

**Minutes from District Board Meeting
Trotwood Church of the Brethren
January 5, 2013**

Attendees: David Shetler, Julie Hostetter, Tom Bowser, Char Foster, Paula Bowser, Larry Tyner, Janet Julian, Judy Boles, Ron Wenzel, Burt Wolf, Steve Conklin, Carl Eubank, Mindy Tipton, Susan Fitze, Jim Moore, Mary Boone, Trent Smith, Susan Liller, Wendy Noffsinger Erbaugh

Gathering

1. Pastor Paula Bowser welcomed us to the Trotwood Church of the Brethren. Larry Tyner prayed for TCOB and its ministries.
2. Worshipful Work, Community Sharing, and Prayer: Led by Larry Tyner.
3. Minutes
 - 3.1. September 8, 2012 minutes: Still unavailable. Dave and Larry will try to get them for our next meeting.
 - 3.2. November 2, 2012 minutes: Were approved.

Reports from District Officers, Staff & Affiliates

1. **Director of Outdoor Ministries: Gene Karn**
 - 1.1. No report given.
2. **Treasurer's Report: Susan Liller**
 - 2.1. Report available online: This is a preliminary end-of-year report for 2012. Complete information is not yet available.
 - 2.2. Based on feedback, depreciation impact of current and prior years has been taken out of the Outdoor Ministries financial report. We operate on a cash basis and depreciation is a non cash item.
 - 2.3. The "New ventures" fund (4301) is gifts from individuals to the district. This is the old "Second Mile Giving" fund.
 - 2.4. Report approved.
3. **Brethren Retirement Community: John Warner**
 - 3.1. Report available online.
4. **Director of District Communications: Mary Boone**
 - 4.1. Report available online.
 - 4.2. Members of the Resource Development Team expressed their appreciation for Mary's work with them on the fall fundraising letter.
 - 4.3. Report accepted.
5. **District Executive: Dave Shetler**
 - 5.1. Report available online.
 - 5.2. The issue was raised that many times information is "filtered" by pastors and churches so that individuals do not receive district news. Would it be better to send district news directly to individuals instead of depending on pastors, churches, and our on-line presence to get information to people? Mary shared that there are over 1000 email addresses in the district database. Letters like the fall fundraising letter have been sent to every address Mary has. Dave asked that as we are out, we pick up church directories and give them to Mary to increase our email database and increase the flow of information.
 - 5.3. The question was raised whether the district might charge congregations a fee for Dave's services as District Executive if they do not contribute to the district budget. Dave noted that other judicatories do this, but he did not know if other COB districts did. Further conversation followed about the possibility of trying this but also the necessity of maintaining positive communication with congregations so that they know what ministries their gifts support and so that they feel supported by the district.
 - 5.4. Report accepted.

Commission Reports

1. Gifts Discernment: Burt Wolf

- 1.1. Meeting scheduled for January 8.
- 1.2. This commission would like to survey the gifts of current District Board members in anticipation of the needs to be filled as Board members finish their terms. They would also like to expand their survey district-wide to help congregations connect with individual gifts.
- 1.3. Gifts Discernment is helping on-site coordinators Burt and Helen Wolf find people to serve at the 2014 Annual Conference in Columbus.

2. Outdoor Ministries: Steve Conklin

- 2.1. The December 2012 Outdoor Ministries retreat was postponed. However, the commission met in December. It is facing several challenges in 2013:
 - a) What is the relationship between District Board and Outdoor Ministries (as a commission not a camp board)?
 - Steve and Larry believe there has been a breakdown in communication between Outdoor Ministries and District Board. They will act as liaisons to connect them. They have invited Outdoor Ministries to come to District Board meetings as they are able. Overall, there seems to be a good spirit between Outdoor Ministries and District Board, but time will be needed to foster it.
 - This staffing transition provides the opportunity to clarify the relationship between Outdoor Ministries and the district. This will enable future leadership to move forward together and clarify responsibilities.
 - b) What will the relationship be between Outdoor Ministries and the Neutral Committee?
 - c) Outdoor Ministries will maintain continuity of programming during the staffing transition.
- 2.2. Members have been told about the staffing changes.
- 2.3. The retreat has been rescheduled for January 10 and 11, 2013 at Mill Ridge Village. John Warner will be a resource for them as they begin to gain consensus on how to move forward as a commission. The visioning originally planned for the retreat will be put on hold until clarity is gained regarding other issues.

