

1 **Board of Trustees**  
2 **Upper New York Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church**  
3  
4 **Meeting Minutes**  
5

6 A previously announced meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on September 12, 2011, at  
7 the Conference Offices in Syracuse, the President being in the chair and the Secretary being  
8 present.

9  
10 The President determined that a quorum was not present and called the meeting to order at  
11 10:20 a.m. with the understanding that any actions taken must be approved at a subsequent  
12 meeting.

13 **Board Members Present**

14 Steve Butler  
15 Debbie Byers  
16 Brooke Conklin  
17 John Jackson  
18 Lee Mount

19 **ExOfficio Members Present**

20 Sherri Mackey  
21 Bill Gottschalk-Fielding

22 **Others Present**

23 Tom Clemow  
24 Scott DelConte

25 **Board Members Excused**

26 Patricia Brown  
27 Wendy Deichmann  
28 Essie Harding  
29 Jackie Kraft  
30 Tom Wolfe  
31 Wayne Butler

32  
33 **Approval of Minutes**

1 The President called for any corrections to the June 27, 2011 minutes which were previously  
2 circulated. There being none, these minutes were declared approved.

3 It should be noted that the minutes of June 7, 2011, Page 2 line 1 should have said that **“All**  
4 **churches and conference owned buildings are currently insured for replacement value.”**  
5 Instead of “The conference wants all active churches and conference owned buildings to be  
6 insured for replacement value.” This notation was approved by consensus.

## 7 **Hurricane Damages**

8 While our Master Policy does not include flood insurance, Sean Keenan of Walsh Duffield has  
9 advised us that local churches may be eligible for up to \$50,000 for damage due to “rising  
10 waters” of creeks, streams, rivers, or lakes. We think this will help with clean-up and some  
11 repairs or equipment replacement. Two churches in the affected areas have purchased  
12 separate flood insurance policies.

13 The trustees asked Tom **Clemow to provide guidance to local church leaders as they prepare**  
14 **claims and move through the claims process. This should happen by request of the District**  
15 **Superintendents. He also will compile copies of filed claims and other documentation of**  
16 **storm impact on behalf of the Conference.**

17 Sherri Mackey was asked to **put relevant information on the conference website to assist**  
18 **those making claims, to advise them of resources, to provide information from the disaster**  
19 **relief coordinator, and any other useful information (such as do’s and don’ts of clean-up and**  
20 **repair). She also will enlist Sean Keenan to prepare an article or some other appropriate**  
21 **communication for church leaders to provide information about what kinds of coverage are**  
22 **provided by the Master Policy and what kinds of additional coverages would be the**  
23 **responsibility of local churches and advisable under certain conditions (vehicle, flood, special**  
24 **event, etc).**

25 It was noted that a pre-union determination was made that including flood insurance in the  
26 Master Policy was not prudent as 90% of our churches would never need it.

## 27 **Treasurer**

### 28 **Emmaus UMC mission church in Albany**

29 Steve Butler moved that **the Trustees subordinate the conference loan to Emmaus UMC to**  
30 **the proposed United Methodist Development Fund loan.** Passed

### 31 **Columbarium at Casowasco**

1 Certain individuals have requested the installation of a columbarium at Casowasco and have  
2 offered to contribute to the cost. Camps and Retreat Ministries requested that the trustees  
3 provide them with some indication that this could be acceptable before they complete an  
4 investigation into finances, legal requirements, insurance and design. By consensus **the**  
5 **Trustees approve the exploration of the concept of the placement of a columbarium at**  
6 **Casowasco.**

7 The Treasurer was requested **to resend a report on funds for which the Trustees are**  
8 **responsible to include name of fund, approximate amount of fund and restrictions, if any, on**  
9 **each fund.**

## 10 **Property**

11 Tom Clemow reviewed his report, Attachment A.

12 The former staff building at Camp Asbury is in very bad shape. Camp and Retreat Ministries  
13 and our Property Manager do not believe that it can be salvaged. By consensus we **approve**  
14 **that the former staff building at Camp Asbury be razed.** It is recommended that Camp and  
15 Retreat Ministries search out someone who will do the demolition and removal for the value of  
16 the materials.

