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# BOARD OF GENERAL MINISTRIES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

# NOVEM BER 14-15, 2024

# MINUTES

# Final

**Meeting Location:**

The Alloy King of Prussia

301 West DeKalb Pike

King of Prussia, PA 19406

Ph: 610-337-1200

**Officers:** Nikita McCalister, President

William Poland, Vice President

Paul Higgins, Budget Review Officer

Gina Jacobs-Strain, General Secretary

**Committee:** Cedric Jones, PBA

Tamara Scott, MI

Joy Martinez-Marshall, NE

Jim Wolfe, Past President

**Chaplain:** Doug Scalise, MA

**Parliamentarian:** Bill Fredrickson, NJ

**Staff:** Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary for Finance//CFO/Treasurer

**Thursday, November 14, 2024, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. - Summit 3 Room**

The Executive Committee gathered for dinner at 6:00 p.m.

The Executive Committee met with Intercaucus President Katharine Hsiao, who advised that minimum reporting on the use of funds was reasonable. It was determined that further discussion will wait until the new caucus president is in place.

The Executive Committee met with David Ball, Esq. to review WRC policy and practices. David Ball shared there is nothing in the current documents that supports IM current practice to withhold donor information on funds collected for OGHS. The EC determined to request a formal review by the NLC. Bill Poland also noted that the WRC needed to update policies and practices and will wait until the new chair is in place.

**Friday, November 15, 2024, 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. - Summit 3 Room**

*Breakfast 7:00 a.m. -9:00 a.m. Lunch was held during the meeting from 12:00 p.m.-1:30 p.m.*

**BGM EC 909 WELCOME AND GREETING ONE ANOTHER**

ABCUSA President Nikita McCalister welcomed everyone.

**DEVOTIONS**

*Chaplain Doug Scalise opened with the Lighting of the Christ Candle and led with Devotions:*

*The Gospel of Matthew 12: 23, 25.*

**BGM EC 910** **EXECUTIVE MEETING CALL TO ORDER –**

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Proposed Action:** To approve the Minutes of the September 2024 BGM Executive Committee

Meeting in Omaha, NE, and approve the agenda for this meeting of the BGM Executive

Committee. Doug made the motion, and Gina seconded the motion.

**By voice vote**, the BGM Executive Committee approved by general consent the Minutes of the Board of General Ministries Executive Committee September 5-7, 2024, in Omaha, NE, and the designated reports on the current agenda.

**BGM EC 911 REPORT FROM THE ABCUSA PRESIDENT**

ABCUSA President Nikita McCalister referenced her “President’s Report November 2024” and spoke on the highlights of her written report on amplifying the American Baptist Identity. President McCalister shared that she met with the American Baptist Great Commission Fellowship and listened to the group who wanted to be heard and find ways to collaborate and help churches have a stronger witness of being uniquely American Baptist. President McCalister informed the Executive Committee that she has made herself available to have meaningful communication with many constituents within our ABCUSA family. With this year’s motto, “risking love” and “leaning into love,” President McCalister mentioned that she would continue to create a space for all by listening to one another and building relationships.

**BGM EC 912 REPORT FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY**

General Secretary Gina Jacobs-Strain referenced her “General Secretary November 2024 Report.”

Engage has started with virtual meetings. The ABCUSA staff is actively participating in all webinars to broaden their exposure to our ABCUSA family. Our Social Media Ambassador received 4,000 likes when she posted an article on Clergy Appreciation. We are working on updating a new brochure for Women in Ministry.

The OGS office has sent out a series of four gratitude letters (Spring/Summer/Fall/Winter) of gratitude.

The first letter was to reconnect with our donors. The fall letter requested prayer for the children returning to school and included information about the Biennial Golden Jubilee. The Christmas letter focuses on lapse OGS and WIM donors who have not donated since 2019. Christmas cards signed with a personal message will be sent to all our donors. Lastly, there will be an end-of-year letter will also be mailed to our donors signed by Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain and Rev. Dr. Robin Stoops.