3. Missional Renewal: Susan Fitze

- 3.1. Report is available online.
- 3.2. They will be meeting Monday, January 14.
- 3.3. It has been exciting to get to know churches, but follow-up has proved challenging. They are discerning how Missional Renewal should walk with churches and help them move to the next level. Susan will explore some ideas with Dave.
- 3.4. Congregations have varied in their implementation of the ideas. More structure is needed. Trent Smith noted that simply making the relationships has given churches new hope and helped foster relationships between them and the district.
- 3.5. Missional Renewal tries to balance outward and inward movement. They work to provide an inward foundation for outreach while helping congregations look beyond themselves.
- 3.6. Julie Hostetter shared about a denominational pilot project in Middle PA District. Leaders work with congregations interested in missional renewal, nurturing inward spiritual and outward missional development.

4. New Church Development: Ron Wenzel

- 4.1. They have been working to find a time to meet in 2013. They continue to meet with the Mennonites as well as District Executive John Ballinger from Northern Ohio to discuss new church work. It is possible all three will collaborate.

5. Ministerial Leadership: Sandra Jenkins

- 5.1. Dave offered a quick update for this commission. They have had a couple of interviews. One person was invited for a second conversation but declined. Another was approved and is now the interim at West Alexandria.
- 5.2. Looking at mentoring and continuing education issues.
 - a) There will be a mentoring event in February. Information will be coming soon.
 - b) There will be a Shoes of the Fisherman event on March 16.
- 5.3. CODE will be looking at continuing education requirements, trying to discern the balance

between ministry hours and CEU's. Should they be different for part-time and full-time? Should a schedule of pro-rating CEU's be developed?

5.4. Questions were raised as to how the Ministry Commission might support pastors (in traditional and non-traditional ministries), especially those who are struggling but don't feel comfortable making contact with district leadership.

a) Share and Prayer was started to try to meet this need.

6. Shared Ministries: Mindy Tipton

6.1. Report available online.

6.2. Brethren Disaster Ministries has received \$23,000 for clean-up buckets. They have spent \$18,000 assembling buckets and money is still coming in. Other districts have sent us bucket money because they have heard we can assemble buckets at low cost.

a) Board members are encouraged to participate in the bucket assembly gatherings.

6.3. Brethren Helping Hands: Has completed 2 projects, but there is still ongoing work.

6.4. Empowering disciples: As of January 5, 5 registrations have been received for this event.

6.5. Brittany Fourman, a youth from Prince of Peace, will be serving on the national youth cabinet to plan National Youth Conference.

6.6. Steve Conklin suggested that District Board members might foster interconnection with Outdoor Ministries through attending work weekends at Woodland Altars.

7. Resource Development: Carl Eubank

7.1. Members of the District Board are invited to BRC on January 31 for a presentation by Charles Shumate. Shumate is a professional fundraiser with the Church of God Anderson and will explore consulting with us on a capital campaign. A campaign would look at the annual fund, planned giving, building up the endowment, and creative ways to sustain and expand district ministries.

7.2. Resource Development will explore different ways to raise funds for the district and bring options to the Board. Board involvement will be important if there is a capital campaign.

7.3. North American Power

a) Outdoor Ministries proposed that they or the District Board work with North American Power to raise funds. People can purchase electricity through NAP who then gives \$1 per customer per month to a charity of the customer's choice. We would receive money, but so would referring individuals (like a pyramid business).

b) Possible benefits include:

- Receiving a dollar for every customer designating us as their charity plus residual income as we move up the pyramid.
- Receiving money from customers outside Ohio who designate us as their charity.
- Having our own page on their website.

c) Concerns include:

- Setting precedents about promoting companies and individuals. Do we want the district to be affiliated with a product?
- The amount of time devoted to marketing for NAP. We would need to aggressively market to make any money. The district does not have available staff to do this.
- In Ohio, only DP&L and Duke customers can switch to NAP.

d) The board decided not to participate in this program.

