

## **Council Retreat Minutes (March 29-31 2013)**

### **Agenda**

Dates

Lesson on Council Processes

Con Debrief

Covenant Discussion

Con Programming Follow Up

Jeanelyse (10:00 Saturday)

--regionalization

--age range

--brown paper bag policy

Medical Release Forms

Gofer Gas Money

How NomCom is run

Con Programming Follow-Up Discussion

We were going to do a survey about Coffee House. We didn't. Next Con!

Emergency Ballot

Making a way to Facebook Vote

Tamara and Regionalization (5:00 Saturday)

### **Dates**

Summer Con 2013 Meeting: July 27

Summer Con 2013: August 16-18

Fall Con 2013 Meeting: October 26

Fall Con 2013: November 8-10

Council Retreat: September 27-29 2013

Elections Con 2014 Meeting: January 25

Elections Con 2014: February 14-17

Spirit Con 2014: May 2-4

Social Action Summit/Leadership Development Training: August 2-4 2013

Summer Con 2014: August 15-17

Fall Con 2014: November 7-9

Elections Con 2015: February 13-16

### **Job Jots:**

- Nikki: Leadership in nomcom, address concerns about NomCom process
- Phoebe: research adult covenant, update email list
- Ryan: Ask parents about paper bag policy
- Jenna: talk to Chuck about GRUUST
- Ian or Jeremy: Bible the ElectionsCon NomCom announcements and being creative with scheduling
- Rosemary: Facilitate Coffeehouse survey
- Dylan: Talk to next CoCoHos about GRUUST announcement
- The Meows: Steamy Fresh Docs Folder

## Lesson on Council Processes

### Con Debrief

Super Duper	Needs Improvement
Tents	Tents
Soup	Hiking
Sunday Service	Social Action
Coffee House	--NomCom
Respect	Reaction to Mac and Cheese
Reverend Pallas	Touchgroup Length
NomCom (Nikki and Rob)	Illness
Erik	--Not going home when sick
Generally the Food	Lack of Wink
Cook Team	Leaving during Bridging
Legitimate Workshops	Tarps and Lights
No Schedule Freakouts	Over Shopping
Room Sharing Sunday Night	Meat
Good Vibes	Burnt Cooks
Hanna as Gofer	Dishwasher Drama
Woody the NonCorporate Fruit Man	Noise during worship
NomCom Room being Adult Room	Aptos
Enthusiasm	--District Communication
WaterColors (art workshop)	Overpresense of Minister
Dance	Sunday Night Room Changes
Mac and Cheese	--Alteration of Orientation
Reaction to Winklessness	Nonexistent Dessert
Cleaning	Peanut Butter Replacement
More Sleepy Times	Gofer Gas Reimbursement
Alteration of Orientation	
Matzah	
Hydration	

### Con Debrief (Continued)

#### Nom Com

- Two chaplains, two CoCoCos, and other leadership inaccessible during noncom
- If leaders discouraged, more difficult to find noncom members
- This con had no major issues, but likely in the future
- Need to encourage more non-leadership to join, but not just snack-wise
- Don't ban leadership, but discourage
- Add to noncom guide

### **Not Going Home When Sick**

- Many people became very ill and did not perform good self care
- The well being of the community needs to be stressed during orientation
- The issue pertains more about conscious effort to monitor health than the physical removal from the community
- include in self care blurb (registration form)
- Add to Dean Bible the necessity for selfcare when sick
- Have Temperature/contagiousness Guideline to take away arbitrary home sendings (include in registration)

### **District Communication**

- Did not know which youth leaders to contact
  - Often Contact leaders they know rather than the proper leaders
- Handled Problems without consultation with the correct people
- We need both sides to be equally represented and improved upon
- Church Leaders needed to contact cococos not Jeanelyse
- What is the origin of this problem?
  - Growth of Cons
  - many possible big changes
  - regionalization
  - Aptos was a scary church
  - They care a lot about us!

Action:

A very accessible council contact list including basic responsibilities of each position  
(in the future outgoing resource master creates this list)

When specific council members are contacted by District, that member should cc the council group email. Only relevant members should respond

Board Liaison should always be the original point of communication

District Staff should notify all appropriate youth leaders (always including cococos and board liaison)

A list of concerns from district staff should be sent to board liaison who will in turn forward to or cc the rest of council

Be clear and direct about expressing and addressing concerns

In light of the last conference, there are a few concerns we would like to address for the sake of developing trust and right relations. We would like to hear the district staff's feedback on these, and we would like to hear their input on what we can do better

### **Covenant**

- "Sexual orientation" addition good, "sexuality"
- "Malicious" added to violence clause
- Covenant very specific
- "Discrimination about ... not permitted" vague. Changed to "No discrimination, including ..."
- Come up with policy for changing covenant

## Proposal:

I would like to propose that we add to the bylaws “any changes to the youth covenant must be approved each year by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority by at elections con by all present youth and adult advisers.”

