

**MINUTES OF THE TRIENNIAL MEETING OF THE  
GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE FELLOWSHIP**

**July 13, 1997**

The Triennial Meeting of the General Council was held at 3:10 P.M. on Sunday, July 13, 1997 at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

The following members were present, constituting a quorum:

Sara Blackstock  
Matthew Block  
Robert Bruyn  
Robert Burns  
Gary Deinstadt  
Avi Dogim  
Lila Dogim  
Stephen Dreier  
Scott Forsythe  
Christel Garrick  
Marvin Gawryn  
Janet Farrington Graham  
John W. Hales  
Eef Hoedemaker  
Gard Jameson  
Richard E. Johnson  
David Kantor  
Michelle Klimesh  
Marilynn Kulieke  
John Lange  
Joseph Liszka  
L. Dan Massey  
Harry McMullan III  
Dolores Nice  
Charles Olivea  
Stephanie L. Shaefer  
Mo Siegel  
B rian Smith  
Lee Smith  
Paula Thompson  
Steven Zendt

Elizabeth Bartley, Earlene Greene, Geri Johnson, Paul Knott, and Steve McIntosh were absent.

David N. Elders was present and acting secretary until the election of officers. A proxy naming Richard Johnson had been received by the secretary from Geri Johnson.

Steve Dreier, President, called the meeting to order and began with a reading from *The Urantia Book*.

It was agreed that the dinner break would be from 6:00 to 7:30 P.M.

Steve Dreier then welcomed the newly elected Councilors to the meeting: Matthew Block, Gary Deinstadt, Christel Garrick, Earlene Greene (not present), Michelle Klimesh, Dolores Nice, Charles Olivea, and Stephanie Shaefer. He also noted with thanks those Councilors who were retiring from service. Steve asked that a unanimous resolution be placed in the minutes thanking these retiring Councilors for their service and asking that the President write a letter confirming that appreciation.

The President then asked if there was any objection to placing the elections as the first order of business to be taken up by the Council. There were no objections. As required by the Fellowship constitution, the Executive Committee presented the following nominations slate consisting of two options:

Proposed Slate of Officers

And Committee Chairs

The Executive Committee is proposing two slate options consequent to its placing two candidates in nomination for the office of President. In addition, it is also proposing under both options several changes in committee chairs.

	<i>Office</i>	<i>Option 1</i>	<i>Option 2</i>
Farrington	President	Dan Massey	Janet
	Vice President	Janet Farrington	Mo Siegel
Klimesh	Secretary	Michelle Klimesh	Michelle
McMullan	Treasurer	Harry McMullan	Harry
Kulieke	Secretary General	Geri Johnson	Marilynn

Lange	IFC	John Lange	John
Dogim	Publications	Avi Dogim	Avi
Johnson	Charter	Paula Thompson	Geri
Liszka	Finance	Joe Liszka	Joe
Massey	Judicial	Marilynn Kulieke	Dan
Dreier	Education	Steve Dreier	Steve
Thompson	Domestic Extension	Mo Siegel	Paula
Kantor	Special Projects	David Kantor	David
Jameson	Fraternal Relations	Gard Jameson	Gard

Steve Dreier explained that the Executive Committee in its deliberations in creating a slate could not reach unanimity on a single recommendation.

For the office of President, the names of Janet Farrington and Dan Massey were placed in nomination. The chair, Stephen Dreier, then asked for nominations from the floor. Inasmuch as there were none, the nominations were declared closed.

A **motion** was made and seconded to have the candidates speak to the Council prior to the election on their vision for the organization and how they might manage the organization.

Discussion followed.

The motion carried (25 for, 2 against, 2 abstain). After making their statements, the candidates left the room. Members made supportive comments for the candidates.

A **motion** was made, seconded, and carried to call the question (29 for, 0 against, 0 abstain).