Letter from the East Dayton Church of the Brethren (Order of the Day)

1. Letter available online.

2. History: Members of Resource Development heard that East Dayton had monies they might be interested in using to support district-related outreach. Burt Wolf, Jane Woodie, and Dave Shetler met with members of this congregation to explore this further. They sent the congregation a follow-up letter listing possibilities and asking for feedback.

3. Members of East Dayton perceived that they were being asked to help fund specific ministries and disliked that, believing that the district should operate in the black so that seeking additional help from congregations is unnecessary. East Dayton is looking for ways to reach out with special funds but would prefer to seek those on their own rather than make a general

donation to the district. They are open to trying to meet specific needs, even those brought to them by the district (i.e., camping ministries), but don't want needs created for them to help with.

4. Resource Development believed they were offering a service by naming possibilities for outreach. The letter was not intended to be a formal proposal, just a conversation starter. They were not seeking donations, but following up on information they had received. The letter was only sent to East Dayton.
5. Carl Eubank, Burt Wolf, and Susan Liller explained that the District Board had to choose between maintaining a balanced budget and possibly dying out for lack of programming, or working with a deficit budget to revitalize the district through new ministries. For the next two years, if churches and individuals do not give enough money to bring the budget into the black, the District will dip into "savings" (not borrow money) to fund district ministries. The hope is that those funds will be raised to support district ministries. At the end of 2014, if congregations and individuals are not supporting the district, the District Board will discuss next steps for the district.

Letter from the Good Shepherd Church (Order of the Day)

1. Letter available online.
2. In addition to the concerns expressed in the letter, several delegates from Good Shepherd were unable to get online materials before the conference because they don't have internet access. One person with internet access had trouble finding information on the website.
3. Response to concerns regarding the 2013 budget:
 - 3.1. Instead of shrinking the budget for 2013, the District Board decided to draw on previous years excesses (the timber fund and extended ministries fund). The board felt we could not cut the budget further and remain a viable district. So we dipped into funds we already have to meet current expenses. Members of District Board did not believe it made sense to let the district die spiritually and physically when we have unused funds. They wanted to give budding ministries a chance to flourish and give congregations and individuals time to catch the vision and excitement guiding those ministries. The board will use the extra funds for two years. At the end of 2014, we will stop dipping into our "savings" if we are not headed toward the black. Instead we will look at other options, such as merger with another district.
 - 3.2. Members of Good Shepherd thought these funds should be used for specific ministries, not keeping the district solvent. The said it would have been helpful to hear the reasoning behind the budget shared more fully.
4. Response to concerns regarding voting on the 2013 budget:
 - 4.1. Program and Arrangements wanted the delegates to hear the story of God's movement in the district through the ministry teams before presenting the budget. The budget was a way to celebrate that story. The Outdoor Ministries/Woodland Altars ad hoc committee also took a lot of time which limited the time left for the budget.
 - 4.2. In the future, one possibility would be to present the budget at the beginning of the morning, have reports, then vote on the budget at the end of the day. That would allow people time to think about the budget before voting. Program and Arrangements is also thinking about how the tables might be used in this discussion and will look at voting again, taking into account that some people may not feel comfortable showing their vote publicly.

Old Business

1. **Shalom Team Study Committee:** Had to reschedule their meeting.
2. **District Board visits with churches of the Southern Ohio District:**
 - 2.1. Reminder to board members to visit congregations.
 - 2.2. The video needs to be updated. It would be good to make it more generic, no longer including specific dates. Andrew Wright might be interested in helping with that.

New Business

1. Larry will draft formal response letters to East Dayton and Good Shepherd.

2. Letter from the Eaton Church of the Brethren

2.1. Letter available online.

a) This is a response to a meeting between Dave, Sandy Jenkins, Larry Tyner, and John Kinsel and the Eaton elders.

b) Eaton would like the 2013 District Conference agenda to include a query asking for the district's response to recent decisions and/or actions by various denominational agencies, departments, committees, etc. that are in conflict with the 1983 Annual Conference paper on human sexuality.

c) They also gave the district permission to forward the letter to denominational leadership.

2.2. The board found consensus to send Eaton's request to District Conference as an item of business and decided not to forward the letter to denominational leadership.

