Tuesday, September 19, 2017
The meeting of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and the Philadelphia Historical Society Board (PHS) was convened at the Galt House Hotel, at 2:00 p.m. by COGA Moderator, Barbara Gaddis. Lynn Hargrove led the opening worship.

Roll Call
The following persons present for all or part of the conference call were:

COGA Members:
Barbara Gaddis, Moderator
Wilson Kennedy, Vice Moderator
Andy James
Marsha Zell Anson
Mark Boyd
Eliana Maxim
Carol McDonald
Stephanie Anthony
Denise Anderson, Co-Moderator of the 222nd General Assembly (2016)
Jan Edmiston, Co-Moderator of the 222nd General Assembly (2016)
Leon Lovell-Martin
Lynn Hargrove
Kathy Matsushima
Marcia Mount Shoop
J. Herbert Nelson II, Ex Officio

PHS Board Members
George Abdos, Chair
Ernest Higginbotham
William Leonard
Ben Chandler
Jane Carol
William Marshall
Steve Grace
Michael Livingston
Joan Bergsteingsson

**OGA Louisville Staff:**
Tricia Dykers Koening
Laurie Griffiths
Tom Hay
Jerry VanMarter
Cora Brown
Kerry Rice
Brunhilda Williams-Curington
Robina Winbush
Jake Souder

**PHS Philadelphia Staff:**
Beth Hessel
Nancy Taylor
Fred Tannenbaum
Kim Shirey
John Wood
Takiyah Cuyler
Lorraine Brown

**Way Forward Commission**
Mark Hostetler, Moderator
Matthew Eardley

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly reviewed the proposed meeting agenda, and –

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**VOTED** to approve the proposed agenda, as presented at today’s meeting.

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly reviewed the proposed meeting minutes, and –

**MINUTES APPROVAL**

**VOTED** to approve all minutes as presented.
Moderator Gaddis gave her report – requested that COGA members sign their ethics policy and return to recorder by end of day.
The Co-Moderators report is attached to the minutes. Co-Moderator Anderson gave highlights of their report.

The Stated Clerk gave highlights of trips, focus and vision for his term up to this point.

Meeting recessed for 15 minutes
Meeting Reconvened with Overview of OGA utilizing staffing chart. Each Director explained how their units operated.

Tom Hay – GAMS
Beth Hessel – PHS – largest protestant archive in the country – written report is attached
Jerry VanMarter – Communications – written report is attached
Rev. Robina Winbush – Ecumenical & Ecclesial EEC
Kerry Rice - Mid Council Ministries – Kerry Rice - The Office of the Stated Clerk - Q&A to the respective area

- Shared PHS strategic Plan
- Beth Hessel – Report of the PHS Exec. Dir. Written report is attached to this report
- Report from George Abdo, PHS Board Chair

Board Member Nominees
Michael Livingston
William Yoo
William Leonard
(Information and candidates on report B-03 which is attached).

- The board is down to 14 members and desperately needs to recruit new members
The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly reviewed the report on the proposed board nominees and –
VOTED to approve the three (3) above stated nominees to become members of the PHS Board.

Joint members read over the Notes on Covenant of Understanding between PHS & COGA (Item B- 06 – attached to minutes)

- This is a delegated board – with authority to oversee PHS.

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly reviewed the covenant of understanding and the notes and –

VOTED to affirm the covenant of understanding for the next three (3) years.

The Committee acknowledged the birthdays of Laurie Griffiths and Lorraine Brown.

Evening Closing worship was led by Kathy Matsushima

Meeting recessed at 5:532 pm by Moderator Gaddis

CONVERSATION ON COVENANT OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PHS & COGA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF BIRTHDAYS

EVENING CLOSING WORSHIP

MEETING RECESS FOR EVENING

The COGA Meeting Wednesday, Sept. 20, 2017

Meeting reconvened at 8:35 am by Moderator Gaddis in Conference Rooms A&B at Presbyterian Center.

- Report from GACEIR by Kathy Matsushima & Robina Winbush
  Starting work around intentional bias and antiracism Interaction with community at Stony Point.

