**General Council Meeting**

**February 18-20, 2022**

A meeting of the General Council of The Urantia Book Fellowship took place in Costa Mesa, CA beginning Friday, February 19, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. PST and ending Sunday, February 20, 2022 at 12:00 p.m. PST.

**Friday, February 18, 2022, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. PST**

**The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Sue Seccombe.**

**The recorded version is available at** [Meeting Recording](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1gstPO8NJQEZOHpNsn27YbvqveSfTpl34?usp=sharing):

You need to access the link from your [firstname.lastname@urantiabook.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@urantiabook.org) email.

**1. Roll call:**

**Link to contact information for GC members, as of February 20, 2022:**

[GC Contact List](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KVJGjMKZ_BCSM1g7DBlzebkQ1DpugFUvxsmi4uHAsmY/edit)

The following members were present, constituting a quorum:

Tom Allen (on Zoom)

Dan Amyx

Lara Amyx

Sally Annabella (in person, newly elected)

Douglas Burns (on Zoom, newly elected)

Trudi Cooper

Lila Dogim

Bobbie Dreier (on Zoom)

John Hales (on Zoom)

Pamela Keller

Jacquelyn (Jackie) Koury (in person, newly elected)

Cecelia Lampley (on Zoom)

John Lange (on Zoom)

Albert Einstein Lassiter

Jena Lassiter

Alvin Lockett

Barbara Newsom (on Zoom)

Michael (Mike) Painter

Michael Perrie (on Zoom)

Andrè Radatus

Stephen (Steve) Sawyer (on Zoom)

David Schlundt

Cristina Seaborn

Sue Seccombe

Brent St. Denis (on Zoom)

Pablo Segovia

Jill Strunk

**Absent:** Ted Blaney, Toni Oyeyemi, David Meyer, and Geoff Taylor

**Also present**: Geoff Theiss, Fellowship Executive Director

**2. Opening Reading or Prayer:**

Mike Painter opened the meeting with a prayer, followed by silent worship.

**3. Approval of Agenda:**

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

**4. Approval of Minutes:**

Minutes of the October 3, 2021 GC meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

**5. Elections:**

The GC went into informal, closed session by a majority vote to discuss GC applicants. Sue Seccombe presented the names of those who have submitted applications: Sally Annabella, Israel Armstead, Douglas Burns, Tony Daniels, Jonathan Robert DeToy, Jacquelyn Koury, and Mahtab Tehrani. In addition to the seven applicants previously submitted, Larry Geis was nominated from the floor, at his request.

The GC returned to formal session. David Schlundt made a motion to vote on the eight candidates as a slate. Andrè Radatus seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by secret ballot.

**Tellers’ report: 24 votes were available. 24 yes, 0 no.**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**6. Changes to Committee Composition:**

Jacquelyn (Jackie) Koury was elected as Education Committee chair by secret ballot.

**Tellers’ report: 27 votes were available. 27 yes, 0 no. The motion passed unanimously.**

In addition, the GC ratified changes to the following committees:

International Fellowship Committee, Youth and Young Adult Committee, Finance Committee, Outreach Committee, Membership Committee, and Interfaith Committee.

Lara Amyx made a motion to ratify the changes to the committee composition. Mike Painter seconded. The motion was passed by unanimous consent.

The changes are reflected in this [document.](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1O9gjJmvJCT9KOWXZLMYrLUztXs7t-bUVpa3nptsi8hU/edit?usp=sharing)

**Saturday, February 19, 2022, 8:45 – 3:15 p.m. PST**

**The meeting was called to order at 8:50 a.m. by President Sue Seccombe.**

**1. Roll Call**

**Present:**

Tom Allen (on Zoom)

Dan Amyx

Lara Amyx

Sally Annabella (newly elected)

Isreal Armstead (on Zoom, newly elected)

Ted Blaney

Douglas Burns (on Zoom, newly elected)

Trudi Cooper

Tony Daniels (newly elected, present on Zoom during the morning)

Lila Dogim

Bobbie Dreier (on Zoom)

Larry Geis (newly elected)

John Hales (on Zoom)

Pamela Keller

Jacquelyn (Jackie) Koury (newly elected)