CONSENSUS REACHED

## Con Debrief (cont.)

### Talking with Jeanelyse

- Many little miscommunications need to be clarified and better communication guidelines need to be established
- **Internal:**
- cc all council members
- Accessible contact sheet
- **Board:**
- Talk to proper council members (CoCoCos)
- **Both:**
- Be more clear and direct
  
- Board liason kept in the loop
- Chuck: Logistics, Jeanelyse: programming

### Regional Assembly

- Regional handled differently than district
- Hotel not allowing suites
- Youth couldn't stay at church because transportation liability, and liability insurance higher than ever before.
- Gender-segregation issues frustrating
- There were communication issues with policies
- Segregated rooms happening because liability issues with sex and babies
- Possibly set up meeting with Jennica (regional youth specialist)
- We feel the need to convey that we want to be included in regionalization conversation
- We would like to be aware of board decisions
- Each district is very foreign to the others and it's hard to change perspective
- Let Jennica know what we do works
- Much more adult participation in other districts
- Possibly have a meeting to learn what youth empowerment is like in each district (There is a time for this during RA)
- Jeanelyse wants an advisory board of youth and DREs from different districts

## Age Discussion

- First time staff has begun youth conversations
- Many values of districts are the same, but implemented differently
- Not sure yet if regional pressure will take control, but the age range will have to be looked at.
- Most likely become high school age shift, no specific reasons why that's a good thing, but mostly fear about sex, safety, liability, (insurance companies are terrible), age-appropriate ministry. Also complaints from DREs about how internal programs have different age ranges
- May be able to do Quest Leadership School because of regionalization, but requires understanding of culture
- Must figure out how to get along with others
- District has bad record of making programs for ages dropped from cons
- Jeanelyse will be in conversations involving young adult programming
- Feels like we are being asked to roll over to pressure to change, but should continue conversation
- **Concerns:** Lack of young adult programming; if only high school, too many transitions at once; spending time with older youth provides good role models out of high school; outside influences may be more harmful than beneficial. Culture in pcd yruu has things such as statutory rape are a non-issue and we feel insulted when people are worried about it; last large sex issue was years ago, shortens time with community and doesn't give time to develop leadership, should have community provided around people before being pushed into leadership, less time to join community before being forced into leadership; broader range of ages feeds communities because of mentorship; makes college transition easier because of making connections with people who have gone through it; not very much trust in the yruu community; current age range good because it's over the course of brain development; a lot of new members 16 or 17; be taking a step backwards if we just made ourselves out to be a bunch of high schoolers messing around; don't like "high school" label as opposed to age; older people bug influence on newbies; with broader age range, communities are more easily formed with people of the same maturity levels, other communities have different needs,
- Not decided how likely it is, other three districts doing it. Currently an open-ended discussion
- Need to find ways to help other people trust us.
- Last age change poorly received
- Chance recommended because a shift happening throughout organization (also insurance companies are still terrible)
- Bylaws don't use the words high school or grades
- Many transitions related to size growth
- Jeanelyse will listen to issues after she makes a decision but she won't be able to change the decision
- LRY may be affecting viewpoint on YRUU

## Brown Paper Bag Policy

- Liability-- people who have bags in car might be arrested, and giving bags back might be aiding and abetting illegal drug usage
- Some cons no bags used and some maybe 3 or 4
- If the bag might be taken away, people might just hide their stuff in their bags instead
- insurance companies (they should really get some dramatic theme music an a lightning strike whenever they're mentioned)
- Objections understandable, but no clear better alternative
- Could be plausible deniability for the car owners because they don't look in the bag
- Drugs, weapons, etc prohibited, but things are usually brought in by accident. Paper bags good safety net
- Possibilities of moving location of bags
- Owners and caretakers of bags could still be in trouble
- Been lawsuits, but not within the UUA
- Insurance companies back up cons, so they must approve of policies
- If drugs weren't put in bags then yruu wouldn't have any liability. Good from legal standpoint but bad from communal standpoint
- Insurance companies more concerned with unfollowed safety policies than when things happen we don't know about
- Some people quietly keep their things in the bottom of their bags instead of brown paper bagging
- Last time there was a large issue, the persons involved were banned
- Policy optional anyway, but good for community
- Rules don't allow possession, so w/out paper bag policy if things are found the person could be banned
- No solution, tabled

### **Medical Release**

- Make clearer, have over 18s sign too
- Same as UUA, but slightly changed to fit community
- Releases for council meetings and retreats: yearlong releases. Cons and trainings have their own sheets
- Altered for for 18 and over so there's not parent line
- Facilitator keeps physical copies of release forms during meetings

### **Gofer Gas Money**

- No policy on gofer reimbursement
- Sometimes get reimbursed, but not usually
- Gas reimbursements as long as long as receipts are kept. Don't waive registration fees.
- Separate reimbursements for GRUUST printing expenses? Ask Chuck.
- Jenna will ask Chuck