**BGM EC 913 2025 BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT**

The Biennial launched open registration on November 1st. The theme is “Come Seek Living Water and the subtheme is “Family Reunion.” General Secretary Jacobs-Strain is working with the LAC Team in Nebraska and the head of AV productions to have consistent themes that promote harmony and unity, within the Family Reunion idea.

**BGM EC 914 REPORT OF THE BUDGET REVIEW OFFICER**

Budget Review Officer Paul Higgins presented the budget report prepared by Alan Musoke, CFO, to the BGM Executive Committee.

1. **YTD Financials through September 2024**

The year-to-date financials show a loss of ($81K).

The following activity is based on financials, **excluding** the 2023 Biennial.

In 2024, ABCUSA received income in the form of a dividend from the insurance provider in the amount of $306K. We received a dividend in 2023 in the amount of $270K.

Net revenue compared to 2023 is down ($64K). Revenue is down primarily due to

Transition Ministries.

Expenses as compared to 2023 are lower by ($214K). This is primarily due to the expenses for Transition Ministries, which are down due to fewer Pastors in the field.

**United Mission**

Total UM is 3,864,110. This is a decrease of ($202,816) from the prior year. This represents a decrease of (4.99%).

1. **2025 ABCUSA Budget**

On average, UM has been declining annually by 4.05% over the last 5 years from 2019-2023. The budget chart was presented to the BGM Executive Committee.

The projected 2025 and 2026 UM show a decrease of 3.00%. The chart shows the average decline of UM using actual amounts from 2019-2023. The budget chart was presented to the BGM Executive Committee.

**BGM EC 915 PRESIDENT’S NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS**

**Proposed Action:** Awards to be discussed:

Sparrowk President’s Award – Dr. Susan Gillies

Mowbray Ecumenical Award – This will be determined at one of the CCUIR action group sessions.

Theological Commission – Priscilla Eppinger and Amy Chilton were invited to be co-chairs on the Theological Commission. The General Secretary has agreed that the commission should continue, and the President will appoint participants on the Theological Commission.

**BGM EC 916 AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN’S MINISTRIES**

There are no additional items to add other than the actions already taken. The Bylaws and Standing Rules changes will be considered and voted on by the Board of General Ministries.

**BGM EC 917 CREDENTIALS AND CAUCUS COMMITTEE**

Vice President Bill Poland proposed keeping the funding equal among the Caucuses.

OGS Communications will draft a standard letter to accompany the quarterly check, asking each Caucus to share its story on how the monetary support helped the ministry.

**BGM EC 918 CHANGED RELATIONSHIPS REPORT**

Alan Musoke presented the Changed Relationships Report. The report covers October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024. We started with a count of 4,688 and ended with 4,659 churches.

Twenty-nine churches became activated, four new additional churches were added, one church closed (failure to membership), twenty churches did not respond, three were dismissed,and thirty-nine churches withdrew from ABCUSA for various reasons.

**BGM EC 919** **REPORT ON KING OF PRUSSIA BUSINESS DISTRICT**

**A. Proposal for a Recharge Park**

The proposal is to create a park on our leasehold to Brandywine. ABCUSA owns around 24 acres. The KOP Business District wants to build a park for the public. The park will be ½ acre, similar to the Linear Park already in place. It is a temporary recharge park for rest, charging mobile phones and bicycles, and a recheck because a substation is nearby. The cost of creating the park is $500,000.00. KOP Business District letter requested an ABCUSA representative with authority to work with them and approve the next steps as they go along. The KOP Business District wants to keep the same terms as when the park was built, including a lawyer. The executive committee mentioned that if there are legal fees, we should not pay any fees because the KOP Business District came to ABCUSA for the land. The BGM will be told about this proposal.

