

[Approved at meeting of July 20, 2003]

The Urantia Book Fellowship  
Meeting of the General Council  
January 31, 2003

A Special Meeting of the General Council of The Urantia Book Fellowship was held at 7:10 P.M. on Friday, January 31, 2003 in Las Vegas, Nevada at the Tuscany Suites Hotel.

President Avi Dogim called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M. PST.  
The following members were present, constituting a quorum.

Sara Blackstock  
Beth Bartley  
Matthew Block  
Robert Bruyn  
Robert Burns  
Linda Buselli  
Gary Deinstadt  
Avi Dogim  
Lila Dogim  
Steve Dreier  
Marvin Gawryn  
Larry Geis  
John Hales  
John Hay  
Doreen Heyne  
David Kantor  
Rebecca Kantor  
Michelle Klimesh  
Marilynn Kulieke  
John Lange  
Dan Massey  
Harry McMullan  
Charles Montgomery  
Dolores Nice  
Charles Olivea  
Thomas Orjala  
Susan Ransbottom  
Bill Rocap  
Stephanie Schaffer  
Lee Smith  
Paul Snider  
Paula Thompson  
Stephen Zendt

Absent:

Agustin Arellano - proxy to Susan Ransbottom

Claudia Ayers - proxy to Lee Smith

Brian Smith – no proxy

33 present, 2 proxies, 3 absent. 35 votes total.

Reading from *The Urantia Book* – Bob Bruyn

Approval of the Agenda – The agenda given below was approved without adjustment.

1. Reading from *The Urantia Book*
2. Approval of the July Meeting Minutes (sent by email – no copies made)
3. EC retreat report
4. Uversa Press Update
5. Ad Hoc Marketing committee Report
6. Ad Hoc PR Committee Report
7. Ad Hoc Family Life Committee Report
8. SSS '03 Update
9. TDA preparations
10. IC '05 Update
11. Office Reorganization Update
  - a. Building Sale
  - b. Web Based Database & Other Issues
12. Standing Committee Reports
  - a. Finance
  - b. Membership
  - c. Judicial – potential constitutional revisions
  - d. Publications
  - e. Special Projects
  - f. Education
  - g. International Fellowship
  - h. Outreach
  - i. Interfaith
13. New Business

Approval of minutes of July 5, 2002 – Approved unanimously

President Avi Dogim reported on the Executive Committee “retreat” held from Tuesday to Thursday evening prior to the General Council meeting. The items discussed included “facing to the world,” translations, international outreach, organizational structure, and website, print publications, publishing *The Urantia Book*, and publishing derivative works.

The Executive Committee recognizes David Kantor’s outstanding work in developing the website. The website should distinguish between *The Urantia Book* and *The Urantia Book Fellowship*. Political material should be difficult to get at. The President appointed Steve Dreier, John Hales and Robert Burns to an ad-hoc committee to look at the Fellowship’s website and report back with suggestions by March 1.

Print publications were discussed. Linda Buselli was recognized for her outstanding work in managing the Fellowship's periodical publications.

Publishing The Urantia Book is viewed as consistent with Fellowship's mission. There are no immediate plans to publish translations.

David Kantor is doing a good job with the International Outreach committee. The policy is assistance without intrusion, and fostering study of The Urantia Book.

The Executive Committee recognized that no one in that group was under 50. Not many younger people seem to be getting involved. Ideas are needed to stimulate interest in the Fellowship's work among younger people.

An examination of the Fellowship's organizational structure is needed. Good committee work essential, but does not seem to be working in some of the standing committees. All work gets done by the chair. More people need to be involved in the process.

Harry McMullan and John Lange will look into going to book fair in Delhi, India.

A break was called at 9:10 P.M. The meeting resumed at 9:24 P.M.

Book Marketing Committee Report - Alison Gardner

Alison urges that we not back off on relationship with IPG. The committee is preparing a video to help train people to introduce The Urantia Book. It is a work in progress. A 10 minute video was shown to the group.

Uversa Press Report – Harry McMullan

Sales results of The Urantia Book have not been good. International Publishers Group has sold 1127 copies. We have invested \$30,000 with IPG which came from a contribution for that purpose. The Fellowship contributed \$5000. IPG gets a 65-67 percent discount. Uversa makes no money but we were hoping for distribution. But we are not getting distribution. We need to let it play out until contract is over – summer 03. If there are no results by then, drop them.

Paula Thompson described what was done with the 1996 printing – primarily in house marketing. At that time a grant of \$15,000 from Veritas was used for trade advertising. Uversa Press sold 11,000 books in one year in 96.

Alison agrees and requested the Uversa give IPG another 6 months and see what happens. She hopes that the promotional effort will pay off. The IPG contract expires in July. They expect us to be out on the road promoting, and produce derivative works to refresh interest.

There was an extended discussion on book marketing.

The President called a recess at 10:30 P.M.

The meeting resumed on Saturday, Feb. 1, 2003 9:10 A.M. Steven Zendt read a passage from the UB – on the Golden Rule – followed by a period of silence.

Mention was made of the space shuttle tragedy which took place this morning.

Agenda Item 7 - Family Life Committee Report – Sara Blackstock

Jerusalem Marketplace being shipped to Alaska for use in a program.

Agenda Item 8 - Summer Study Session – 03 – Lee Smith reporting.

Theme – “Revelation and the Religionist.”

The program will explore the “sources,” but is not limited to this topic.

It will also consider how to best present the book or its teachings to the public.

Sara Blackstock (Family Life) will do something also.