## 17 **Connectional Ministries**

18 Bill Gottschalk-Fielding reviewed a proposal for the use of proceeds from future sale of  
19 abandoned churches, Attachment B. While the Trustees are in favor of using these funds for  
20 New Faith Community Development, Revitalization of Existing Congregations and Camp and  
21 Retreat Ministries, we don't feel we can make a specific commitment without a clear  
22 understanding of currently existing funds, projected sales amounts, and other needs.

## 23 **Insurance**

24 The meeting with Philadelphia Insurance is scheduled for Sept 26. As part of that meeting we  
25 will ask for clarification of coverage for volunteer work by churches in the community. We will  
26 also clarify the extent of insurance coverage when the conference leases or rents property  
27 including the Conference Center and rented housing.

## 28 **Real Property**

### 29 **John Muir Drive**

30 By consensus **the Trustees approve the sale of the former conference center located in West**  
31 **Amherst for \$675,000.**

1 **Tomhannock UMC**

2 By consensus **the Trustees approve the sale of the Tomhannock United Methodist Church for**  
3 **\$25,000 and the transfer of the cemetery to the town of Pittstown, NY, pending the**  
4 **formation of a cemetery society. The net proceeds of the sale are to be given to the**  
5 **cemetery society once it is legally formed.**

6 **VanEtten UMC**

7 By consensus **the Trustees approve the sale of the Van Etten United Methodist Church to an**  
8 **independent church for \$30,000.** The conference will assume no responsibility for necessary  
9 repairs.

10 **Binghamton District Parsonage**

11 By consensus **the Trustees approve the sale of a 26 foot strip of land to the adjoining Danielle**  
12 **House.** The sale of this land will not materially affect the value of the parsonage property.

13 **Investments**

14 Proposals have been received from four investment management firms and are being  
15 reviewed. Steve Butler will ask Dave Whitman, Deborah Byers has asked Richard Daniels to  
16 assist in the selection of an investment manager.

17 **Camp Findley Leases**

18 By consensus **the Trustees agreed to extend the Nelson lease on a month to month basis until**  
19 **Camp and Retreat Ministries can determine a fair rental value.** It is intended to offer a lease  
20 for this property on a year to year basis with the rent ramping up to market value over a period  
21 of 3 or 4 years.

22 **By consensus the Trustees approve demolition of the Hunsberger building on lot 8d.** It is  
23 recommended that Camp and Retreat Ministries search out someone who will do the  
24 demolition and removal for the value of the materials.

25 By consensus **the Trustees decline to purchase the Robert Johnston building located on lots**  
26 **22c and 23c.** Camp and Retreat Ministries believe that this building is of no value to Camp  
27 Findley.

28 **Camp Asbury Director Housing**

29 By consensus **the Trustees affirm the payment of a lease for the Camp Asbury Director for the**  
30 **first year.** In the future, the Trustees do not want to assume responsibility for a lease.

1 Camping and Retreat Ministries will be directed to develop an alternate plan for next year. In  
2 any event this cost should be included in the Camp and Retreat Ministries budget. **The**  
3 **Treasurer is requested to obtain liability insurance for this leased property, the cost for the**  
4 **initial year to be paid by the Trustees.**

5 Options for funding unplanned expenses within the conference should be explored.

6 **Sky Lake Gift**

7 By consensus **the Trustees accept with thanks a \$16 to \$30 quarterly donation to Sky Lake**  
8 **from the Vanguard trust of a donor who was affiliated with the Providence United Methodist**  
9 **Church of Scranton**

10 **Replacement Trustee Appointments**

11 The Bishop has asked for recommendations from the Trustees for persons to fill two vacancies  
12 on the board. Trustees are requested to provide recommendations to the President.

13 **Trustee Assignments**

14 By consensus **the Trustees approve the assignments on the attached chart, Attachment C.**  
15 The Secretary will provide additional/revised certificates as soon as possible.

16 **Membership List**

17 The trustee membership has been revised to include cell phones where available. The first  
18 number on the list is the preferred number to call.