- PHS Board Liaison report Margaret Elliott – written & attached

- PMA Audit Cmte. report – Stephanie Anthony working on several audits
  Audit Cmte. sessions are closed because quite a lot of info is personnel related thus needs to be closed.

MEETING RECONVENE

REPORTS OF COGA MEMBERS SERVING ON OTHER GA COMMITTEES
• COGA Leadership Meeting report from Newark is to start putting together long-range planning for 223rd GA. Will be approaching this GA differently.

• No other reports at this time

At 8:55 Meeting recessed to attend morning chapel.

Meeting Reconvened at 9:50 am by Moderator Gaddis and then placed Vice Moderator Kennedy in the Chair.

• WCRC report by Robina Winbush
  This meeting happens every 7 years.
  Pre-conference meeting June 28-29, 2017
  Plenary began on June 30, 2017
  Get PowerPoint from Jake
  Watched the presentation of Jeanneke – Rev. Winbush sent out the link of her presentation of Public Witness Cmte. highlights
  Election of new president.
  For more information go to: www.WCRC.ch/gc2017

• Big Tent Reflections
  Theme: Race, Reconciliation, Reformation
  Attendance: approximately 600
  • Good crowd
  • 2nd time to be on a college campus
  • Was able to stay within budget

• 1st Plenary – Local pastors to offer their conversation in forum setting
  o Was positive to offer journeys to churches in the area
  o Lesson learned from presbytery hosting both Big Tent and upcoming GA was Positive experience now have a cadre of volunteers for GA and great excitement
  o Question about childcare for upcoming GA – do not offer childcare – offer reimbursement by established guidelines to attendees that qualify
Worship leadership & worship time was a “High Time in the Lord”
Workshop leaders need to be present not skyped or Zoomed in

**Update on staffing rationale and Personnel Searches**
- The Manager of Admin. – Cora Brown gave overview from document on the packet D-03 and org chart B-00
- Open positions
  - Gave current open positions as of today
- Gave filled positions as of today
- OGA has an Intern, Madeline Hart-Andersen

The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly reviewed the documents presented and –

**VOTED** to approve current staffing rationale and organizational chart included in meeting papers.
- Important to create space to build relationships & trust
  - need the space to ask questions at next joint meeting need to build a relationship
- Still a question about accountability – why does PHS Board send their minutes to the GA? Should that be the case? That is a structural issue.
- Beginning to start a relationship by holding a retreat in January 2018 for OGA in Louisville and PHS in Philadelphia.
- Is there a summary of the history of the issues between COGA and PHS?
  - Complicated layered complexities but nothing written – struggles about unconscious biases
  - Should there be conversation to explain what did happen?
  - Determine a way to go forward – accepting what has happened and that it may never be resolved
  - PHS is a central part of narrative of the Office of the General Assembly

**UPDATE ON STAFFING RATIONALE AND PERSONNEL ISSUES**

**DEBRIEF OF JOINT SESSION WITH PHS BOARD**
Diversity is a major issue for PHS board members – question needs to be brought to the table for various reasons – seems to be a need to keep white & privileged

In order for the church to do better going forward there needs to be a name associated with the “elephant in the room”.

History is the conversation being raised in this room today – Is the PHS Board a governance board or a fund-raising board? And the PHS board then wondered who are we? Who does COGA want that board to be. Covenant was established to start that conversation.

The PHS Board was established to be a fund-raising board because it became apparent that funds were needed but over time a vacuum has been created and the PHS Board kind of filled that vacuum.

Probably the leadership from COGA/Stated Clerk/leadership from PHS Board – possible person is Steve Grace and maybe a newer member – Michael Livingston

- **Action Item:** Meeting with PHS Board Leadership by COGA leadership with additions and report back at the Spring 2018 meeting.

Meeting recessed for 15 minutes by Vice Moderator Kennedy.
Meeting Reconvened at 11:22 am by Vice Moderator Kennedy.