Harry McMullan 31 for, 1 abstain

Marilynn Kulieke's name was placed into nomination for General-Secretary. There were no nominations from the floor. After discussion, the vote was taken. The tellers tallied the ballots and reported:

Marilynn Kulieke 31 for, 1 abstain

John Lange's name was placed into nomination for the 6-year term on the International Fellowship Committee, and as its Chair. There were no nominations from the floor. After discussion, the vote was taken. The tellers tallied the ballots and reported:

John Lange 31 for, 1 abstain

Avi Dogim's name was placed into nomination for the 1-year term on the Publications Committee as its chair. Marvin Gawryn was nominated from the floor. The nomination was declined. After discussion, the vote was taken. The tellers tallied the ballots and reported:

Avi Dogim 31 for, 1 abstain

Geri Johnson's name was placed into nomination for the 6-year term on the Charter Committee, and as its chair. Marvin Gawryn was nominated from the floor. After discussion, the vote was taken. The tellers tallied the ballots and reported:

Marvin Gawryn 23 for

Geri Johnson 8 for, 1 abstain

Joe Liszka's name was placed into nomination for the 6-year term on the Finance Committee, and as its chair. There were no nominations from the floor. After discussion, the vote was taken. The tellers tallied the ballots and reported:

Joe Liszka 31 for, 1 abstain

Dan Massey's name was placed into nomination for the 6-year term on the Judicial Committee, and as its chair. There were no nominations from the floor. After discussion, the vote was taken. The tellers tallied the ballots and reported:

Dan Massey 32 for

Stephen Dreier's name was placed into nomination for the 6-year term on the Education Committee, and as its chair. There were no nominations from the floor. After discussion, the

vote was taken. The tellers tallied the ballots and reported:

Stephen Dreier 32 for

Paula Thompson's name was placed into nomination for the 6-year term on the Domestic Extension Committee, and as its chair. There were no nominations from the floor. After discussion, the vote was taken. The tellers tallied the ballots and reported:

Paula Thompson 31 for, 1 abstain

The chair recessed the meeting at 10:15 P.M. and called it back to order at 10:22 P.M.

There was discussion of the remaining committee vacancies to be filled. Since there were newly elected committee chairs who had not had the opportunity to talk with their members, or evaluate the needs of the committee, the request was to leave the expired positions vacant until the next meeting of the Council, if possible, when the committee chair could make a more studied recommendation. It was pointed out that this could be accomplished by either not nominating anyone for the vacancy, or in the casting of one's vote.

The President called for nominations for the 3-year term on the Charter Committee. Larry Bowman was nominated. After discussion, the vote was taken. The tellers tallied the ballots and reported:

Larry Bowman 25 for, 7 abstain

The President declared Larry Bowman elected.

The chair recessed the meeting at 10:43 P.M. to reconvene at 9:00 A.M. the following day.

The chair reconvened the meeting at 9:11 A.M.

The chair announced that balloting would continue by separate ballot until elections for committee positions were complete. Scott Forsythe indicated that he had some concerns about the way elections were being conducted. He would bring these up as an agenda item.

The Secretary, Michelle Klimesh, was ill. Janet Farrington appointed Steve Dreier to act as Secretary.

The President called for nominations for the 1-year and 3-year terms on the Judicial Committee. There were no nominations. It was agreed that recommendations would be presented at the next meeting of the Council.

The President called for nominations for the 3-year and 5-year terms on the Education Committee. Alison Gardner was nominated for the 3-year term and Charles Olivea for the 5-year

term. After discussion, the vote was taken. The tellers tallied the ballots and reported:

Alison Gardner 28 for, 0 against, 0 abstain

Charles Olivea 29 for, 0 against, 2 abstain

The President called for nominations for 5-year term on the Domestic Extension Committee. There were no nominations.

The President called for nominations for the 6-year term on the Special Projects Committee. Lawrence Brown was nominated. During discussion it was pointed out that the candidate had technical computer skills which included knowledge of video conferencing. The vote was taken. The tellers tallied the ballots and reported:

Lawrence Brown 30 for, 1 abstain

The President called for nominations for the 4-year term on the Finance Committee. There were no nominations.

The President called for nominations for the 6-year term on the Fraternal Relations Committee. There were no nominations.

With the completion of elections the General Council went into open session and observers were invited to join the meeting.

The Chair announced that the council would go into closed session at 12:30 P.M. before the recess for lunch and would continue in closed session when reconvening after lunch.

Charles Olivea read from page 2093 of *The Urantia Book*.

The chair asked for additions to the agenda.

C Brian Smith requested consideration of a public relations matter.

C Scott Forsythe requested consideration of the election process.

C Harry McMullan requested consideration of a donation matter, to be discussed in closed session.