19 **Adjournment**

20 The meeting was adjourned at 4:24 p.m.

21 **E-Mail Ballot Approval of Meeting Actions**

22 Subsequent to the meeting, all Trustees approved the actions of the meeting by e-mail ballot.

23 

24

25 Lee Mount, Secretary

1 Attachment A

2 **PROPERTY MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT**  
3 **INTERIM REPORT TO THE UNYAC BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

4  
5 September 12, 2011

6  
7 Property Management: Site Visits

8  
9  
10 Conference Properties -

11 John Muir Drive - 7/6/

12 Purchase offer from VOCAL Technologies countered; awaiting response; sale approved  
13 pending purchaser agreement. Contract in the hands of their attorney. I am prepared  
14 to return to Buffalo and assist in the search for a new site to accommodate the District  
15 Office and the Resource Center.

16 Endicott Office - (Multiple trips)

17 Approved sale to United Methodist Homes fallen through. Homes withdrew offer  
18 based in part on possible environmental concerns. Property to be commercially  
19 marketed.

20 Niagara Frontier District Parsonage - 7/6

21 Multiple repair issues. Some of these have been both serious in terms of the well-being  
22 of the property and expensive.

23 Binghamton District Parsonage - 7/7 & 8/22

24 Sub-divide lot to provide a 26' strip for the adjoining Danielle House.  
25 Reviewed tree removal due to intrusion on neighboring property, and evidence of  
26 serious disease.

27 Mohawk District Parsonage - (Discussed with DS, District L&B Chair, Trustees)

28 Maintenance and repair issues. A number of projects completed; lawn care and snow  
29 removal require a consistent approach across the districts.

30  
31 Local Church Properties -

32 University Church (Buffalo) - 7/6 [Possible Office Site]

33 Visited to review former renovated District Office space as a possible alternative to  
34 John Muir. Not enough space.

35 Harris Hill UMC (Williamsville, NY) (Niagara Frontier District) - 7/7 [Loan Request]

36 Visited to review with pastor and trustee chair the renovation projects they plan to  
37 undertake and for which they seek to borrow from the Annual Conference. We are still  
38 waiting for a decision regarding loan funds and procedures for obtaining.

39 Van Etten - (Finger Lakes District) - 7/14 [Sale Pending]

40 With trustee Essie Harding visited and toured the property with former trustee chair  
41 and former administrative council chair. Pending offer from an independent church  
42 body approved. Offer of \$30,000.

1 West Genoa (Belltown UMC) - (Finger Lakes District) - 8/3 [To Be Sold; Cemetery Issue]

2 First visited in March. Visited this date to meet with Town Supervisor. We have a  
3 cemetery in terrible condition. Possible connection to be made with Town Historical  
4 Society for control of cemetery. Now we learn there may be another congregation  
5 interested in acquiring the property. That contact is being explored this week.

6 Port Crane UMC (Binghamton District) - 8/3 [Pending Sale in Jeopardy]

7 Visited this property with Essie Harding to familiarize her with its location. I had  
8 previously served as DS for this congregation. We have had an on-going interest shown  
9 by the local Baptist Church. We arranged for a formal appraisal which took a very long  
10 time to receive. The current response from our contact at the Baptist Church has been  
11 that they are now looking at additional properties. I recommend taking this property to  
12 market.

13 Chilson UMC (Adirondack District) - 8/9 [Sale Pending]

14 The Troy AC Trustees established an expectation that the property and a small amount  
15 of money (\$5000) would be transferred to the local cemetery association. We are in a  
16 position to sell the church for the nominal fee of \$1.00, but the available funds will need  
17 to underwrite the expense of the transfer. This was opposed by the leading  
18 spokesperson for the cemetery. I met with this individual, explained why we could not  
19 simply gift the funds outright. Arranged for them to be transferred to the conference,  
20 the residual to be returned after covering the costs of the transfer. Currently working  
21 on a valuation on this property.

22 Sidney Center UMC (Oneonta District) - 8/11 [Rebuilding Plan Rejected; Merge Possible]

23 Authored letter at request of Bishop Matthews responding to public criticism of District  
24 and Conference denying the congregation to rebuild on their terms. (I had led the  
25 original Par 312 study with this congregation after its arson fire in 2009. DS is using my  
26 letter in a broad appeal to local leaders and others to help them work with the District  
27 in a more acceptable plan; possibly a merger with Unadilla (now flooded out for the  
28 second time in five years).