- OGA draft budget – John Wood & Takiyah Cuyler –Is attached as D-08a.
  - Balance sheet highlights
  - Major Budget Issues
  - 70% of Presbyteries pay 100% of billed Per Capita
  - Look at slide – OGA expects to be under expense by 5% by end of 2017

- Per Capita Budget is attached as D-08b Church does have an abundance –
denomination has funds

Initiatives by The Stated Clerk

- Hands & Feet
- Training Institute - If more funds might it include ruling elders – thinks it currently includes teaching elders – no history is known – no instruction given
- Diversity Capacity
- Utilizing space in the center at 100 Witherspoon St.
- Cannot approach budget from position of scarcity (cost control) – obligated to extend ourselves at least to break even
- The Stated Clerk has offered an opportunity to re-focus/retool/look outside the box for solutions
- Is this budget enough – this is a balanced budget – there are reserves
- Current Per capita rate is $7.50 for 2017-2018
- $3.00 increase on Per Capita proposed for 2018 – 2020
- Mid Council Relations have a large place in this budget
- OGA office will need to assist the Mid Councils
- The center of the church is not 100 Witherspoon – it is the communities of the church
- How will this be communicated to Mid Councils for a win-win & are excited about being engaged
- Use technology for Stated Clerk to reach out to congregations
Meeting reconvened at 1:00 pm by Vice Moderator Kennedy

Further discussion about per Capita dollars in Per Capita Budget

Would be better to hear about positives – introduce comprehensive plan including all caucuses (vision first) and then speak about Per Capita increase (the cost - later).

**Plenary E - Continuation of Committee Reports**

PMA – debrief. Wilson Kennedy: Because PMA has had a series of closed meetings – there is nothing to report

Teresa Waggener and Amanda Craft reported Immigration Work Updates –
- The Stated Clerk spoke about possibility of Sanctuary in the building and possibly the city

All Agency Review Committee – Debra Block (via conference call) Document E-01

- Announcement in August from AAR & WFC that they would not be recommending a merger of OGA & PMA. They both have distinct differences, tasks. Felt that announcement would relieve stress so that agencies could do their missions and work.
- Will be getting from Eric Bean - subcommittee – a new openness for 2 headings
- Wish to have reflections – Kerry has and will distribute.
- Beginning to see committee’s responsibility as less a product and more a process and assessment
- Looking to have open conversation time with Dave Davis next month(October) with Mid Councils.

Conference call closed in prayer by Moderator Gaddis.
Vision 20-20 Update: Lisa Juica – conference call

Meeting in churches
January 2018 – should have a Vision Statement
Could you give comments from listening sessions

- Social justice
- Community/witness
- Surprising response – What is on your heart?
  More a cry of lament.
- Many places where Cmte. members are asking
  the questions and sparking energy in the
denomination

Way Forward Commission – members in attendance

Debrief of COGA Coordinating Cmte. & Way Forward
Commission Lunch
Attached is the Mid Term Report from the Way Forward
Commission.
How do you prepare commissioners to get background
information before being placed into their committees to be
informed.

From joint lunch yesterday – how to get information
disseminated

How much sway does the COGA Coordinating Cmte have
that they can ensure that everything is done with the utmost
care and that the current Moderators could invoke the
provision to have previous commissioners from 3 years back
be appointed as Moderators of Committees...

Vision 20-20/AAR/WFC will work where possible to offer
recommendations jointly.

Visual reference of all agencies org charts with pictures and
names

Encourage selection of commissioners very early so that
training can take place earlier
Moved and Second that COGA enables Barb/J. J. Herbert/Wilson to write a letter to WFC affirming the actions from their September 18th meeting. Amend to postpone to tomorrow morning (Thursday, September 21, 2017) at 10:30 am. Amendment Carried. Amended motion to Postpone Definitely to tomorrow morning (Thursday, September 21, 2017) at 10:30 am discuss writing a letter WFC affirming the actions from their September 18th meeting. Carried.

