

American Baptist Churches of New York State  
Board of Mission Meeting  
March 4, 2023 - Minutes

Present:

**Officers:**

Lecia Rodriguez - President  
Leon Runner – Vice President  
Bruce Aikin – Secretary  
Jim Harriff – Treasurer

Claudia Little  
Patricia Ludwig and Ministers Council  
Howard Maxson  
Kenneth McKenzie  
Delma West (Committee on Ministry)

**Association Reps:**

David Harris IR  
Michael Dickinson LW  
William Stoklosa MA  
Letta Palmer MO  
Edris Hitchcock WE

**Staff:**

James Kelsey - Exec. Min.

**Auxiliary Organizations:**

Colleen Charsky (ABWM)

**At-Large:**

Elizabeth Fell-Dewalt

**ABC/USA Board of General Ministries:**

Merle McJunkin

- 1.0 The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM by the President, Lecia Rodriguez. There were 17 Board members and one staff member present. Due to the weather the meeting was entirely on Zoom. The meeting was recorded.
- 2.0 Devotions and Opening Prayer – Leon Runner gave a devotion based on Judges Chapter 4, about Deborah and other women in the Bible. He then opened the meeting with prayer.
- 3.0 Approval of Agenda (Document #1) –  
The following need to be added to the agenda: Raising the bookkeeper’s salary, voting on accepting the offer on the Wappinger Falls property. The agenda was approved as amended.
- 4.0 The Minutes of the December 2, 2022, meeting, were approved as submitted. (Document #2).

**Reports**

- 5.0 Executive Minister - Jim Kelsey (Documents #3 and #4)  
There were no questions about Jim’s written report (Document #3.)  
Document #4 is a report on the Wappinger Falls Church.  
The Grace Community Church’s attorney said the Wappinger Falls church can transfer the property. The letter from our lawyer, Catherine Hedgeman, to the Wappinger Falls church and the Pastor of Grace Community Church is in the report. A question was asked about who is responsible for the property? The Wappinger Falls Church must insure the building and maintain the property. Their attorney is not aware of Article 7, section 140, of the Religious Corporation Law regarding Baptist Churches. A local attorney commented that the property could be assessed for as much as \$900,000. The process could take years. Our lawyer is very good. She has been proactive throughout the process.

ABCNYS Board of Mission

March 4, 2023

2.

The former parsonage sale should be all right. The buyer's attorney has sent a proposal to our attorney.

Youth Training Event – There is \$4,466.75 left in grant monies. Our plan will be to give a \$500 grant to fund a youth ministry initiative for the first 10 participating churches to apply.

Should we form a committee for refugee resettlement? The Executive Minister is empowered by our rules to give grants of up to \$2,500.00 from the Ministry and Mission Fund. Possibly four or five churches could apply. Possible members for the committee were Mark Caruana and a member of the Board. It was moved by William Stoklosa and seconded by Howard Maxson that we expand the function of the Ministry and Mission Fund to support refugee resettlement. Motion carried.

6.0 Associate Executive Minister – Jim Kelsey for Jerrod Hugenot (Document #5)

There were no questions about Jerrod's written report.

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, David Van Brakle, who was the Associate Regional Pastor for the American Baptist Churches of New Jersey, took his own life. David and Jerrod were very good friends and he is at the memorial service. Jim offered a prayer for David's wife Erica and their two children, Ethan and William and the American Baptist Churches of New Jersey. Jim said Jerrod would appreciate cards from the Board members.

Jerrod completed all the materials and online presentations for the Region Offering.

7.0 Treasurer – Jim Harriff discussed the financial reports. He noted that the report for the end of 2022 was not included and will be emailed to the Board members.

United Mission giving was off by 15% at the end of the year. Donations totaled \$145,491.00; the budget was \$170,000.00. We need to encourage churches to participate in United Mission and America for Christ giving. The AB Foundation income for the year was 127.7%. The shortfall for 2022 was \$20,616.00.

7.1 January 2023 General Fund Profit and Loss Snapshot (Document #6)

United Mission giving was good for January.

AB Foundation investments are not in yet.

There were no questions about this document.

7.2 January 2023 General Fund Profit and Loss Detail (Document #7)

There were no questions or comments about this report.

7.3 January 2023 Total Ministry Profit and Loss (Document #8)

There were no questions or comments about this report.

7.4 Balance Sheet as of January 31, 2023 (Document #9)

The General Fund checking is good.

There is no change in the Reserve Fund.

The Reserve Fund at the AB Foundation, line 15100, has a balance of \$118,647.07.

Churches can ask for grants from line 11524, the PSALM Savings.

Our Total Assets are up.

ABCNYS Board of Mission

March 4, 2023

3.

- 7.5 The following Reports were provided for the Board members information:
- General Fund Profit and Loss Snapshot January – February 2023
  - Balance Sheet as of February 28, 2023
  - Explanation of ABCNYS Balance Sheet
  - Explanation of ABCNYS Profit and Loss Statement
  - Approximate Net Equity Yearly Comparison Dec. 2014 – Dec. 2022

**Old Business**

- 8.0 Rwanda Mission – Jim Harriff

There is a Mission Trip to Rwanda scheduled for May 22 to June 5.

