



BGM Executive Committee
September 10-11, 2020

MINUTES

Officers: Karen Podsiadly, President
Jim Wolfe, Vice President
Paul Higgins, Budget Review Officer
Josué Gómez-Menéndez, Past President
Jeff Woods, Interim General Secretary

Committee: Cedric Jones, PBA
Raimundo Barreto, NJ
Judith Christiansen, NYS

Chaplain: Zina Jacque, CHI

Parliamentarian: Bill Frederickson, NJ

Staff: Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary/Treasurer/CFO
Kathy Jachowski, Administrator

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.

Thursday, September 10, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.: Virtual Meeting via Microsoft TeamS

BGM EC 676 DEVOTIONS

Zina Jacque lit the Christ Candle in recognition of Christ's presence and shared a devotion based on Psalm 139.

BGM EC 677 CALL TO ORDER

ABC President Karen Podsiadly called the meeting to order.

BGM EC 678 CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION: Judith Christiansen made a motion and seconded by Jim Wolfe to accept the agenda items dated September 10-11, 2020 and to approve minutes of the June 15, 2020 meeting of the Executive Committee, held virtually.

Approved with no objections.

BGM EC 679 REPORT OF THE BUDGET REVIEW OFFICER

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. There was little activity in the Biennial account so the difference with the Biennial is minor.

Net revenue compared to last year is down \$503,000. Expenses as compared to last year are lower by \$1,030,000. Some of the factors for the decrease in expense and revenue are due to the elimination of intercompany charges in 2020, reduction in personnel expenses, reduction of \$126,000 in expense for Representative Process due to the elimination of meeting expenses, and there was \$208,000 of income and expense generated in Denominational Emphasis for a one-time transaction in 2019.

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%.

Paul reminded the committee that the Paycheck Protection Program of approximately \$620,000 is shown on our books as a loan. Once forgiven, however, it will be recorded as income, potentially making up for the loss in United Mission support received by ABCUSA.

BGM EC 680 REPORT OF THE 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.

BGM EC 681 REPORT OF THE INTERIM GENERAL SECRETARY

Anti-racism Task Force:

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.

Regions:

Jeff Woods has regular on-going conference calls several times a month with the Region

Executive Ministers, some focusing on addressing racism, which included personal sharing of the identification of regional activity, and presentations from Baptist historians and leaders. In addition, the conference calls included the impact of COVID-19 in worship and creativity. A survey regarding the impact of COVID-19 on regional activity is included in the reports for this meeting.

Search committees for Region Executive Ministers were completed virtually due to the pandemic. 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.

BGM EC 682 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 David Knipel, Esq. regarding the laws about holding a virtual business meeting: “New York has adopted provisions to hold meeting partly or entirely virtual.”

Discussion notes regarding a virtual 2021 BMS:

1. Have groups gather in what is appropriate in your community at a church to share large video screens to view the BMS together in pods so not alone. Message – “We will gather together. Not in same place, but safe gathering.”
2. Leadership will be in same place for the BMS (President, Vice President and Interim General Secretary).
3. Do check-ins at various regions “face of the denomination” and greetings in various languages.

MOTION 1: Cedric Jones made a motion and seconded by Paul Higgins to not hold the 2021 Biennial Mission Summit in Puerto Rico “in-person.”

Approved with no objections

MOTION 2: Cedric Jones made a motion and seconded by Paul Higgins to hold the 2023 Biennial Mission Summit in Puerto Rico.

Approved with no objections

MOTION 3: Paul Higgins made a motion and seconded by Jim Wolfe that due to the impact of COVID-19 the 2021 Biennial Mission Summit will be held primarily drawing on virtual technology.

Approved with no objections

BGM EC 683 RECESS/CREDENTIALS & CAUCUS/RECONVENE

Josué Gómez-Menéndez called to order the meeting of the Credentials & Caucus Committee.

After discussion and consideration regarding caucus funding, the committee recommended that two decisions be made (1) regarding funding for next year and (2) the next step to talk with

each caucus about the process and to create new ways to be more creative for caucuses to have space to work with the Credentials and Caucus Committee.

MOTION: *Josué Gómez-Menéndez made a motion to fund the caucuses for next year and create a new process to improve the work of the Credentials and Caucus Committee with the caucuses. (Motion rescinded after discussion)*

CONCERNS:

1. *The process is punitive and broken; systematic issues need to be addressed in terms of funding.*
2. *Accountability; using funds for administration not program and caucuses not understanding the difference.*

QUESTIONS:

1. *Why were the caucuses created?*
2. *What is the point in providing the caucuses funding?*
3. *Will the caucuses grow or change over time?*

SUGGESTIONS:

1. *Need to connect with the leadership of the caucuses.*
2. *Invite current and past leadership together to discuss the benefit the money has brought and for the future of the caucus.*
3. *Need to understand the purpose of the caucus.*
4. *ABCUSA President should meet with each caucus.*
5. *Need to include caucus leadership in leadership pool for rep process.*
6. *Create a new dialogue process and then a new funding process.*

MOTION: *Josué Gómez-Menéndez made a motion and seconded by Paul Higgins for the budget for the caucus committee be set at \$48,000 (\$2,000 less than 2019) for the budget year; funding for 2021 each caucus at \$6,000 per caucus. (Motion amended after discussion)*