Cecelia Lampley (on Zoom)

John Lange (on Zoom)

Albert Einstein Lassiter

Jena Lassiter

Alvin Lockett (on Zoom)

David Meyer

Barbara Newsom (on Zoom)

Michael (Mike) Painter

Michael Perrie (on Zoom)

Andrè Radatus

Stephen (Steve) Sawyer (on Zoom)

David Schlundt

Cristina Seaborn

Sue Seccombe

Brent St. Denis (on Zoom)

Pablo Segovia

Mahtab Tehrani

Geoff Taylor (on Zoom)

Jill Strunk

**Absent:** Jonathan DeToy and Toni Oyeyemi

**Also present**: Geoff Theiss, Executive Director

**Also present as observers, for part or all of the meeting:** Dennis Baker, Larry Bowman, Anthony Finstad (on Zoom), Jack Holloway, Jack Miller, Vaughn Fosmo and Stephen Zendt.

**2. Opening Reading or Prayer:**

Pamela Keller offered a prayer.

**3. The Society Census Report for 2021—Jill Strunk**

The Society Census, as reported by Society officers to Jill Strunk, GC secretary, and finalized December 31, 2021 totals 577. Derek Samaras reported 580 Members-at-Large as of December 1, 2021, bringing the membership grant total to 1,157.

The Report is available at [Society Census, 2021](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KFKwSgOo_hhiKzyen5IadriaQYWRZF2n/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=108888860116985577021&rtpof=true&sd=true).

**4.  Committee Reports on Programs and Projects—Service Team and/or Committee Chairs**

You can read committee reports of 2021 activities at [Committee Reports:](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1MyICGgTbslxN4hEnQ1_IZ7sW0vbX1FGv)

Jena Lassiter presented an introduction to the Project Planning Team, composed of the Executive Director and the Service Team Chairs: Jena Lassiter, Media and Communication; Lara Amyx, Fellowship; and Lisa Dogim, Worldwide. The team meets bimonthly with the purposes of better coordinating the activities of all the committees and projects; identifying thematic elements; coordinating overlap and complementary effort; and leveraging and applying resources where needed.

The Project Planning Team asked Committee Chairs to present current and upcoming activities with focus on five areas: What audience(s) are being served along the engagement continuum; what problem(s) are being addressed; what program(s) are being developed to address the problem(s); how is money being spent; and what are outcomes for people being served, including movement along the engagement continuum with the Fellowship and the *Urantia Book* community.

Ways to measure effectiveness are being enhanced. Sometimes results are “soft” rather than hard data, so measurement reporting may be diverse.

Ongoing and upcoming activities were presented and are at [Present and Future Programs and Projects.](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1MyICGgTbslxN4hEnQ1_IZ7sW0vbX1FGv?usp=sharing)

**Standing Committees:**

Education – Jackie Koury

Finance – John Lange

Interfaith – Barbara Newsom

International Fellowship – Andrè Radatus

Judicial – Tom Allen

Membership – Dan Amyx

Outreach – Al Lockett

Publications – Cristina Seaborn

Youth and Young Adult – Pamela Keller

**Other Committees or Working Groups**

Area Coordinator/Field Worker – Ted Blaney

Family Life – Tony Finstad

Graduation Memorial Committee – Derek Samaras and Sally Annabella

Gratitude – Cristina Seaborn

IT – Jena Lassiter

Latin American Subcommittee of IFC – Pablo Segovia

Leadership Training – Cristina Seaborn and Andrè Radatus

Location Investigation – Lara Amyx

Mentoring – Ted Blaney

Organizational Guidance Committee – Sue Seccombe

Pipeline of Light – Geoff Theiss

Social Media – Israel Armstead

Second Miler Grant Program – Brent St. Denis

Spanish Web Content – Pablo Segovia and Jack Holloway

Web Content (Including Stepping Stones Project) – Jena Lassiter

**Lunch: Half hour Pizza break from 11:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.**

**5. Select Committee To Investigate Constitutional Revision (SCICR) report – Tom Allen**

Tom reported that the SCICR committee has been established in response to a unanimous resolution from the Triennial Delegate Assembly (TDA). It is a three-year mission, to be completed prior to the next TDA.