- 9.0 The mission trip to Community Missions in Niagara Falls is scheduled for October 26 to 29, 2023. Accommodations will be at Stella Niagara. The deadline for submitting applications is October 13<sup>th</sup>. The cost is \$265.00 per person. There are grants available from the Keith Griffin Fund for any young person who wishes to attend. There are grants available for adults from other funds. If this was held in the summer we might have up to 25 people. In the autumn we are expecting 10-12 people to attend.

- 10.0 The agenda item on the Community Baptist Church of Wappinger Falls was discussed under the Executive Minister's report.

**New Business**

- 11.0 Election of Board member –

It was moved by Leon Runner and seconded by Jim Kelsey that Elizabeth Fell-Dewalt be elected to an At-Large position on the Board of Mission.

The motion was carried.

- 12.0 Election of members of the Executive Committee –

It was moved by Jim Harriff and seconded by Howard Maxson that the following people be elected to the Executive Committee:

Claudia Little

Pat Ludwig

Ken McKenzie

William Stoklosa

The motion was carried.

These members are in addition to the officers.

- 13.0 Election to the Nominating Committee –

It was moved by Merle McJunkin and seconded by David Harris that Laura Palada be elected to the Nominating Committee. The motion was carried.

- 14.0 Vick/Pathfinder Camping –

We need to recommend a representative from our Board to the VPCCM Board. They are having monthly meetings as they search for a new CEO. Marilyn Malone is the temporary CEO. If anyone would like to volunteer, please let Lecia know. Marilyn Malone will send reports on their meetings.

ABCNYS Board of Mission

March 4, 2023

4.

15.0 The Executive Committee has recommended that our bookkeeper, Sharon Argus, be given a 4% raise retroactive to January 1<sup>st</sup>. This motion does not require a second. The motion was carried.

16.0 Jim Kelsey shared we need to affirm the decision to sell the house at 15 Helen Avenue in Wappinger Falls. The special online Zoom meeting on February 21<sup>st</sup> did not give the required 20 days' notice for a special meeting. Jim Harriff read the motion to sell the property from the prior meeting. It was shared that the house is appraised at \$405,000, an appraisal done by a licensed NYS real estate appraiser. It was moved by Howard Maxson and seconded by Jim Kelsey that we affirm the motion to sell the property at 15 Helen Ave. in Wappinger Falls. It was noted that about \$15,500.00 in repairs need to be done to the septic system. The net proceeds from the sale will be \$350,000.00 to \$360,000.00 after these expenses.

The motion read: Accept the buyers' offer to sell the residence at 15 Helen Avenue, Wappinger Falls NY 12533 to Rachel Marie Fabozzi and Karl Christopher Wettels for \$405,000. After a \$5,000 seller's concession, the Region will receive \$400,000. The buyer will have conventional financing. The motion passed unanimously.

**Additional Reports**

17.0 AB Men – No report.

18.0 AB Women's Ministries

Colleen Charsky reported that the Annual Convention will be April 28 to 30 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Troy.

They have had two Leadership Development webinars. The first one was held on Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>; 34 people attended. The second one will be March 23<sup>rd</sup> and will feature a speaker from Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center. Men can join the webinars.

19.0 Ministers Council – Howard Maxson for Patricia Ludwig (Document #10)

There are two upcoming events:

May 16 to 18 there will be a Celtic Spirituality retreat at Stella Niagara. The cost is \$75.00.

September 24 to 26, the Rev. Adam Russell-Taylor from Sojourners Magazine will speak about social justice.

Grants are available for these events from the Lynette Martin Fund.

The Ministers Council needs new members.

20.0 AB Youth Report – Stephanie Schneider (Document #12)

They are looking for a new venue for their convention. It will have a different format. They will be implementing the Region's Safe Child policy. The Youth Fund will be used to offset costs.

21.0 ABCUSA Board of General Ministries – Merle McJunkin

The next meeting is in June.

ABCNYS Board of Mission

March 4, 2023

5.

- 22.0 Lay Study Program – Leon Oaks-Lee (Document #11)  
All of the courses are set for this year.  
There were no questions about the report.
- 23.0 Committee on Ministry – Delma West  
The Committee is up and running. There are some applications for recognition of ordination and for certifying lay pastors. They will review the Ordination Handbook.
- 24.0 Vick/Pathfinder Camping and Conference Ministries (Document #13)  
There is a list of planned activities. Volunteers are needed. The website is up.
- 25.0 There was no other business to be brought before this meeting.
- 26.0 Pat Ludwig offered to do the devotion for the next Board meeting on June 9<sup>th</sup>.
- 27.0 There were no reflections offered.
- 28.0 Future Meeting Dates:  
Executive Committee meetings will be held by Zoom. The November meeting will be hybrid as it is the budget meeting.  
May 19 Friday; August 19 Saturday; November 16 Thursday  
  
Board of Mission meetings will be hybrid.  
June 9 Friday; September 9 Saturday; December 8 Friday.  
  
All meetings will begin at 10:00 AM as always.
- 29.0 The meeting was adjourned at 11:28 AM.

Minutes taken by  
Bruce D. Aikin  
ABCNYS Secretary