29 Cato (former church site) (Crossroads District) - 8/12 [Former Lot Sale Incomplete]

30 We were contacted by an attorney representing a couple who had initiated the  
31 purchase of this site back in 2004. They paid the asking price through the previous N/C  
32 AC Chancellor, but the sale was never properly recorded and no fees had been paid. I  
33 met the buyer and discussed the steps we will probably have to go through to complete  
34 this transaction. He lives on the adjoining property and has been treating this site as if he  
35 owned it since, mowing, planting and generally giving it care. He agrees to pay all  
36 transaction costs. Current question is whether the Conference ever received the  
37 money he paid through the attorney (now deceased).

38 State Street UMC (Fulton, NY) (Crossroads District) - 8/12 [Consultation on Options with Older  
39 Structure]

40 Responded to a request generated by the news article of my appointment to discuss  
41 potential future of this very large property, including the currently vacant parsonage.  
42 Toured the property from attic to sub-basement. Many significant issues. Discussed  
43 options with leaders meeting with me. Made full report to DS.

1 Fabius UMC (Fabius, NY) (Crossroads/Finger Lakes Districts) - 8/12 [Current Mission Site  
2 Review; Deed Issue]  
3 This property, after discontinuance, was made available to Greg Forrester and the VIM  
4 program as a mission support site. The covenant was renewed in 2010 and again in  
5 2011. While physically in the Crossroads District, the project is supervised by the  
6 Cortland UMC and they seek to acquire this property as a second ministry site. There is  
7 an issue with the deed which appears to separate the adjacent parsonage site, but  
8 which may not in fact be the case. More research is being done. The project at present  
9 appears quite successful and the equivalent of some \$10,000 of renovations have thus  
10 far been accomplished.

11 Schuyler Lake UMC (Oneonta District) - 8/23 [Fire]  
12 Photographed this property which has been secured following the fire which heavily  
13 damaged the building. Have not begun working with the DS on the status of this  
14 congregation or its property. Worship is currently held in the nearby UU Church.

15 North Steuben (Mohawk District) - 8/23 [Church and Cemetery; Property Transfer Pending]  
16 Visited this site to determine the status of the building and the adjoining cemetery.  
17 Isolated location. Both properties in good repair. We have a blueprint from Chancellor  
18 to place this property with the local Cemetery Association. We are attempting to  
19 negotiate this in a way which will not have the costs accruing to the Conference. Lead  
20 person in this transaction is Rev. Robert Wollaber.

21 Westernville UMC - (Mohawk District) - 8/23 [Discontinued; to be Marketed]  
22 Visited to assess status of this church which we officially discontinued in June. Took  
23 steps to arrange to remove materials, secure building, and remove insignia. Will be  
24 working to market this property.

25 Columbia Center / North Columbia UMC (Mohawk District) - 8/23 [Sale Pending]  
26 Visited both sites and toured facilities. These churches are withdrawing from the  
27 denomination and setting up separate independent corporations to hire their previous  
28 UMC Local Pastor. The negotiations had been difficult. We have agreed to their  
29 nominal sale, but seek recovery of the costs of the property transfers. That arrangement  
30 has now been agreed to.

31 Cameron Mills UMC (Mountainview District) - 9/6 [Inquiry Regarding Preservation Funds]  
32 Virtual visit through Google. A presumed attorney from San Francisco was directed to  
33 me by Conference Staff requesting possibilities for preserving the currently active  
34 church at Cameron Mills. Responded asking him to contact me directly for discussion.  
35 He has not yet done so.

36 Tomhannock UMC (Pittstown, NY) - (Albany District) - 9/7 [Sale Pending; Cemetery Issue]  
37 Visited and discussed arrangements for sale to the Town of Pittstown which will also  
38 likely agree to take responsibility for the cemetery until former Troy Trustee, Paul  
39 Wiley, can establish a Cemetery Association to take control. Sale offer: \$25,000. Paul  
40 has consented to the use of the sale proceeds to cover the costs of the property  
41 transfer; residual to be placed with the new Cemetery Association.

