

RCA 2027 Convention Hosting Exploratory Committee

February 27, 2026

Meeting opened with the Serenity Prayer and reading traditions one and two.

Attendees: John, Ruth, Debbie, Liz, Mike, Vicki, Deborah, Jennifer, Buddy and Mark

Chair asked for approval of the minutes from the previous meeting, noting the following corrections to the minutes:

1. Add John to the list of attendees
2. The committee decided to table the choice of Richmond – pending further investigation
3. Committee documents are on the 2027 website, <https://rca2027.org/admin/>

The minutes were approved with these corrections.

Open Issues

1. Hotel Selection: John shared his thoughts on his review of the Delta, Omni and Reston Sheraton hotels, as documented in the Venue Choice .pdf.
 - a. Room rates are cheaper at the Reston Sheraton, and it offers a free airport shuttle, but the ballroom seems small and they would require using their contracted A/V vendor, with costs not stated.
 - b. The site does not appear to be walkable but does offer shuttle service to Reston Town Center.
 - c. Delta seems cheaper on food.
 - d. Neither of the hotels, on paper, seem to be a clear winner but noted that if the Reston Sheraton offers affordability and shuttle service.
 - e. Noted that one hotel offered Sept. availability and asked if July dates are firm for the convention. He's concerned about the typical July heat and humidity in Virginia.
 - f. Mark asked about the Arlington hotel near the airport. Others responded that they had a 20k minimum for food and beverage. We would have to do something big to make that cost effective.
2. Initial Report from Richmond site selection team (Ruth, Debbie, Jennifer, Deborah)
 - a. Omni:
 - i. Deborah shared that they viewed the ballroom, dining facility and two sleeping rooms.
 1. The A/V contractor is in house. Smaller breakout rooms would not be mic'd for streaming/zoom.

2. The property is very nice and recently renovated with a lot of private meeting spaces available. It adjoins a downtown office building.
 3. Parking is \$26, likely per day but not sure, and is possibly negotiable.
 4. The group had lunch from the same kitchen that would serve the convention and it was very good.
 5. They can drop the food & beverage charge from \$14K to \$12K.
 6. The hotel is two blocks from the train station.
- ii. Ruth noted the hotel is beautiful and had a “spirit and a heart” that was welcoming, and it felt like a place she would want to spend the weekend.
 - iii. Ruth added the A/V quote just came in and it is high. However, we can bring our own equipment and she will research opportunities to conserve costs.
 - iv. Debbie added that the Omni had a lot of natural ambient light, good for mood and circadian rhythms. The Omni (family owned) is also rich in history; gives back to community, sharing the fellowship’s obligation to service. It has a sense of history and good energy and would be conducive to what we are trying to create for the fellowship. Their representative, Michelle, is vegan and it seems like they would really work with us on menu needs.
 - v. Jennifer said it is considered a very nice hotel and she thinks it is a world class hotel. The open dome was very uplifting. It’s its own little universe, with lots of places to explore on the property. Delta was angular and limited. Omni was cosmopolitan while at the same time being very Richmond. Both locations are near the river in “playground” areas. There are parks along the river and even a class five rapids in the middle of the city. She prefers the Omni.
- b. Delta: Deborah: Five blocks from the Omni and feels like the edge of downtown. Feels smaller than the Omni.
- i. The immediate area is not as walkable for downtown amenities, although there are other appealing places to walk.
 - ii. Currently being renovated.
 - iii. A/V is contracted
 - iv. Spacious ballroom with room to store resources.
 - v. Free parking
 - vi. Free shuttle to locations within two miles (excludes the airport).

- c. Debbie shared that the Delta feels very corporate. It's near highways, a pyramid with lots of angles and did not have a pleasant energy.
 - d. Follow-up comments from the group:
 - i. John: It sounds like the Delta charges for the A/V contractor, with a 10% discount having been mentioned.
 - ii. Liz: It is common for renovations to run beyond the original schedule and selecting a site currently under renovation risks interfering with the convention experience.
3. Ruth asked if we are ready to decide between Northern VA or Richmond?
- a. She shared that Richmond's history seemed very appealing. Richmond, and especially the Omni, has a wonderful feel to it. She would like to make it not just about the money but also the spirit of the place.
 - b. Mike stated that it's not only the experience of the hotel, but there is a benefit to having something about the city/location that makes the trip worthwhile beyond the convention itself, so Richmond sounds appealing.
 - c. Liz encouraged us to, individually, rank our own priorities/concerns regarding location and dates to assess how each option fits in that ranking.
 - d. Mike: think about promoting 2027 convention at the end of Denver convention, what is the sizzle that you can offer to attract attendees to next year's convention? Richmond seems very appealing.
 - e. Deborah: appreciates Mike's comment on the sizzle. There is a lot of development in Richmond, yet it is still rich in history. Omni best represents that sizzle and best represents Richmond.
 - f. Vicki shared that post-convention reviews do not offer a clear indication of what the fellowship values in a convention location. We won't be able to please everyone. It's up to the committee to find a place that feels like a good choice.
4. Further discussion on dates
- a. Vicki: We gave Carol four dates and only the Delta gave the fall date. We can ask again about fall dates.
 - b. John: Remembers only the Delta having fall dates
 - c. Several individuals voiced concern about the weather for July in this region, particularly regarding humidity and expressed a desire to further investigate fall dates.
 - d. Vicki (as stated in a follow-up email because I did not catch the point in the meeting): A board term runs from convention to convention. If we extend the time between conventions, board members potentially are serving longer

than they expect to. It's usually not a big deal, but something that we should consider.

- e. Regarding August:
 - i. August can still be hot and humid.
 - ii. Potential attendees with school-aged children may find mid to late August problematic with school restarting.
 - f. Regarding September:
 - i. Avoid Labor Day weekend.
 - ii. Liz: San Antonio's September date encouraged attendees to go out in groups to eat, explore and socialize.
 - g. Regarding November, we need to be mindful of the approaching holidays and restrictions regarding board member terms and annual business meeting dates as required by our by-laws.
5. Tri-brid Track: Ruth proposed that the large meeting room will serve as the venue for the tri-brid attendees. The room will host both individual sessions and the featured speaker shares.
- a. This allows remote attendees to participate in the larger meetings where all attendees gather (such as the convention welcome meeting and keynote speaker share).
 - b. This will make the hybrid sessions a defined track of sessions that remote participants will attend, rather than giving them an option of choosing from sessions that may be scheduled concurrently.
 - c. Zoom attendees would send chats for questions or comments to presenters.
 - d. The hybrid track will also be well attended by those whose home meetings are hybrid and therefore provide lots of technical support.
 - e. Debbie: they did a tri-brid for another program with a "parking lot" for people on zoom and it was amazing the extra conversations attendees had. Other attendees were present to encourage safety guidelines in the discussions.

Registration costs

1. To begin the discussion of registration costs, Ruth proposed \$75 attendance for zoom couples. For attendees, \$350 plus another \$50 for the banquet at the end. This would provide a firm count of who will be there.
 - a. A reasonable remote rate may attract large numbers because a high rate for 3 days remote might discourage those who won't attend the entire convention, and the session choice might be limited if all tri-brid sessions are limited to the one room.
2. Vicki: Two thoughts.

- a. Regarding costs for in person compared to remote attendees, she suggests subtracting the cost of meals from the in-person registration and that is the cost for remote.
 - b. Asked clarification on promoting a separate price based on the last meal? Are you flexible on that meal price because \$50 is probably too low.
3. Mike: We could credit the cost of the buffet if in-person attendees don't want to pay for that meal. So, advertise the higher rate and credit. Also suggests opening remote registration later after in person attendees have committed to come, encouraging in person attendance.
4. Vicki made additional comments regarding the calculation of meals into the registration fees.
 - a. Hitting that minimum for food is necessary to pay for the meeting rooms.
 - b. Board members typically pay for their own food for business meeting, although San Antonio and Syracuse covered it. That is an exception to how it's worked for recent years. This was a surprise to some who said that has not always been the case.
5. John: supports a low cost for zoom participants because they are not adding to the cost, aside for the A/V. Perhaps the fee for remote attendees should be calculated based on the A/V cost.

A motion was made and then amended to consider the weekend after Labor Day through the end of October for the date of the convention. We will initially pursue having the convention at the Omni and then consider other options if the Omni is not available during that time. The motion was seconded and unanimously accepted.

Convention Theme and Promotion

1. Ruth suggests developing a flyer to put in every clubhouse of other fellowships in the region. Then a flyer for all zoom meetings but this does not have to be advertised right away.
2. Jennifer: The *Take my Hand* daily reader will come out in time for the Denver convention. Is it too far-fetched to put plugs into the daily reader for the convention?
3. John: *Take my Hand* sounds like a good theme.
4. Deborah: Enrich your coupleship in Richmond.
5. Ruth: Would love to use a bridging theme to bridge old-timer couples to new; bridging internationally, and bridging our coupleships.

6. Deborah: There seems to be a lot of bridges in Richmond and likes how bridges connect people. Supports simple and imagery but it should be colorful but punchy. Bridging and hand-in-hand imagery can be merged.
7. Buddy: regarding having someone from '88 speak, tech chair refers to original members not as old timers but pioneers.

The meeting closed with the Unity Prayer.

Next team Meeting: (Last Friday of month) March 27, 2026, 6pm EST

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85946506616?pwd=dbnfYNsRRhNJDQ7712iKn5SOp0NH2a.1>

Meeting ID: 859 4650 6616 Passcode: RCA2027