**Motion:**

Paul Higgins made a motion, with second by Jim Wolfe.

The Executive Committee will recommend to the BGM that Alan Musoke be appointed as a representative regarding the Recharge Park, with the authority to review and approve the steps necessary to complete the project at a cost to ABCUSA of zero dollars.

**By voice vote**, the BGM Executive Committee agreed with the motion.

**B. Design Development Presentation**

The BGM Executive Committee reviewed the Design Development Plan that Alan Musoke presented.

**BGM EC 920 WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE (WRC)**

The confidential document on One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) was discussed. It was noted as per

David Ball Esq., the exception has swallowed the rule. The OGHS offering is an OGS offering, and

the funds are distributed through the World Relief Committee, a BGM committee. Yet, IM collects

offerings but does not record and share the donor details with OGS. ABHMS also collects OGHS

funds and shares donor information.

**Question:** How do we bring OGHS collection back into compliance?

**Answer:** Refer to the Budget Covenant, which states that the WRC should distribute OGHS and that donor information must be shared.

**Recommendations to the Executive Committee from David T. Ball Esq.:**

The EC agreed that President McCalister will send a formal letter to Alan Musoke, CFO, requesting the Common Budget Covenant Review Committee to review the Budget Covenant and related documents as needed concerning International Ministries' current practice as it relates to not sharing donor information for funds collected through One Great Hour of Sharing. Why has the exception become the norm?

**Motion**: President McCalister asked the Executive Committee if they all agreed that the meeting's discussions on WRC and OGHS should remain confidential within this committee.

**By voice vote**, the BGM EC agreed.

**BGM EC 921 ECUMENICAL WORK**

General Secretary Gina Jacobs-Strain informed the Executive Committee that OGS had updated all representation on ecumenical groups. A staff person is now overseeing ecumenical relationships. BWA nominations and recommendations were submitted in consultation with Chaks Zadda, Roy Medley, and staff. BWA requested nominations for positions on commissions and committees. Staff was included in the nominations. General Secretary Jacobs-Strain stated that this is a form of staff development because it allows the staff to participate and better understand the ecumenical groups and how they connect with ABCUSA.

**BGM EC 922 DISCUSSION** - **ABGC Fellowship**

President McCalister shared about her meeting with the American Baptist Great Commission Fellowship. The meeting was full-day, and the ABGC Fellowship shared their concerns. President McCalister listened to the group, as it is important to sustain open communication.

**BGM EC 923 BOARD CONFIDENTIALITY**

Paul Higgins informed the Executive Committee that the Board should control its processes. The Board's decision on its stance on confidentiality is good for governance. Loyalty to ABCUSA means keeping confidential information confidential.

Our Bylaws state that we are an organization created to be open, transparent, and representative. As an Executive Committee, we should take action to demonstrate that we value openness and confidentiality. The Executive Committee agreed and supported the need for a confidentiality statement, which is a good start.

**BGM EC 924 PRAYER AND ADJOURNMENT** President McCalister adjourned the BGM Executive Committee meeting with prayer.

Submitted by,

Rev. Dr. Gina C. Jacobs-Strain, General Secretary

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*Documents attached:*

FINAL BGM EC Agenda Nov 2024 Revised

OGHS MEMO from David Ball, Esq.

Report of the ABCUSA President

EC MINUTES September 2024 Final

BGM Executive Committee Roster

Report from the ABCUSA General Secretary

ABCUSA 2025-2026 BUDGET

YTD Financials 9.30.24

Recharge Park Proposal

Design Development Presentation

**BGM Executive Committee Meetings:**

November 14-15, 2024, Alloy, King of Prussia, PA

March 13-15, 2025, Los Angeles, CA

September 11-13, 2025, Chicago, IL

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**Board of General Ministries Meetings:**

November 15-17, 2024, Alloy Hotel, King of Prussia, PA

July 1-3, 2025, Omaha Hilton, Omaha, NE