C Marilyn Kulieke asked for consideration of the theme for the 1998 mid-year meeting of the General Council.

The minutes for the February 7, 1997 Special Meeting of the General Council in Kansas City,

previously mailed to the members, were approved.

The census of members for December 31, 1996 was presented as follows:

Society Members

The First Society . . . . .	61
First Society of Los Angeles . . . . .	120
Society of Glenview . . . . .	14*
First Society of Oklahoma . . . . .	197*
Orvonton Society of Chicago . . . . .	35
Fort Wayne Society . . . . .	25
Evergreen Society of Washington . . . . .	17*
First Society of Houston . . . . .	32
Golden Gate Circle for Students of <i>The Urantia Book</i> . . . . .	49
Connecticut Fellowship for Readers of <i>The Urantia Book</i> . . . . .	54
Dallas Society . . . . .	54
Rocky Mountain Spiritual Fellowship . . . . .	126*
Northern Light Society of Alaska . . . . .	36*
Pilot Light Society of Seattle . . . . .	36*
Heart of America Society . . . . .	57*
Society of Greater New York for Readers of <i>The Urantia Book</i> . . . . .	26
Ontario Fellowship for Readers of <i>The Urantia Book</i> . . . . .	35*
Grand Canyon Society of <i>Urantia Book</i> Readers . . . . .	73
First Wisconsin Society for Readers of <i>The Urantia Book</i> . . . . .	<u>25</u>

Total society members	1072
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Members-at-large	
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298

Total Fellowship members	1370
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\* No report submitted for 1996. Figure based on office records.

**Annual Reports.** The President asked for any comments or questions on the annual reports which had been previously mailed to the members.

**Treasurer's Report:** The balance sheet was discussed. Note that includes inventory startup expenses for publishing, which should be taken out.

**Domestic Extension:** Names from expo activities are incorporated into the Fellowship mailing list.

**Education Committee:** Additional Wrightwood seminars will be solicited. Avi Dogim brought up the question of a session in Florida to meet the expectations of the Latin readers from South America. Gard Jameson indicated that we thought about having the mid-year meeting in Florida. Lila Dogim indicated that it should be a study meeting. Janet Farrington ruled that we would discuss the mid-year meeting later down in the agenda.

John Lange said he understood that we had planned to have people from Latin America during Summer 1998. He suggested we reconsider the venue for the 1998 Summer Seminar and move it from Washington DC to Florida.

Dan pointed out that the Vancouver conference program was designed to be portable.

Janet moved the question to the Education Committee for suggestions about how to proceed.

**Publications Committee:** Avi Dogim, chair, intends to put out a quarterly publication. The object is to increase frequency and decrease volume. During discussion the following points were raised:

- C Suggestion that original *Study Group Herald* (SGH) format be reconsidered.
- C Put our publications on the Internet.
- C What happened to SGH collecting material from societies and study groups?
- C The need to achieve consistency in our publications.

- C Should we charge a \$15 subscription fee? We would have difficulty in reaching the people you want to since they will probably not subscribe.
- C The need for translating materials into Spanish and French.
- C Spanish translators are available in the reader community.
- C Move back to small format publications.
- C Strive for graphic excellence; pay for professional services; strive for image continuity.
- C Give away publications and charge some kind of a membership fee.
- C Publish the Mighty Messenger on a quarterly basis and send it to whole mailing list.
- C Publish the Herald for members only.
- C Have two types of publications:scholarly and fraternal; the latter is the one to concentrate on.

**Finance Committee:** Harry McMullan spoke of the difficulty of getting contributions from members. Joe Liszka, the new chair of the Finance Committee, thought that we would need \$250,000 to \$300,000 to get started. It was pointed out that it is always a challenge to get more individuals to contribute, but it is important try to get the greatest number to contribute something. A suggestion was made that we must decide what we want to do as an organization and the finances will follow. Some may perceive that is difficult to participate in The Fellowship while the International Urantia Association provides an easier path. There is a connection between fund raising and membership involvement.

**Special Projects Committee:** Congratulations were expressed to David Kantor, chair, for his work on the Fellowship website. A question was raised as to how material was selected for placement on the website. Some discussion followed about reviewing material placed on the web. Legal implications would be discussed in closed session.