The five conversations for collaborative Way Forward as opposed to Way forward telling the church what should be the Way Forward:

1. Shared Services
2. Institutional culture
3. Communications & integration
4. Usage of vacant Building space
5. Working together engaging diverse voices – what obligations

Action Item: The Stated Clerk is recommending the election of Assistant and Associate Stated Clerks per document E-05

Moved and Second COGA will forward the Assistant & Associate Clerks recommendation to the 223rd GA. Motion Carried Unanimously

The Vice Moderator spoke about the forming of the Mid Council Working Group – he explained the formation of the new working group.

Recess at 3:10 pm. To Break out into small groups from 3:45 to 5:00 pm.

COGA in Executive session from 5:00 – 6:30pm

Entire meeting group and OGA staff went to Salmon Bake at home of Jerry VanMarter.
Thursday Morning September 21, 2017
Reconvened at 8:45am by Moderator Gaddis
COGA Back into Executive Session
Reconvened at 10:10 am
Worship led by Rev. Leon Lovell-Martin
Report out of Exec. Session

Session 1 – Evaluation of the Stated Clerk’s 1st year
Session 2 – Discussed personnel issues as they related to
PMAB Governance Task Force and OGA

223rd GA report from T. Hay for St. Louis MO – PowerPoint attached.

70% of presbyteries send the minimum of delegates to past Gas.

Conversation with the Stated Clerk regarding issues about having GA in St. Louis, MO

It is racially, statistically and numerically impossible to sustain this church if it stays as is which is: 91% Caucasian.

Drawn into the context, growth, development and health of this particular city – contextual reality of the city.

Not only an issue of race but also an opportunity to engage in radical discipleship.

Tom presented 4 questions about holding a meeting in St. Louis –

1. How do we engage local community interests in St. Louis in this conversation?
2. How do we ensure that African Americans and other marginalized and all people of color are safe?
3. How do we most strategically leverage our voice for justice?
4. How do we best stand in solidarity with those in St. Louis who are engaged in this struggle?

**Moved & Second** that the COGA Committee affirm our intention to hold the 223rd General Assembly of the PCUSA in June 2018 in St. Louis, MO and we believe that GOD has led us to this place at this time. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**Moved and Second** that we encourage all Presbyterians to join us engaging in service and justice opportunities prior to, during and following the 223rd General Assembly. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**Moved and Second** to invite a small group of people to join us in doing community based training and engagements. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Originally St. Louis was a first opportunity but given circumstances it has become a way to go forward.

Request for action:

**Moved & second** Per Diem D-06 Change policy to $55.00 per day. **Motion Carried**

**Moved & second** to amend the policy for room reimbursement D-07. **Motion Carried**

**Action item:** Need to appoint group to receive requests for dependent care funds.

**Action item:** Need to appoint group for TSADs

Co-Moderator Anderson just received a message from the Moderator of the Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery that she is about to issue a press statement affirming the 223rd GA in St. Louis, MO. Press statement attached. Motion from yesterday (Wednesday, September 20, 2017) that was Postponed Definitely to Thursday at 10:30 AM. **MOTION REGARDING AFFIRMATION OF WFC**

Motion was:
Amended motion to Postpone Definitely to tomorrow morning (Thursday, September 21, 2017) at 10:30 am decision about writing a letter of affirmation to WFC.

Moved and Second that COGA enables Barb/J. J. Herbert/Wilson to write a letter to WFC affirming the actions from their September 18th meeting. Motion Lost

Moved & Second to affirm the work of the WFC, AAR and the Vision 20-20 this far and COGA is holding them in prayer. MOTION CARRIED.

According to the COGA manual for those persons who are rotating off the committee there needs to be a committee formed - the committee will be Members: Carol McDonald/Marcia Mount Shoop & Eliana Maxim.

New COGA member Rev. Luis Jose Ocasio Torres from PR Developmental Psychologist and Pastor – nominated and appointed to open position on Committee Of the General Assembly (COGA).

Other Announcements

Having no further business before the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly there was a Motion to adjourn – Motion Carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:50 am on Thursday, September 21, 2017

Respectfully submitted,

Brunhilda Williams-Curington
Recorder