MOTION (AMENDED): *Josué Gómez-Menéndez made a motion and seconded by Judith Christiansen 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 (See Caucus Allocation Chart included in Reports).*

Approved with no objections

MOTION: *Josué Gómez-Menéndez made a motion and seconded by Jim Wolfe requesting Karen Podsiadly to take the leading role in creating the process to talk face to face with each of the caucus leaders allowing for Karen to give a report at the next meeting in June regarding allocations for facilitating the budget for 2022. (Motion amended after discussion)*

DISCUSSION:

1. *The Beloved Community could have interviews with the caucuses and perform the task with Karen Podsiadly.*

2. *After Karen's summary there may be a need to review the By-Laws for broader conversation.*

MOTION (AMENDED): *Josué Gómez-Menéndez made a motion and seconded by Jim Wolfe requesting Karen Podsiadly engage caucus leadership in discussions to reinvent the caucus funding process.*

Approved with no objections

Josué Gómez-Menéndez recessed the meeting of the Credentials and Caucus Committee. Karen Podsiadly reconvened the BGM Executive Committee Meeting.

Friday, September 11, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.: Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

BGM EC 684 DEVOTIONS

Jeff Woods shared a devotion and the Christ Candle was lit in recognition of Christ's presence.

BGM EC 685 REQUEST FROM AB WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

American Baptist Women's Ministries (ABWM) requests adding an additional staff person from ABWM on the World Relief Committee (WRC). Staff are non-voting members; therefore, would not change the voting. Adding this staff person would mean a change to the Standing Rules.

MOTION: *Judith Christiansen made a motion and seconded by Raimundo Barreto to recommend to the Board of General Ministries at the November 2020 meeting to change the Standing Rules to read:*

14.7.1 Membership. There shall be a World Relief Committee consisting of eleven (11) members including:

...

(b) four (4) non-voting members, one (1) each from the staffs of ABCUSA, ABFMS, ABHMS and American Baptist Women's Ministries ("ABWM"), appointed by the General Secretary in consultation with the appropriate respective members of the National Executive Council.

Approved with one opposed

BGM EC 686 LEASEHOLD ADJACENT TO FORMER MISSION CENTER

The leasehold surrounds the former Mission Center sold this year in March. In July 1984, ABCUSA entered into an agreement to lease 24 acres of property to Prudential Insurance Company. The initial lease term is for 50 years with three successive renewal options at Fair Market Value for an additional 49 years (2034 – 15 years; 2049 -15 years; 2054-19 years at the lessee's discretion. Brandywine is the current tenant of the surrounding leasehold. The leasehold is the most valuable asset that ABCUSA owns. Rent received upfront for the initial lease term approximated \$4,690,000.

The Mission Center property was appraised at \$20M in 2007 when ABCUSA put up the property for sale. The Mission Center was also 24 acres.

In 2009 ABCUSA reached an agreement to sell the Mission Center property to ABCUSA partners at \$20M. By the time the Mission Center property was sold to ABC partners in 2009, the real estate prices were dropping steeply from their highs in 2006. The partners agreed to purchase the property in light of the falling real estate prices with the understanding that ABCUSA needed the funds to create

an endowment that could be used to generate funds needed for operations for ABCUSA to remain viable. ABCUSA offered the partners a share of the proceeds from the surrounding leasehold when the lease matured in 2035. Offering a share of the leasehold proceeds was done to get the partners to allow purchasing the Mission Center property for \$20M although the value of the property was less than \$20M due to the decline in real estate prices. ABCUSA provided value for the decline in the Mission Center by offering future proceeds from the surrounding leasehold. ABCUSA agreed to share the proceeds from the leasehold when it matures in 2035 in the following proportions: ABCUSA - 56.6667%, ABHMS (BNM) – 23.3334%, MMBB – 16.6666%, and ABFMS (BIM) – 3.3333%. Prior to finalizing the sale of the Mission Center, ABCUSA was consulted about selling together the Mission Center and Leasehold. ABCUSA didn't offer to sell the leasehold. ABCUSA realized the leasehold would be more valuable close to maturity in 2034.

We received an offer letter to purchase the leasehold land for \$6.5M dated August 5, 2020 from Brandywine Realty addressed to the Consulting Company we used to sell the Mission Center.

MOTION: Jim Wolfe made a motion and seconded by Raimundo Barreto to decline the offer with the response, "Thank you for the offer, not interested in selling at this time."
Approved with no objections

BGM EC 687 FUTURE MEETING OF THE BOARD JUNE 2021

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

BGM EC 688 EXECUTIVE SESSION

Before adjourning the meeting, the Executive Committee met in Executive Session. Actions taken during this meeting will be placed in a sealed envelope and filed with the official minutes in the General Secretary's office.

Submitted by,



Dr. C. Jeff Woods
Interim General Secretary

CJW/kj

Documents attached

BGM EC Proposed Agenda (1101:09/20)

BGM EC Roster September 2020

BGM Executive Committee Minutes: June 2020 (1002:06/20)

ABCUSA Financial Report through July 2020

Report of the Interim General Secretary

ABCUSA's Leasehold Adjacent to the Former Mission Center

Congregations Response to 2021 BMS Survey

REMC Survey Results 2021 BMS

World Relief Committee Information
Caucus Allocations 2004-2920
Factors Influencing the 2021 BMS