3. Disorganization of the Cornerstone Fellowship

3.1. Letter available online.

3.2. Cornerstone does not own the church building, only things the Rineharts have purchased.

3.3. Dave recommended the District Board grant their proposal. If granted:

a) They would no longer be able to use "Church of the Brethren" in their name and would no longer be on our insurance policy.

b) Charlie Rinehart's ordination would be revoked because he, as the credentialed minister, recommended disorganization. Joe Hodapp's license will not exist when Cornerstone is officially disorganized because his licensing is held by Cornerstone.

3.4. The date of the District Board's vote to disorganize Cornerstone as a fellowship would be the official disorganization date, not the date in their letter.

3.5. This decision does not need district approval because Cornerstone is a fellowship, not a congregation.

3.6. Two votes were taken, one to disorganize /Cornerstone and one to terminate Charlie Rinehart's credentials. Both found support.

4. Resignation of Gene Karn as Director of Outdoor Ministries

4.1. This was covered in Executive Session. The following is a summary of that time.

4.2. Upon receiving a letter of resignation from Gene Karn as Director of Outdoor Ministries, it was moved, seconded and approved by consensus to accept the resignation of Gene Karn.

4.3. The framework of the severance package for Gene Karn with funding to come from district reserve (timber funds) was approved by consensus. It was also approved by consensus that the Board Chair and District Executive will communicate and implement the severance package. The framework is as follows: By definition, a severance package means that employment ends with a buyout in accordance with the employment agreement. Therefore a package for this buyout consists of 90 days equivalency of salary (total of \$6251.64) plus the district's share of the health insurance premium for this period (\$1120.19) for a total of \$7371.83. Other than consulting with his successor, Gene's responsibility will be considered completed when all documents, files (paper, electronic and any other format), bank and financial documents including credit cards, equipment, and any other items belonging to the District are prepared and transferred to an official District representative as appointed by the District Executive and the Outdoor Ministries Commission. This transfer is to be completed within two weeks of acceptance of this package by the District Board. As part of the severance package, fees for career and crisis counseling will be covered up to \$1500 and/or one year from the date of the severance package. Payment(s) will be made directly to the provider of such services.

4.4. Gene Karn is welcome to serve as a lay volunteer in any program or ministry of the Southern Ohio District Church of the Brethren with the following exceptions. Recognizing that Gene Karn is not a Church of the Brethren credentialed minister but served in a district ministry as paid staff, the District Board is utilizing the Ethics in Ministry Relationships document and the Guidelines for Ministerial Service and Membership in a Former Parish document for this policy. Based on these documents, Gene is not to volunteer as a dean, counselor or other role with any Outdoor Ministries Commission sponsored event unless

specifically invited to do so by a future Director of Outdoor Ministries or successor of this position. Gene may, however, participate in any such activity with proper registration and associated fees, if any. Use of the Woodland Altars property, such as the rental of a chalet or attendance as a participant in a camp, is permitted.

4.5. It was affirmed that signers for bank services are Susan Liller, District Treasurer, David Shoup, former District Treasurer, and Wendy Noffsinger Erbaugh, District Clerk.

5. Interim Director of Outdoor Ministries

5.1. Discussion was held on the interim situation for director of Outdoor Ministries with the possibility of approaching Camp Mack to enter into a management agreement for the interim period or having someone here. A hybrid of these options was also discussed and will be explored. Potential persons for this role are Bruce and Mary Sue Rosenberger or Tom and Karen Dillon. A committee consisting of Dave Shetler, Larry Tyner, Janet Julian, Judy Boles, Steve Conklin and Charlene Foster was appointed to explore obtaining an interim.

6. Other

6.1. Vicki Ullery thanked District Board for allowing her to serve on standing committee.

6.2. Vicki left fliers for free concerts at the New Carlisle Church of the Brethren.

7. Announcements

7.1. Mindy Tipton encouraged board members to share flyers for the upcoming "Focus on Finances" event with their congregations.

Worshipful Work

1. Larry will email these questions to District Board members. Please "reply all."

1.1. Where have we sensed God's Spirit leading us in this meeting?

1.2. For what do we have to give thanks out of our time together?

1.3. What do we need God's help with moving forward?

1.4. Where do we need God to continue to give us clarity?

Closing Prayer