The group meets every other Monday. They are currently working on the preamble and purpose statement. The next mission will be to work on membership.

They record meetings and make them available to the entire GC, which will eventually ratify (or deny) what the committee proposes.

**6. Announcements from the Chair:**

**A.** Work is progressing on a New Member Packet, as requested by a TDA resolution. Bobbie Dreier is spearheading this effort.

**B.** Sue and Jena Lassiter are working on website improvement through exploring new software options.

**C.** Sue has met with Mo Seigel (Foundation President) and Enrique Traver (President of the UAI) on a regular basis. One result is that the UAI has agreed to a meeting between the board of the UAI and the EC to discuss collaboration on “confusion when people search online for Urantia-Book-related topics.” The goal will be to explore ways to protect the integrity of the *Urantia Book* online and discuss the benefits of a unified online presence. Cristina Seaborn mentioned that a UrantiaUnited.org website still exists to allow access to the major UB-based organizations on one site ((created for a joint 2020 conference and approved by both organizations, but never launched),

Volunteers for the group which will meet with the UAI board are: Sue Seccombe, David Schlundt, Jena Lassiter, Geoff Theiss, Brent St. Denis, and possibly one of the Service Team Chairs, depending on the meeting date, which will be after Easter.

**7. Update on Second Miler Grant Program:**

Brent St. Denis reported that since inception in fall 2020 the Second Miler Grant Program has received about 50 applications of which about 30 have been approved. The Grant Review Team is now receiving and reviewing projects on a quarterly basis. The first Quarter of 2022 has seen a great number of applications from Uganda, the majority of which the Review Team has agreed are of a community or social development nature. As such they are outside the grant program mandate. However, the Review Team believes these will provide the Fellowship with an opportunity to learn more about Urantia Book dissemination in Africa although a different approach will need to be taken. Discussions with IFC and other stakeholders are ongoing as to how best to support spread of The *Urantia Book* in Africa, and specifically in Uganda.

**8. Motion to Amend a Previously Adopted Resolution.**

Submitted by the Executive Committee and seconded by Tom Allen.

**Motion to Amend Previously Adopted Resolution to Give the SCICR Self-Governance in**

**Choosing Voting Members**

**Motion to Amend a Previously Adopted Resolution Entitled**

**“The Select Committee to Investigate Constitutional Revision” (SCICR)**

**As Approved at the** [**July**](https://gc.urantiabook.org/Minutes/2021_07_31_GC_Minutes.pdf?_ga=2.151578937.1047530743.1643495450-2111186638.1590363479)**/August Meeting of the General Council**

**Sunday, August 1, 2021 on pages 7-8 of the Minutes**

(Procedure to Amend Something Previously Adopted is specified in §35 in RONR)

**Whereas**, to legitimize and expedite the appointment of more women voting members in the SCICR, by allowing SCICR to appoint its own voting members, SCICR unanimously recommends the ratification of this amendment to the General Council resolution titled, [“The Select Committee to Investigate Constitutional Revision”](https://gc.urantiabook.org/Minutes/2021_07_31_GC_Minutes.pdf?_ga=2.151578937.1047530743.1643495450-2111186638.1590363479) (SCICR) previously ratified at the July meeting of the General Council on Sunday, August 1, 2021 on pages 7-8 in the minutes, and

**Whereas,** the Executive Committee cannot presently allow more voting members than are now allocated and there is now only one vacancy that the Executive Committee has authority to fill, and

**Whereas,** the SCICR is unanimously in favor of stabilizing our committee composition to allow SCICR self-governance and expeditiously to ensure equal representation of both men and women, and

**Whereas**, there is presently a 7:2 ratio of men to women currently on the SCICR and an equal number of women and men would improve the balance of wisdom in SCICR, and

**Whereas,** the teachings of the Urantia papers validate the equality of men and women in positions of authority, (49:4.4) (51:1.3) (52:2.7) (55:3.9) (66:4.2) (70:12.20) (71:8.10) (74:3.5) (84:6.3) (84:5.11) (84:6.6) (138:8.11) (150:1.1-3) and

**Whereas,** the time-delaying burden of appointing members to SCICR by the Executive Committee need not further consume their agenda unless membership objection is ratified by the Executive Committee, therefore let it be

**RESOLVED,** thatthe aforementioned July 2021 General Council Resolution be amended as follows:

**RESOLVED,** the Select Committee to Investigate Constitutional Revision (SCICR) shall have full authority to appoint voting members, and be it further

**RESOLVED,** that petition by three (3) Executive Committee members requesting denial of any appointed voting membership by SCICR will require a majority vote of the Executive Committee for removal.