**Family Life Committee (Ad Hoc):** Sara Blackstock had contacted International Urantia Association members in Southern California who are doing Family Life activities. She plans to talk with them about cooperative efforts. She reviewed the Summer Seminar teen program and some of the difficulties experienced with unsupervised late night activity. The request for volunteers to participate in the program, including those without children, worked well and would be used at future conferences.

**International Conference 1999(IC99) Progress Report:** Gard Jameson, Chair, reported that the IC99 planning committee met. With the University of British Vancouver being the site of the

conference they discussed some of the problems that surfaced at the Summer Seminar, such as the food service choices. A new state-of-the-art auditorium is under construction, the Chan Performing Arts Center, which would be ready for our use by 1999. Jennifer Siegel offered to again help plan the country fair event that proved so popular at the last international conference.

The dates for the conference have been set for Saturday August 7, to Thursday, August 12, 1999. Tuesday will be a day off. The opening session will be done by Sequoia, a native American. It will be a healing ceremony. In asking for questions, a concern was raised that we might prefer to have an opening to the conference using our own rituals and ceremonies. In reply it was noted that Sequoia is a reader of *The Urantia Book*, and is expressing his views of the teachings through his culture.

**Fraternal Relations Committee:** Gard Jameson, Chair, reported we would make materials available to the Parliament of World Religions, which could also be used with Area Coordinators.

He reported NAIN (North American Interfaith Network) has developed some meaningful programs, and would like to see the Fellowship involved in these activities at some point. It may be premature, because some of these programs have not really taken form yet.

At the request of Harry McMullan, the meeting went into closed session.

A lunch recess was taken at 1:00 P.M. The meeting reconvened, in closed session, at 2:23 P.M. with a moment of silence.

The council continued in closed session to discuss legal matters and the proposed receipt of a gift of property.

A **motion** was made and seconded that we employ an attorney as general counsel to advise us on legal matters. The motion was seconded. Discussion followed.

A **motion** to call the question passed by a 2/3rds majority.

The **motion** to hire an attorney to act as our general counsel carried (27 for, 1 against, 0 abstain).

The Chair appointed Dan Massey to lead the search for counsel, seeking the advice of other council members with useful experience in such matters. He would report to the Executive Committee as soon as information was available.

**Meeting with URANTIA Foundation Trustees:** The formation of a negotiating team was discussed. A consensus was reached that it be composed of the following members of the Executive Committee: Janet Farrington Graham, chair, Steve Dreier, Marilyn Kulieke, John Lange, Dan Massey, and Mo Siegel. They would report back to the Executive Committee for approval of all options. The creation of this ad hoc team was approved unanimously.

After a brief recess the meeting resumed in open session at 4:30 P.M.

A general discussion of philosophy followed, generally making the point that there should be unity in the community if possible.

Stephen Zendt left the meeting.

Resolutions from the 1997 Triennial Delegate Assembly were considered next.

### **Resolution 2: Study Group Consultants**

WHEREAS at the time of publication it was advised by the revelators that “the book is being given to those who are ready for it long before the day of its world-wide mission. Thousands of study groups must be brought into existence...”;

WHEREAS it is the view of many long-time students of *The Urantia Book* that study groups are not thriving. The Study Group Directory, while an excellent tool, is merely a list of study groups, and a more personal touch is necessary to revitalize the study of the book;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the function of the Area Coordinators be more fully focused on the support and nurture of study groups.

After discussion a **motion** was made, seconded, and carried to receive Resolution 2 and send to the Domestic Extension Committee for further development.

### **Resolution 4: Request that Societies be Informed and Consulted**

WHEREAS Societies are intended by the Constitution of The Fellowship to be the component parts of The Fellowship, and

WHEREAS Societies are channels through which Fellowship members hold their membership, and

WHEREAS Societies are the most effective agents for development of local study and fellowship in the movement.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Council and Executive Committee formally and promptly apprise the Societies of their actions and decisions, and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Council and Executive Committee consider the impact on Societies of all actions which they are contemplating.

After discussion a **motion** was made, seconded, and carried to accept Resolution 4 and send it to

the Executive Committee for further action.