### **NomCom Concerns:**

- People not at conference but still in community should be able to vote
- NomCom minutes
- Saying number of Lucy Booths per person and concerns
- Basically should be more democratic

#### Concerns about concerns:

- First Suggestion:
- Not very feasible
- Second Suggestion:
- More transparency would be good but not including deep discussions -- instead maybe basic summaries on why the person was chosen. It can however be hurtful
- Minutes like “We talked about this position and shuffled around nominees”
- Naming names can be hurtful for people who aren’t chosen
- Minutes might not be worth it if cut down that much
- Third suggestion:
- Not very feasible
- Very hurtful
- Misc.
- Anyone can join nomcom, but it doesn’t equate to transparency
- Others who aren’t in nomcom might still want to know what’s going on
- Process not well-explained, could announce steps they’re taking
- With minutes, it’d be great for people not running, but terrible for people running
- Nominees need to answer questions they might not be comfortable with telling the entire community
- The process itself may not be the problem
- Explain that the process is trying to leave out popularity factors
- ElectionsCon morning nomcom announcements
- Put guide online

#### **Con Programming Follow-Up Discussion**

- Becoming less focused on spirituality
- Instead of freetime for non-Worshippers, spiritual discussions. Also, many people don’t want or need worship and might not like to be roped into it. Good worship co’s really important,
- Don’t need to do the same thing every con
- Get on top of touchgroups, make them deeper (God in the Dark)
- Possibly morning worship
- More serious workshops
- UU time
- 6 sources
- Fishbowls
- Game night
- Having Social Justice Council member dean at Social Justice con
- Workshops on principles
- Participation in services
- Worship teams (?)

Actions taken:

- Survey
- Yoga morning at Spirituality con
- Tables

Coffeehouse:

- submit written poems to GRUUST newsletter and music to youtube channel
- Youtube- people perform for community and may not want it in a public place
- The channel is mostly private
- Editors have full discretion on published
- Last Coffeehouse was much more successful, but at first restrictions may have been pushed too hard
- If comfortable submitting to GRUUST, do it
- Definitely having survey

### **Emergency Ballot**

- At ElectionsCon bylaw and policy/procedure changes should be approved. Only the former were changed at this last one
- Changes must be presented at community
- Make provision for emergency ballots in the event a change is left out

### **Proposal:**

Council will bring the newly edited covenant to the community to Spirituality con to be approved by the regular  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority

CONSENSUS REACHED

To put into our policies and procedures a provision for covenant changes

Create bylaw for creating emergency ballots

Article 9 Section 5

### **Action Item**

I propose that council will enact the following action item: Council will present the most recently proposed covenant alterations to the conference community for approval at Spirituality Con 2013. these alterations must be approved by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority of present youth and adult advisors.

CONSENSUS REACHED

### **Facebook Voting**

In the case of an issue being deemed too urgent to be tabled until the next council meeting, the following policy will be utilized instead of the standard consensus method because consensus is much more difficult to reach when not at a Council meeting. In these cases, Council will conduct an absentee vote in which Council follows the will of a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority of participating members unless any given member expresses principled dissent on the given issue. If any member of Council expresses principled dissent to following the will of the majority, said member will explain the reasoning behind his/her/zhher objection. Council will then discuss the objection and try to address and/or allay the objecting member's concerns, as well as any other concerns brought up in the discussion of the objection. Once this discussion is concluded, Council will hold a second absentee vote on the given issue which will follow the same voting rules as the first vote. If any member expresses principled dissent to following the will of the majority after the second vote, Council may conduct a vote to override the given member's veto. In order to override this veto, at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of participating Council members must vote in favor of said override. If at any point in this process there is a successful override or there is no expression of principled dissent, the decision approved by the majority of council will take effect as though Council had reached consensus on the given issue. If Council is unable to override the given member's veto, the proposal being deliberated upon will be tabled until the next Council meeting. No decisions made through this process will take effect unless a quorum of council has participated in the vote.

CONSENSUS REACHED

### **Discussion with Tamara**

- Regionalization might not affect youth programming. Good because it doesn't mess with system, but bad because things are decided without youth input
- Regionalization good on a large scale because diversity but little to no good effects on youth programming
- Biggest advantage for youth: larger leadership opportunities
- Youth leadership/empowerment conversation on regional level led by youth would be really helpful, but might be met w/ resistance
- "Create structure at a regional level so youth can be affiliated with that group instead of just the congregation"
- Many churches feel that they're losing youth to the district level and feel territorial
- Should talk about setting aside money for leadership programs
- District Trustees going away, at-large trustees instead. District trustees much less qualified and diverse
- Ask Chuck the right questions. He knows people.
- Find out attitude towards conversations about youth programming among other districts
- Express need for youth voice coming more naturally from the community
- Nonsensical voting

- [www.tamarapaynealex.com](http://www.tamarapaynealex.com)