It is a 2.5 day event in East Stroudsburg, PA. Most details will be managed on the internet.

Dates: Triennial Delegate Assembly July 16 and 17 before Summer Session. The General Council begins July 20 in the afternoon.

Agenda Item 9 – Triennial Delegate Assembly – Bob Bruyn reporting.

Bob noted the importance of the TDA. It is important for candidates to fill out application forms, including existing councilors. It is important to look for budding leadership and encourage them to consider GC service.

Bob requested the continued service intention of councilors with expiring terms. Beth, Sara, Lila (uncertain) Avi, John Hay, Rebecca, Marilyn (not sure) Dan, Tom Orjala, Steven Zendt (no), Brian Smith (no).

Please use the new application form, available from John Hales, or on the website.

Comment: Paul Snider – When asking people to serve, we should try to frame the major issues that are facing the organization. What are the major leadership challenges we face as a fellowship. This will help draw people and give them focus. Lee Smith suggested using the SocAdmin list to do this, and also to educate the TDA.

Bob Bruyn noted that the idea of the annual TDA seems to have deteriorated. He recommends that the same person continue on for the three year period, not change each year.

Agenda Item 10 – IC05 – Doreen Heyne reporting

Lila Dogim and Doreen Heyne are co-chairs of the IC05 conference.

The selected site is Villanova University, near Philadelphia

Dates - July 30 to August 5, 2005.

It will be the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of the book.

Agenda Item 11 – Office Reorganization

Robert Burns reported on the sale of the Wrightwood Avenue Building. Mary Snider is listing agent. Listed at \$950,000. Some repair work is being done.

David Kantor reported that a web based database is technically in place. It will provide one place for all information. We need to develop procedures for access and use. The plan includes making publications available electronically.

Marilynn Kulieke asked if procedures in place for communications when Wrightwood office closes. Avi Dogim reported that the 800 number will move to the John Hales' home. That will be the contact number. Marilyn asked that contact numbers be posted to the GC. There will be a phone number and an email address.

Gary Deinstadt asked about getting listed in the phonebook as The Urantia Book Fellowship. John Hales was assigned to look into the matter.

A break of 15 min was called at 10:41 A.M. The meeting resumed at 11:04 A.M.

## STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Finance Committee Report – Robert Burns

It is very difficult to raise the budget. This year it is \$361,000.

Overhead costs are being reduced to a minimum – good fund raising point. New accounting procedures are helping to better understand and explain Fellowship finances. If we do not raise sufficient, restricted funds are used to make up the balance. We could do more if we had the funds. People are willing to work but funding limits some activities.

### Membership Committee – Bob Bruyn

Membership materials are finalized and will be posted on the Fellowship website in PDF format.

The Socadmin list has finished a third year. It has been a good tool for sharing ideas. Guidelines for participation are finalized incorporating a provision on confidentiality.

The Aloha Society (Hawaii) is in turmoil. Aloha Society. 8 members sent a letter to EC requesting guidance and assistance. The Executive Committee has discussed the matter and will provide some guidance. They will be advised to use their constitution to guide their actions.

### Judicial Committee – Dan Massey

The committee chair would like to focus on constitutional reform. An outline of potential changes to be considered, without prejudice, was described. It involved appointment rather than election of committee members; conversion of ad-hoc committees to standing committees, perhaps with merger, perhaps replacing other committees; redefinition of Special Projects to serve as a catch all or incubating committee; provision for representation of members at large, perhaps allowing them to elect TDA delegates; direct election for some of the officers; provision for dealing with defunct societies; presidents of societies might become the TDA; amend constitution to provide for a constitutional convention.

Some of these are by-law adjustments, some more complex.

Extended discussion followed.

A motion to limit debate was made, seconded and carried.

### Publications Committee – Linda Buselli

See printed reports sent by email.

Working on a Herald. Steven Zandt will be guest editor.

Considering doing the Mighty Messenger electronically.

Marilynn Kulieke suggested we need more information going to the community – more MM type vehicles – sent by mail. Gary Deinstadt agreed. The EC will look at it again.

### Special Projects Committee –

No report. Chair vacant.

### Education Committee – Lee Smith

The committee is considering another Wrightwood type seminar on family – the Kingdom of Heaven as a family concept.

The 2004 Summer Session may focus on presenting UB to the world, along with interfaith presentations. It is scheduled to be held in Santa Fe, New Mexico (altitude 7000 ft.).

Discussion followed on the subject of training teachers and leaders.

International Fellowship Committee – David Kantor

Help is needed with correspondence and with languages. Help is needed writing materials for international publications. The Jesuit group in Ecuador (60 people) will be putting on conference this year. Work continues on the Spanish section of the website.

Agustin Arellano is not at the meeting because he cannot get a visa. He moved, and the requirement is that he must be at an address for one year before getting a visa.

Outreach Committee – Paula Thompson

Two expos coming up. One in LA. Next in April in San Francisco. Spokane and New York also doing expos. Study group directory is online.

Interfaith Committee – Rebecca Kantor

The Interfaith Website continues to develop. Discussion is taking place about a retreat and also about involving people as adjuncts. The committee may make a presentation on Islam at the Summer Study Session.

New Business:

Thank You to Steven Zendt for 9 years of service.

Thanks to Avi Dogim for work done this week.

Executive Committee will meet at 9:00 A.M. tomorrow.

The General Council will meet at 10 A.M. tomorrow for worship.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 P.M.

Minutes submitted by Steve Dreier, Secretary