more along the lines with a person in a lead position where people are responsible to that person, there could be an expectation that we work nicely with one another and don't openly share opinions..the person in the leadership role could say, 'I need you to go talk to this person and tell them that their song has a grammatical error,' and the person assigned to do that feels not as empowered, and that could lead to an awkward situation over time.

Erika: the past two and half years have been so absent of those dynamics. And a lot of the language I took out to make this more concise has to do with the task force and song selection team worked hard to connect with one another. At the UUA power works in odd ways and some of us wield power in unconscious ways. We can talk more about this.

Bran: I want there to be systemic protections for those participating regardless of who is at fault.

Erika: not sure how these things would become part of the written description.

Jen: I was learning so many amazing songs through the songleader workshop at the conference. Wondering if we, or you (Erika and Camille) know of people who have been part of the songleaders track who could be recruited to the song selection team. They may have access to fresh resources, songs outside the denomination, but that are appearing in the ether of our worship services. I agree with you that the council is tougher because it's almost like serving on the board for the hymnal, navigating the administrative parts of this and there are risks to relationships with others. And that is within the Venn Diagram of people we are looking for as

leaders within the Board and Nominating process. Your suggestions about how we navigate that would be helpful.

Bailey commented: there is a usefulness in understanding the differences between the song selection team and council, and service to AUUMM. And there is a stipend involved. And also, because the council terms are two years, that is different from a three year term and whether someone then re-ups for another term (total 6 years). We need to think about how to make the greater membership of AUUMM more aware about the seeking of leadership and how to promote it.

Erika: one of the questions we need the Board to decide is whether you want the power to appoint people. Or whether you prefer to suggest people. This council will be deep work about understanding boundaries and harm, important practices and policies to adapt and create. And there is accountability: you are accountable to your membership. Accountability for the hymnal is to people in congregations of all types. There are many more people using this hymnal than AUUMM members, so that is a lot.

Bran: I appreciate you lifting up what this means in terms of power. When do you need our answer?

Erika: as soon as possible. We are holding steady. I think we can move forward on the song selection committee who you know and love. That is less urgent. You don't meet again till the end of October and that feels really late. But if we have to wait for a clear answer, we can do that, around wanting to appoint people or preferring to publicize.

Treasurer's report - Matt Meyer:

Registration increased by twenty people, about 10%. We were \$9K over for expenses, but also income, so we are very close to budget. Annual operating budget was set around \$20K; with what we have in the conference budget we are well ahead of where we expected to be.

Conference specs: gross income is better than what is noted - scholarships are noted as unrestricted finances. We are at about \$13K net (rather than \$6,700 in the red). \$3K from the memorial service, more than \$1K for the UUSC. Next year we don't expect transportation costs.

This year we had huge transport costs, but next year we think we will have more income because we will be relying on public transport.

Jen: have we conveyed the amount we took in to Manish Mishra and Mary Kathering Morn?

Matt: the Atlanta church took up the collection and not sure where that is at the moment.

Bran: Don has left and Taryn (Sr. Minister) is on sabbatical. But Allison has been in touch with Bryce (UUCA's Executive Administrator) who seemed to indicate that the money has been sent to UUSC.

Jen: it would be good to write a letter to UUSC to make sure they know where that money

came from. And we should tell the membership.

Laura: did we have a vote on applying for a grant for the bandleader's track?

Laura called for a motion to approve applying for a grant for the Worship Bands team through the UUFP (for equipment, rentals and scholarships). (Seconded) The vote carried.

Matt notes that we need to have funding to support participation by musicians who are non-professionals.

Laura: this has to do with a conversation in Atlanta with Carey McDonald about applying for some marketing. Carey thought the CPC would benefit from having some infrastructure to bring more people into the conference. Do you think that we can apply for both things? Laura thought Carey had a specific idea about a way in which the request would be well received.

Matt will follow up with Carey and Laura.

Laura: Carey suggested that the grant could support a start up effort. The money could help bring someone in to help with the marketing push. (It would be a temporary stipend position to get this effort moving).

Matt notes that grants are due September 30...so if we can empower them to make the application that would put us into the grant cycle. (Plan B is to only provide workshops for those attending the conference anyway). Matt moves that we allow Carl Keenedy and his team to apply for a second UUFP grant for the UU Bands track if they deem it helpful. (Seconded). It was unanimously approved.

The CPC requested that any income above \$30K be split with our scholarship fund. So that would mean that \$1700 would be moved from our income to the Donna Harris Fisher scholarship fund to make the conference more accessible. This was moved and seconded, and Unanimously approved.

Matt noted that a future to do is a budget surplus provision for moving funds to scholarship funds.

We noted that Susan Peck had come to the meeting hoping to speak to us, but we didn't know of this request (regarding resignation from working on the Living Tradition focus).

We expressed gratitude for Bran for their wise commentary during the meeting, and to all who are holding so many concerns and working in leadership.

Closing - The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Deborah Weiner Secretary

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

October 27 (Board retreat is AM October 3rd)

November 10

December 8

January 12 (2nd Board retreat TBD)

February 23

March 9

April 13

May 11

June 15

July 28 (Full day)