### **Resolution 5: Public Information Program**

WHEREAS public awareness of *The Urantia Book* is rapidly increasing, especially on the Internet,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the General Council develop and implement a comprehensive public information program to support Fellowship purposes and activities, and to assist Fellowship members in dealing with mass media situations as they may arise. The purpose of the program would not be to encourage sudden increased attention in mass media, but simply to deal effectively with evolutionary developments that are taking place.

Such a program would seek input and involvement from individual members, societies, interested readers, the Central Office, and Department Committees. The program could include:

- " Review existing public information policies, procedures, and tools.
- " Evaluate needs for expanding and upgrading public information services, developing new services as necessary and feasible.
- " Publish and distribute public information guidelines for members and interested readers, including a list of available tools and resources. Provide training.
- " Monitor public communication about *The Urantia Book*, societies, members, associates, and readers on the Internet and in the print and broadcast media worldwide.
- " Develop a plan for dealing with mass media situations that could develop.

After discussion a **motion** was made, seconded, and carried (18 for, 6 against, 0 abstain) to receive Resolution 5 and send it to the vice-president to address the issues raised and for further work.

### **Resolution 9: Support of Urantian Religious Belief and Practice**

WHEREAS The Fellowship includes within its constitutionally stated purposes "...fostering a religion...";

WHEREAS many current members of The Fellowship hold religious beliefs that are born from teachings that are revealed in *The Urantia Book*, and are engaging in group worship and group

religious identification based on these beliefs,

WHEREAS many current members of The Fellowship are realizing the crucial importance of establishing a Urantia religious identity that is recognized by the world at large,

WHEREAS the emerging revelatory religion born from the teachings presented in *The Urantia Book* needs appropriate, unencumbered name identification and symbolism,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that The Fellowship for Readers of *The Urantia Book* hereby intends to support the emergence of clearly defined Urantia religious groups. Through this resolution we wish to give our blessings to all members of The Fellowship who so desire to openly distinguish themselves as religionists and *Urantia Book* believers, with a mission to live, teach, and honor the high spiritual teachings and concepts within *The Urantia Book*..

After discussion a **motion** was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to receive Resolution 5 for submission to an ad hoc committee for further study.

Janet Farrington Graham appointed an ad hoc committee of Dan Massey, chair, Steve Dreier, Sara Blackstock and Dolores Nice to investigate the matter and report back at the midyear meeting of the Council.

### **Resolution 13: *The Spiritual Fellowship Journal***

We recognize that members of The Fellowship have a wide range of attitudes toward religion and we rejoice in this diversity.

We therefore petition the General Council to assume the publication of *The Spiritual Fellowship Journal* which will initiate a platform for discussion of the theological, philosophical, and polity positions of religious groups germane to the Fifth Epochal Revelation.

After discussion a **motion** was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to receive resolution 5 and send it to the Publications Committee for study and recommendations.

The Publications Committee chair will report back to the Executive Committee at their October meeting.

There was consensus agreement that the President would send a personal letter to each Delegate attending the Triennial Delegate Assembly informing them about the disposition of their resolutions sent to the General Council.

General Council and Triennial Delegate Assembly minutes will also be sent to society presidents and secretaries.

John Lange spoke with Ron Louie about cooperating with URANTIA Foundation-International

Urantia Association on joint projects. It was agreed that John Lange will follow up with Ron Louie and report back to the Executive Committee.

Sara Blackstock asked about the Serbo-Croatian translation as a possible cooperative activity with URANTIA Foundation. Tonia Baney had spoken with her about this in the past. The matter was referred to the Ad Hoc Translation Committee, Avi Dogim, Chair, for further investigation.

David Kantor said the Fellowship Website is getting a lot of traffic - 300 people every 24 hours.

A question was raised about General Councilors who fail to attend council meetings. Janet Farrington Graham would call Steve McIntosh about this; she would call Paul Knott if he does not attend the meeting in February 1998.

It was agreed to hold the midyear meeting of the General Council in Oklahoma City. The dates proposed are February 5-8. The Executive Committee will meet Thursday evening, February 5 at 7:00 P.M. and continue on Friday until 5:00 P.M. The General Council will convene on Friday, February 6 at 7:00 P.M., continue on Saturday, February 7, and conclude by 12:00 noon on Sunday, February 8.

The 1998 Summer Seminar location will be in the Georgetown area of Washington DC, probably in the second or third week of July.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 P.M., *sine die*.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman