

# URANTIAN COMMUNITIES NORTHWEST (UCNOW) Guiding Document

- I. [About Us](#)
- II. [Organizational Structure](#)
- III. [Officers and Job Descriptions](#)
- IV. [Committee Structure](#)
- V. [Board of Directors Meeting Overview](#)
- VI. [Policy and Procedures](#)
- VII. [Roberta's Rules of Order](#)
- VIII. [Robert's Rules of Order](#)
- IX. [Sample Agenda](#)

## I. About Us

**The Vision** of Urantian Communities Northwest (UCNOW) is to model the greatest mandate ever given: to love one another as Our Heavenly Father loves us; to acknowledge that we are the living branches of our Mother-Father God, and that we are here to serve all.

**Our Mission** is to unite those who are open to expanding cosmic consciousness and enhancing spiritual perception.

**Our goal** is to strengthen our human and divine relationships through local and regional gatherings and associated activities and projects that foster socialization, study, support, and service.

**We are** faith sons and daughters, siblings of the same divine family. Living in the regions of Alaska, British Columbia, Idaho, Oregon and Washington inspires us to gather together to support, create and evolve ourselves and our communities based on loving kindness and the teachings of progressive truth.

[back](#)

## II. Organizational Structure

Urantian Communities Northwest (UCNOW) Board of Directors [heretofore referred to as Board Members or the Board] is the self-appointing governing committee of UCNOW which is comprised of up to nine (9) members of Urantia Book students from Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

***UCNOW Board of Directors Responsibilities & Functions:***

The UCNOW Board of Directors is a team that is comprised of individuals who are committed to disseminating the Urantia Book and its teachings, who reside within the Pacific Northwest region, and who bring their organizational, planning, and coordination skills to:

1. be the conduit that collects and shares information between states/provinces and sister organization with shared goals and values.
2. encourage proposals for projects, programs, initiatives, and grants.
3. establish ad-hoc committees with clear job descriptions, timelines, and budgets to help insure successful projects and events in our region
4. provide resources, data sharing, and communication
5. maintains a contact list of fellow Urantia Book readers in our region and makes available our service as needed
6. help coordinate outreach events, study groups, service projects, social connections, and to provide a loving support network.
7. to encourage and foster interfaith activities with other organizations.
8. provide support for regional gatherings, weekend retreats and meet-up groups.
9. maintain a website that features current events and activities within our region.
10. engage in fundraising to further projects and programs

***Terms:***

The term of a Board Member is for two years. There are no term limits.

***Resignation:***

Board Members may resign at any time. A thirty (30) day written resignation notice shall be communicated to all Board Members prior to their resignation.

***Removal:***

If persistent personality difficulties arise between Board Members impeding their efforts to function effectively due to a conflict of any nature, it is then required that our Conflict

Resolution Policy be followed and that every attempt for resolution through fair and honest communication of the existing differences be made by all. If the conflict resolution process fails to bring about reconciliation, only then may a Board Member initiate a special meeting with a minimum of thirty (30) days notice prior to the meeting date and call for a vote to remove a fellow Board Member. Seventy five percent (75%) of the meeting quorum is required for the Board Member to be removed.

***Quorum:***

A quorum for passing any official business must consist of more than fifty percent (50%) of the Board of Directors at the time of the vote, but a lesser number may meet and share notes.

[back](#)

### **III. Officers and Job Descriptions**

***Election of Officers:***

The UCNOW Board of directors shall select Co-chairs, Secretary, and Treasurer at its first meeting in odd-numbered years. Term of each shall be for two years. The Treasurer need not be a Board member.

***Co-chairs:***

There will be two Co-chairs elected during each election cycle. Co-chairs will demonstrate the qualities of spirit-led leadership in fulfilling their responsibilities. These responsibilities include developing the meeting agenda, which shall be emailed to Board members no less than five (5) days in advance of the next scheduled meeting, along with supporting material. They will lead and conduct the Board meetings in accordance with Roberta's and Robert's Rules of Order. During Board meetings they shall pay close attention to what might need clarification and also may ask for reframing of the language if deemed helpful in our collective efforts to communicate more effectively.

***Secretary:***

The secretary shall take minutes of the Board meetings and forward those minutes to all committee members no less than seven days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

***Treasurer:***

The treasurer shall maintain the books of the organization, report our balance sheet when given seven days notice prior to a Board meeting, deposit funds, and disburse funds as directed by the approved motions generated by the Board of Directors.

[back](#)

## IV. Committee Structure

### ***Standing Committees:***

The Board of Directors, by a vote of two-thirds of the assembled quorum, may create a Standing Committee. The purpose and goals of a standing committee shall be defined in writing in advance of this vote and be circulated to all Board Members with a thirty (30) day notice. The chairperson of a standing committee must be on the Board of Directors. If more than one Board member wishes to chair this committee, there will be a closed vote to determine the majority vote recipient. A standing committee chair will serve for two years. There are no term limits but a formal vote must be recorded during the election meeting that takes place on the first meeting of each odd numbered year. The chairperson has sole control over selecting who participates on that committee and whether they will choose to have a co-chair, who is not required to be a Board Member. Standing Committee reports will be written into each Board of Director's meeting agenda with the option of "nothing new to report at this time." A yearly written Standing Committee report must be circulated to Board Members and is due by January 1st. A vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the assembled quorum may choose to disband a Standing Committee if a Board Member chooses to put this on the agenda with a thirty (30) day advanced notice.

### ***Communications Standing Committee:***

The Communication Standing Committee (CSC) is charged with the overall supervision of communicating the presence and activities of Urantian Communities Northwest (UCNOW) by facilitating the development and oversight of our website UCNOW.net and by engaging in the various social media platforms, mass emails, publications, videos, and internet technologies. It is the desire of this committee to work cooperatively with other organizations that share in our goals and visions by actively promoting social gatherings, service opportunities, Urantia Book study groups, and interfaith/outreach events that UCNOW either sponsors or supports. The CSC will foster cooperative internal communications with other UCNOW committees and share information as requested. The CSC is charged with maintaining and updating the UCNOW mailing list data and for upholding the Mailing List Policy.

### ***Outreach Standing Committee:***

The Outreach Committee shall promote the awareness and knowledge of The Urantia Book and its teachings. It shall foster and develop fraternal relations, understanding, and goodwill with other organizations within our region that are also devoted to the practice and study of spiritual enlightenment, social justice, and interfaith dialogue. The Outreach Standing Committee (OSC) will work with the communications Standing Committee (CSC) to advertise and encourage participation in the various outreach events, community activities, social meet-ups, study groups, service projects, and to contribute to the media presence that promotes the vision and goals of UCNOW.

***Ad-hoc Committees:***

The Board of Directors may create an ad-hoc committee for a specific purpose that has been clearly defined and has a sunset date written into its formation, not to exceed one year. We welcome individuals to come to UCNOW with proposals for projects, programs, initiatives, and grants that might be created to help share our common vision and goals. The conclusion of some of these requests might result in the formation of an ad-hoc committee. The chairperson of an ad-hoc committee is not required to be on the Board of Directors but must be approved by the Board with a simple majority vote. The chairperson is free to assemble their own team that they determine best suited to accomplish their specific project which has been outlined and agreed upon. The ad-hoc chairperson must be willing to submit reports to the Board of Directors upon request, either through email communication or as an invited guest during our Board meetings. Any funding will be determined and approved by the Board. The lifespan of any ad-hoc committee may be extended past the sunset date by a simple majority vote by the Board of Directors.

[back](#)

## V. Board of Directors Meeting Overview

UCNOW and its committees are Spirit-led. Our desire is to listen, speak and act from that awareness. Therefore, connecting to soul- consciousness to better the quality of our human relationships, and trusting in the work of our celestial friends are fundamental to our success. Such sincere effort takes time and reflection; calling for a pause, and taking a moment to request divine thinking is encouraged, especially during difficult conversations.

Email the agenda, minutes of the previous meeting and relevant documents, at least 5 days before meetings. If standing committee members have edits to the proposed wording in the documents attached in the agenda, said member will submit his/ her edits in writing to the chair no later than 48 hours from the time the document was sent.

Maintain focus on completing the agenda in a timely manner.

Responsibilities of Meeting Participants: Notify Chairs if you are unable to attend. Read all documents you have been sent. Feel free to contact other members regarding questions and comments to items on the agenda prior to the meeting.

[back](#)

## VI. Policy and Procedure

***Conflict Resolution Policy:***

Jesus encouraged us to maintain order to benefit the welfare of the whole group. In Paper 159:1.3, Jesus presents us with a method to effectively solve problems in a fair and

merciful way. He reminds us that Our Father/Mother in heaven loves us, and so we must learn to love one another; our Divine Parent in heaven forgives us; so we must learn to forgive one another.

1. If we find ourselves in conflict with our brother or sister, Jesus directs us to go to him or her and with tact and patience. And do all this between you and the other person alone.
2. If he or she will not hear you, and the problem persists, meet again, this time taking with you one or two mutual friends. These two or even three witnesses will act to confirm your testimony and establish the fact that you have dealt justly and mercifully with your brother or sister.
3. Then, if he/she refuses to cooperate, the whole group will take such action as they deem wise.

Jesus reminds us “that where two or three of you agree concerning any of these things and ask of me, it shall be done for you if your petition is not inconsistent with the will of my Father in heaven. And all this is ever true, for, where two or three believers are gathered together, there am I in the midst of them.”

### ***Mailing List Policy:***

Confidential contact information of Urantian Communities Northwest (UCNOW) mailing list, which includes all forms of personal contact information, will be used only for official purposes and to facilitate the vision, mission, and goals of UCNOW.

This policy is intended as an overview, to be as flexible and fair as possible, while still ensuring the privacy of those individuals who have given us their contact information in trust. Access to the contact information will be managed by the Communications Standing Committee (CSC) with the support and oversight of the Board of Directors of UCNOW.

### ***Procedure:***

All requests for mailing lists will state reasons for use and the portion of the mailing list needed. A prototype of the materials to be sent may be requested. Any expense for the use of the mailing list will be paid by those requesting its use. All requests need to be made in a timely manner. UCNOW retains the right to decline any request made for sharing our mailing list.

[back](#)

## VII. Roberta's Rules of Order

The intent of Roberta's Rules is to enact the 5 A's:

- Acknowledge what the person has said
- Ask open-ended questions
- Ask clarifying questions
- Accept and relish the beauty of the different styles of thinking and creativity and how it is expressed
- Appreciate each other's ideas

Responsibilities of the Co- chairs and Committee Chairs: Facilitate meetings incorporating the 5 A's Email the agenda, minutes of the previous meeting and relevant documents, at least five (5) days before meetings. If standing committee members have edits to the proposed wording in the documents attached in the agenda, said member will submit his/her edits in writing to the chair no later than 48 hours from the time the document was sent. Maintain focus on completing the agenda in a timely manner.

Responsibilities of Meeting Participants: Remember to enact the 5 A's Notify Chairs if you are unable to attend Read all documents you have been sent Feel free to contact other members regarding questions and comments to items on the agenda prior to the meeting.

Here's a list of other courtesy items that might be helpful in conducting successful meetings:

- Start and end on time
- Everyone is encouraged to participate
- We seek common ground for collective coordinated action, not necessarily agreement
- Have an open mind, seek to understand others perspectives
- Address ideas, not individuals
- Be courteous and respectful
- Indicate when you want to speak (e.g., raise hand, eye contact with facilitator)
- One person speaks at a time
- Speak for yourself, use "I" statements
- Monitor your participation (limit or expand contributions, no lectures, stay on topic)
- Respect and support the role of the facilitator
- Turn off pagers and cell phones. At a minimum place them on vibrate

[back](#)

## VII. Robert's Rules of Order - Summary

For the purposes of efficient UCNOW committee work, the following rules are offered as a basis for conducting meetings.

We are a small group and the strict formality of the summary of Robert's Rules of Order need only be used when the Chair determines, in his/her sole discretion, that such is necessary. These common rules and procedures for deliberation and discussion are provided in order to place the whole membership on the same footing and speaking the same language.

The conduct of ALL business is controlled by the general will of the whole membership - the right of the deliberate majority to decide. Complementary is the right of at least a strong minority to require the majority to be deliberate - to act according to its considered judgment AFTER a full and fair "working through" of the issues involved. Robert's Rules provides for constructive and democratic meetings, to help, not hinder, the business of the assembly. Under no circumstances should "undue strictness" be allowed to intimidate members or limit full participation. The fundamental right of deliberative assemblies requires all questions to be thoroughly discussed before taking action! The assembly rules - they have the final say on everything! Silence means consent!

The chair may call the meeting to order when a quorum is present and the agenda shall begin. After preliminary items, the Chair will introduce the first item, which for us will usually be "Old Business" (see sample agenda below).

### **Guidelines**

To obtain the floor (the right to speak) use an appropriate indication in accordance with circumstance of the situation. For example, raising one's hand, and being recognized by the Chair. The Chair will maintain a list of those wishing to speak.

For our Zoom calls, members wishing to speak will raise their hand and the Chair will note "next and their name" in the Chat window. If this process seems unsuccessful the more formal method will be used:

The member wishing to speak will click on the bottom of screen where it says participants (a list of participants will appear), at the bottom of the list it you'll see a place that says: raise hand; click raise hand and a little hand will appear.

The chair will add the member's name in the Chat window, as above, so that all members of the meeting can see the order of speakers. Committee members will need to be mindful of removing their hand after they speak.