42 Grafton UMC (Albany District) - 9/7 [Sale Possible; Price to Be Set]

1 Visited this site which we discontinued in June. Property in excellent shape. A value  
2 has not been determined. There are two parcels, one containing the church, the other,  
3 across the road, unimproved. A local realtor has contacted me saying he has a potential  
4 buyer. We have asked the same agent handling N. Hoosick to help us set an asking  
5 price. This may move quickly.

6 North Hoosick (Albany District) - 9/7 [On Market]

7 I visited this site to assess current status of property. Currently on the market.  
8 Deteriorating condition. Had the keys and so could tour interior and exterior. Agent  
9 indicates a desire to lower price (currently set very high). We will discuss this week.

10  
11 Camps -

12 Asbury - 7/5

13 Findley - 7/5

14 Casowasco - 8/3/11

15 Skye Farm - 8/9

16 Aldersgate - 8/24

17 Sky Lake - (Scheduled for 9/20)

18  
19 Long Range Issues:

20 1) Site-Specific Program Focus - What is our ministry to be? What is our market? At what  
21 cost? (CRM issue)

22 2) Facilities - What structures are currently on site? What capital projects do they  
23 present? Which no longer serve the purpose for which they were built? What facilities  
24 do we lack?

25 3) Real Estate - What property do we own that we do not use? Does that property have  
26 market value? Should such property be sold?

27 4) Funding - What funding sources currently support each site/the entire CRM ministry?  
28 What funding streams exist that are not currently being explored? If we sell holdings,  
29 how would the proceeds be invested?

30 Short Range Issues:

31 1) Director's residence at Asbury

32 2) Two shore-line properties currently being listed for sale

33 3) Former staff house to be razed

34 4) Decision regarding plans to rehab two older structures which may not serve the  
35 program and marketing needs at Findley.

36 5) Individual Property Leases at Findley

37 6) Multiple structural issues at Casowasco

38 7) Director's residence at Aldersgate

39 8) Pending capital gift vs current retreat center plans at Skye Farm

40  
41 Insurance Issues -

42 Arranging to meet with the team with the Philadelphia Insurance Company Reps.

- 1 Noting that Property Values in the current master list seem higher than they should be in a
- 2 number of instances with which I have become familiar.
- 3 Concern for the nature of the claim-response which will be forthcoming from the the Company
- 4 for the flood claims.
- 5
- 6 Records -
- 7 Begun the development of a data-base.
- 8 Photographic file
- 9 Determining the value of the insurance locator number as a file key

1 **Attachment B**



4 **Upper New York Annual**  
5 **Conference**

6

7 TO: Deborah Byers, Chairperson, Conference Board of Trustee

8 FROM: Bill Gottschalk-Fielding, Director of Connectional Ministries

9 RE: Allocation of net proceeds from discontinued and abandoned local church properties

10 DATE: September 10, 2011

11 In order to financially undergird our mission to "make disciples of Jesus Christ for the  
12 transformation of world" by increasing the number of vital congregations – both new faith  
13 communities and revitalized existing congregations - I propose the Conference Board of  
Trustees authorize the following allocation formula:

- 14
- New Faith Community Development: 50% of net proceeds
  - Revitalization of Existing Congregations: 30% of net proceeds
  - Camp and Retreat Ministries (for capital projects): 20% of net proceeds
- 15

16 I propose this formula take immediate effect and remain in effect through the end of the next  
17 Quadrennium (January 1, 2017), at which time the Conference Board of Trustees may  
choose to review these provisions. (Funds accrued in these three areas would remain  
available for these ministries after January 1, 2017 even if a new formula were approved).

18 The use of funds allocated for New Faith Community Development and Revitalization of  
19 Existing Congregations would be authorized by the Conference Leadership Team or a team  
designated by the Conference Leadership Team or the Annual Conference. No prior  
restrictions on the use of these funds would be in place.

20 The use of funds allocated for Camp and Retreat Ministries would be authorized by the  
21 Board of Trustees on recommendation of the Conference Camp and Retreat Ministries  
Board. The use of these funds would be limited to capital projects.

22

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations*

Matthew 28:19

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**Attachment C**

See Attached Chart, Trustee Assignments 9/12/2011