**RESOLVED,** ~~the EC will appoint eight Fellowship members to a select committee that is diverse and balanced to cull Constitutional and bylaw ideas throughout our membership.~~ The President will serve as an ex-officio member. The Executive Director will be adjunct to the committee. The committee will give progress reports to the General Council at ~~the Winter and Spring meetings~~ **all meetings of the General Council** to allow for discussion of problems and solutions with the Constitution and bylaws. The committee will rise and present models for recommendation, resolution, or emendation on or before the last meeting of the General Council preceding the Triennial Delegate Assembly in 2024, and be it further

**~~RESOLVED~~**~~, that the EC will have 90 days from the adoption of this resolution to name committee members and may fill committee vacancies, and be it further~~

**RESOLVED**, that if adopted, the appointed committee members should be open to all points of view and be in favor of this motion. (RONR 50:18), and be it further

**RESOLVED,** that the select committee will follow Robert’s Rules, select its own manner and time of meeting, and be named, “Select Committee to Investigate Constitutional Revision.”

**Motion passed by Unanimous Consent.**

**8. Resolution On Structural Merger** proposed by Mike Painer; seconded by Geoff Taylor.

**RESOLUTION**

**Resolution to begin formal discussions with the UAI regarding an organizational merger.**

**Whereas, The Fellowship and the UAI have very similar purposes and functions and**

**Whereas, The Fellowship and the UAI have limited resources of money and people,**

**Be it resolved that a formal discussion between the two organizations regarding an organizational merger be initiated this year, before the next meeting of the GC in July 2022, and that progress updates be provided to the GC at each GC meeting.**

Israel Armstead proposed an amendment to change the words “an organizational merger” to “organizational unity”

Cecelia Lampley seconded the amendment.

Brent St. Denis proposed an amendment to the amendment to change “organizational unity” to “greater cooperation.”

Andrè Radatus seconded.

Albert Lassiter called the question, which requires a 2/3 vote.

**Tellers’ report:** 34 votes were available. 29 yes votes were counted through a raised hands constituted a 2/3 majority. No further debate on the amendment to the amendment was allowed.

**The raised-hand vote to amend the amendment to replace “an organizational merger” with “greater cooperation” was 25 yes. the amendment to the amendment passed.**

**The official wording of the passed resolution is:**

**RESOLUTION**

**Resolution to begin formal discussions with the UAI regarding greater cooperation.**

**Whereas, The Fellowship and the UAI have very similar purposes and functions and**

**Whereas, The Fellowship and the UAI have limited resources of money and people,**

**Be it resolved that a formal discussion between the two organizations regarding greater cooperation be initiated this year, before the next meeting of the GC in July 2022, and that progress updates be provided to the GC at each GC meeting.**

**The meeting was recessed at 3:15 to allow participants to attend Paula Thompson’s retirement dinner/party.**

**Sunday, February 20, 2022, 9:00 – 12:00 a.m. PST**

1. **Roll Call**

Sally Annabella

Isreal Armstead (on Zoom)

Ted Blaney (on Zoom)

Douglas Burns (on Zoom)

Trudi Cooper

Tony Daniels (on Zoom)

Bobbie Dreier (on Zoom)

Larry Geis

John Hales (on Zoom)

Pamela Keller

Jacquelyn (Jackie) Koury

Cecelia Lampley (on Zoom)

John Lange (on Zoom)

Alvin Lockett (on Zoom)

Albert Einstein Lassiter

Jena Lassiter

David Meyer (on Zoom)

Barbara Newsom (on Zoom)

Michael (Mike) Painter

Michael Perrie (on Zoom)

Andrè Radatus

Brent St. Denis (on Zoom)