The chair may open an item on the agenda for discussion however, discussion cannot begin until a motion has been made and seconded and the Chair has stated the motion or



resolution and asked "any further discussion" If no one responds, the chair will call for the vote.

After the motion is stated by the Chair (the question) members may suggest modification of the motion; the mover can modify as he pleases, or even withdraw the motion without consent of the seconder; if mover modifies, the seconder can withdraw the second.

Below are additional circumstances and ways of conducting meetings if things get complicated.

The "immediately pending question" is the last question stated by the Chair!

Motion/Resolution - Amendment - Motion to Postpone

The member moving the "immediately pending question" is entitled to preference to the floor.

No member can speak twice to the same issue until everyone else wishing to speak has spoken to it once.

All remarks must be directed to the Chair. Remarks must be courteous in language and deportment - avoid all personalities, never allude to others by name or to motives. The agenda and all committee reports are recommendations. When presented to the assembly and the question stated, discussion begins and changes occur.

The following are a list of Robert's Rules we have agreed upon for guiding the Board of Director's meetings:

**Amend:** Inserting or striking out words or paragraphs, or substituting whole paragraphs or resolutions

**Appeal Decision of the Chair:** Appeal for the assembly to decide -must be made before other business is resumed; NOT debatable if relates to decorum, violation of rules or order of business.

**Commit /Refer/Recommit to Committee:** State the committee to receive the question or resolution; if no committee exists include size of committee desired and method of selecting the members (election or appointment).

**Consider by Paragraph:** Adoption of paper is held until all paragraphs are debated and amended and entire paper is satisfactory; after all paragraphs are considered, the entire paper is then open to amendment, and paragraphs may be further amended. Any Preamble cannot be considered until debate on the body of the paper has ceased.

**Divide the Question:** Divides a motion into two or more separate motions (must be able to stand on their own).

**Extend Discussion:** Applies only to the immediately pending question; extends until a certain time or for a certain period of time

**Informal Consideration:** Move that the assembly go into "Committee of the Whole" - informal debate as if in committee; this committee may limit number or length of speeches or close debate by other means by a 2/3 vote. All votes, however, are formal.

**Lay on the Table:** Temporarily suspends further consideration/ action on pending question; may be made after motion to close debate has carried or is pending

**Limit Discussion:** Closing debate at a certain time, or limiting to a certain period of time

**Main Motion:** Brings new business (the next item on the agenda) before the assembly

**Orders of the Day (Agenda):** A call to adhere to the agenda (a deviation from the agenda requires Suspending the Rules).

**Object to Consideration:** Objection must be stated before discussion or another motion is stated

**Parliamentary Inquiry:** Inquire as to the correct motion - to accomplish a desired result, or raise a point of order.

**Point of Information:** Generally applies to information desired from the speaker: "I should like to ask the (speaker) a question."

**Point of Order:** Infraction of the rules, or improper decorum in speaking.

Must be raised immediately after the error is made

**Point of Privilege:** Pertains to noise, personal comfort, etc. - may interrupt only if necessary!

**Postpone to a Certain Time:** State the time the motion or agenda item will be resumed

**Postpone Indefinitely:** Kills the question/resolution for this session - exception: the motion to reconsider can be made this session.

**Previous Question:** Closes debate if successful - may be moved to "Close Debate" if preferred.

**Reconsider:** Can be made only by one on the prevailing side who has changed position or view

**Suspend the Rules:** Allows a violation of the assembly's own rules (except Constitution); the object of the suspension must be specified.

**Take from the Table:** Resumes consideration of item previously "laid on the table" - state the motion to take from the table.

**Withdraw/Modify Motion:** Applies only after question is stated; mover can accept an amendment without obtaining the floor.

[back](#)

## IX. Sample Agenda

Recommend sample agenda format for use for all meetings; amend as appropriate:

### UCNOW

Committee Name

**Date & Time** (please include all time zones being effected)

**ZOOM video conference call:** <https://zoom.us/j/7293291303>

Meeting ID: 729-329-1303 Phone: (646) 568-7788

### AGENDA

#### CALL TO ORDER

#### ROLL CALL

#### OPENING PRAYER

#### APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Additions to the agenda

**I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of MEETING of \_\_\_\_\_ (attached)**

#### **II. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **a. Standing Committees**

**i. 1. Communications**

**ii. 2. Outreach**

##### **b. Ad Hoc Committees**

#### **III. OLD BUSINESS (example)**

**a. xxxx – (person presenting) (attachment if any)–**

**b. yyyy**

#### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

**a.**

**b.**

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**NEXT MEETING DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **ADJOURN**

[back](#)