

**MINUTES**  
*Annual Spring Meeting*  
*Rhode Island Conference of the United Church of Christ*  
*April 30, 2016*  
*Seekonk Congregational Church, UCC, Seekonk, MA*

The meeting was called to order at 9:12am by Conference President George Peters following a hymn sing worship service led by Wayne Patnaude and Bob Nolan. Seekonk Congregational United Church of Christ Pastor the Rev. Joy Utter was invited to bring welcoming remarks on behalf of our host church. Assisting her was Seekonk Moderator Greg Salguiero.

George observed that this is an historic meeting in large part because of the guests present this morning. Interim Conference Minister Barbara Libby was invited to bring a greeting of welcome and introduce the guests: Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, General Minister and President of the UCC; Rev. Dr. Jim Antall, Minister and President of the Massachusetts Conference, UCC; Moderator Ann Cabbage of the Massachusetts Conference, UCC; Rev. Dr. Michael Ciba, Area Minister with the Connecticut Conference, UCC; Rev. Dale Acevido from Middletown Federated Church in CT. Welcome was offered to Tiffany Vale, newest Conference staff member – Assistant Conference Minister for Communication for the three Conferences. The RI Conference staff was also recognized: George Weavill, Sandy Tremblay, Peggy Matteson, Kristin Putney, Jennifer Geary, Daehler Hayes. Three folks also with us: (Pension Boards) (RI Insurance Boards) (Global Ministries). Barbara also recognized the ordination anniversaries of several individuals. In particular, Joe Runner and Daehler Hayes were recognized for their 50 year ordination anniversaries.

Churches receiving “5 for 5” certificates were invited to send representatives forward.

Following this, the first order of business was reporting on the quorum by Registrar, Darlene McMillan as follows:

Churches represented	25
Lay Delegates	72
Clergy	30
Members in Discernment	4
Ex-Officio	7
Visitors	15
Staff	7

George declared a quorum based on this report.

Motion made to grant our visitors and guests voice without vote. Duly seconded.  
Discussion: None. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Frances Munro, Vice President for the Conference was invited to offer the standing motions as appearing on page 3 of the Meeting Packet:

- That the Agenda as prepared and presented be accepted subject to such change as needed;

- That gratitude be expressed to the Planning Committee and members of Seekonk Congregational Church, UCC for their generous hospitality;
  - That gratitude be expressed to Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ for his presence with us this day.
  - That the Annual Meeting be adjourned following the closing worship service.
- Duly seconded. Discussion: None. Vote: Unanimously approved.

The next order of business was the approval of the Minutes of the Autumnal Meeting a copy of which can be found beginning on page 25 of the Meeting Packet. A motion to approve the minutes was made and duly seconded. Discussion: None. Vote: Unanimously approved.

George invited Bob Nolan forward to offer the Treasurer's Report.

- Noted that investment and endowment funds are included in this report with specific detail offered on pages 20-22 of the main meeting packet.
- Gratitude expressed for the exceptional work done by the staff and investment committee.
- Financial report is showing a loss but we are still in good shape.
- Bob invited questions:
  - Question on the Investment Fund – was the increase due to increased principal in the fund? Answer: No, mostly due to investment return on existing principal.
- Motion to receive the Treasurers Report. Duly seconded. Discussion: None. Vote: Unanimously approved.

The next order of business was a motion to receive the Annual Reports as sent out in advance of the meeting. Motion duly made and seconded to receive the reports with the exception of the Nominating Committee report. Discussion: None. Vote: Unanimously approved.

The next order of business was a motion to approve a proposed Amendment to the Constitution dealing with the convening of Ecclesiastical Councils directly by the Church and Ministry Committee without needing to come to the Board of Directors for approval. It was noted that this will require a two-third majority vote for passage.

Motion to revise the RICUCC Constitution as follows (proposed revision in italics and underlined):

VI.2 "The Conference may act as an Ecclesiastical Council for Ordination, Commissioning, Licensure or Dismissal if a church requests and the Committee on Church and Ministry concurs. *The Church and Ministry Committee may call an Ecclesiastical Council upon thirty days notice sent by the Registrar to each member of the Conference, setting forth the time and place of such meeting and the business to be transacted.* Ecclesiastical Councils are optional but not required for installation of clergy. A verification of credentials and a letter of endorsement by the Church and Ministry Committee is required. The ministers and delegates shall be entitled to vote as such Councils."

Motion made and seconded even though not necessary since it is coming from the Board and from a Committee. Discussion:

- Clarification on what “member” means

Vote: Unanimously approved.

Next was the presentation of the Nominating Committee Report by Evelyn Watkins. The report appears in the meeting packet on pages 23-24. Individuals leaving the Board of Directors and the Church & Ministry Committee who are going off were asked to stand and were recognized by applause. George asked if there were any additional nominations from the floor. There were not. Evelyn offered her thanks to everyone for receiving their phone calls and to the Nominating Committee for all their work. Evelyn made the motion that the Nominating Committee Report be accepted as presented. Discussion: None. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Interim Conference Minister Barbara Libby offered the introduction of the keynote speaker following the Business Meeting, the Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, General Minister and President of the United Congregational Church. His address was entitled “The Mission and Purpose of the United Church of Christ.”

Following the Keynote, there was a break during which participants were invited to visit exhibits and enjoy refreshments.

An update on RI, MA & CT Collaboration by the Conference Ministers was presented as a panel discussion.

The meeting concluded with worship during which the incoming Board of Directors were installed and Communion was celebrated. Following this lunch was provided by the members of Seekonk Congregational Church.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Ruth Shilling Hainsworth  
Clerk

Attachments to the Clerk’s Copy of the Minutes:

Advance Meeting Materials Packet which contained all documents necessary for the actions taken during the meeting including but not limited to the Financial Reports and the Report of the Nominating Committee  
Frequently Asked Questions document for “Engaging a Season of Discernment ...”