Steve Sawyer (on Zoom)

David Schlundt

Cristina Seaborn

Sue Seccombe

Pablo Segovia

Geoff Taylor (on Zoom)

Jill Strunk

Mahtab Tehrani (on Zoom)

**Absent:** Tom Allen, Dan Amyx, Lara Amyx, Jonathan DeToy, Lila Dogim, and Toni

Oyeyemi

**Also present**: Geoff Theiss, Executive Director

**Also present on Zoom:** many guests present on Zoom for Van award ceremony for John Hales.

1. **Prayer or Reading**

Trudi Cooper offered a prayer, followed by silent contemplation and a song to the tune of Leonard Cohen’s “Halleluiah” with new, spiritual words composed by Trudi Cooper (sung by Trudi, Cristina Seaborn, Andrè Radatus, Sally Annabella and Albert Einstein Lassiter). Two of the verses specifically honored Paula Thompson and John Hales.

1. **Announcement of upcoming GC dates – Sue Seccombe:**

July 24-25, 2022 – in Chicago, following the Summer Study Session

February 17-19, 2023 -- Hybrid in-person plus Zoom option

July 28-July 29, 2023 – In Chicago, following IC23

February 16-19, 2024 – Hybrid in-person plus Zoom option

TBA, 2024 post Summer Study Session

1. **Van Award for John Hales:**

John Hales was given recognition of distinguished service for his many, many roles in serving the Urantia Movement for 70 years. At 16, he passed an interview with Dr. Sadler to gain permission to read the Urantia Papers at 533 Diversey Parkway and has faithfully and steadfastly served the movement in almost every capacity to this day: President, Vice President, Secretary, Secretary General, one of the Urantia Brotherhood’s first Field Representatives, the longest serving General Councilor on record, and the longest serving member of First Society for Readers of The Urantia Book.

In 1974, when he was 37 years old, John became our Resident Director, first paid employee of the Urantia Brotherhood, and served for 32 years. To this day he is an active General Councilor of the Urantia Book Fellowship.

Sue Seccombe presented The Van award, which has been given to only two prior recipients, Dr. William Sadler and Emma Christensen. Four long-time friends offered glowing tributes sharing details of serving and enjoying life with John, followed by his heartfelt response.

The inscription on the Van Award comes from Paper 67, section 3: “The spiritual insight and moral steadfastness which enabled Van to maintain such an unshakable attitude of loyalty to the universe government was the product of clear thinking, wise reasoning, logical judgment, sincere motivation, unselfish purpose, intelligent loyalty, experiential memory, disciplined character, and the unquestioning dedication of his personality to the doing of the will of the Father in Paradise.”

1. **New Projects That Need GC Stakeholders or Support:**

Sue Seccombe briefly described the following projects and encouraged new Councilors to get involved. Other GC members added comments, as relevant, and Councilors volunteered to serve where interested.

1. Race Advisory Committee (David Schlundt, Cristina Seaborn, collaboration with UUI.
2. IFC Advisory Council for long-term strategic planning (Andrè Radatus)
3. Free UBs: Inmate Correspondence Program (ICP) and Pipeline of Light (POL)
4. Second Miler Reporter(s)
5. Volunteer Citation Initative, as part of The Gratitude Committee (with Christina Seaborn)
6. Training and Preparation for Response to Attention from The Media
7. Society Website (help with/build/refine); 2 X 2 follow-up (David Meyer)
8. Speakers’ Bureau
9. “GC Buddies” for new GC members. Bobbie Drier, Cecelia Lampley, Cristina Seaborn, Sue Seccombe, Brent St. Denis, and Jill Strunk volunteered to help new Councilors learn the ropes.
10. **Discussion About What It Means To Serve on the GC:**

Sue mentioned that a welcome packet for new GC members is being compiled and invited new GC members to share what it means to serve on the GC and what might be useful for new GC members.

She also asked new and continuing GC members to suggest what we can do better.

New members were encouraged to share what they are interested in, if they haven’t volunteered yet for any committees or projects.

A motion to adjourn was made by Gina Lassiter Seconded by Larry Geis, and approved by unanimous consent.

**The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 PST**

Submitted by Jill Strunk, Secretary