

Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Board Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2017

Present: Board members Tim Pickering, Carol Kern, Bob Stimson, Bonnie Wall-Lievsay, Jennifer Mercier, Susan Wamsley, Bill Baker; ex officio member Don Rollins

The chalice was lit and Bill shared a pertinent Super Bowl commercial as a reading. Bob served as process observer. Everyone checked in.

I. **Agenda:** Bonnie moved to accept the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

II. **Minister and Staff reports-** attached.

A. **Administrator's report-** no further comments made.

B. **Minister's report-** The Board discussed the video options and financial concerns from the minister report. Don explained different options for a projection system. Bob moved that the Board accept a donated monitor/stand, continue to investigate the sanctuary projection system, and create a budget item for funding this system. The motion carried with six in favor and one abstention. The board discussed different options for a Social Justice model. Don explained the proposed Social Justice model. Discussed how other congregations have used this model and how it could be applied at UUC. He also gave the Board written information about an alternative way to approach Social Justice. Tim made a motion for Don to try to get the model set up. The motion carried with six in favor and one abstention.

C. **DLFD report** – no further comments made.

III. **Consent Agenda and Old Business:** Bonnie moved to approve the minutes from January. Tim seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. **Treasurer's Report:** attached. Bill gave a presentation with updated information about how much cash UUC has. He also helped the Board understand the budget.

V. **Building issues** – Dave Lievsay attended the meeting and shared with the Board that a column and beam outside the nursery are rotted. Replacement will cost approximately \$1900. We have a contractor who can do it for \$1800 and won't be painting (we will need to do this ourselves). There has also been an unexpected issue with the fire sprinkler system. It will cost \$400 to Virginia Sprinkler Company to fix the problem. Dave asked for \$2300 to cover these expenses. Tim moved to the Board authorizes the expenditure of \$2300 from facilities contingency fund to pay for the column repair and the sprinkler system repair. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. **Members Forum:**

Marquita Hill attended and discussed the importance of our congregation committing to ongoing assistance to refugees and IDPs.

VI. New Business:

- A. Stewardship update: There will be sign-ups for cottage meetings in March and stewardship training on March 11. There will also be opportunities for people to meet with stewards individually.
- B. Space Cadets III: The Board reviewed and discussed the proposed suggestions from the Space Cadets committee, which includes improvements to the Anteroom, the Library, and the room adjacent to the Nursery. Bob is going to get a second estimate for the proposed cabinet work. Bill explained different ways that we can incorporate these improvements into the budget. Tim suggested that we add a line item to the 17-18 budget for facilities upgrades.

VII. Budget Discussion: The Board discussed staff salaries as they appear on the budget. Carol shared that we need more information about labor laws and the UUA guidelines for staff salaries. Tim volunteered to talk to Don to get more information about the salaries and the hours that are worked. Bill offered to help Tim with this. The Board discussed the budget goal for 17-18 and what the needs are of the UUC for the upcoming year. Bob suggested \$370,000 as a goal and everyone agreed.

VIII. Immigrant Sanctuary for UUC: The Board reviewed the current policies and Carol read the proposed pledge. Tim raised a concern about liabilities, such as the potential to harbor someone who is in the U.S. illegally. Don reported that no congregation has ever been prosecuted for this. Carol shared that Molly McClintock volunteered to coordinate educational opportunities for the congregation. Susan made a motion that we sign the pledge. The motion carried with six in favor and one against.

IX. Informational Items: Carol informed the board about upcoming special events, such as the Mardi Gras party and the YRUU coffeehouse.

X. Next meeting: March 9 at 7 p.m. Susan will provide refreshments and hopefully Molly will take minutes (Carol offered to talk to her about this). Jennifer will provide the opening words and Tim will serve as Process Observer.

XI. Process Observer report: Bob reported that we started on time but didn't end on time. He expressed some confusion about what outcome is needed from agenda items. He believes it may be helpful to know what decisions need to be made before each Board meeting.

UUC BOARD MEETING AGENDA
Thursday, February 9, 2017

7:00-7:15 Chalice Lighting & Reading Check-in Process Observer	15 Minutes
7:15- 7:20 Review and Accept Current Agenda	5 Minutes
7:20-7:35 Minister and Staff Reports Administrator's Reports DLFD's Reports Program Council Report	15 Minutes
7:35-7:40 Consent Agenda and Old Business Previous Board minutes for January—approve Stewardship update	5 Minutes
7:40-7:55 Treasurer's Report	15 Minutes
7:55-8:00 Building Chair Update; approve money for column and sprinkler from contingency fund	5 minutes
8:00-8:10 Break and Refreshments	10 Minutes
8:10-8:15 Members Forum Members are invited to address the board. Please Your Comments to 3 Minutes.	5 Minutes
8:15-8:30 New Business Space Cadets III	15 Minutes
8:30-8:50 Budget Discussion: decide amount to aim for in Stewardship Drive	20 Minutes
8:50-9:00 Immigrant Sanctuary for UUC (Don)	10 Minutes
9:00-9:05 Information Items Timeline, special events	5 Minutes
9:05-9:15 Select refreshments, process observer, and closing words volunteers for March Process Observer Report Extinguish Chalice and closing reading (Don)	10 Minutes

Next meeting: March 9, 2017

REPORT TO THE UUC BOARD
February 9, 2017
Don Rollins

Big Picture: I continue to be encouraged by UUC lay leaders' overall openness to trying new ideas and ways of "doing church". It's nice to be able to tell pre-candidates that while there are some pockets of resistance to shifts in size, governance and role of the minister, key leaders will go out on the branch with her/him.

Leadership Development: I'll lead the first session of UUC's Creative Growth Session on February 14. We encourage you attend if possible. If not, recommend us to anyone you'd like – we're open to all comers.

Coffeehouse: Attendance averages around 20 per month, and revenues are a little below the costs of drinks/food. We'll take March off to accommodate the YRUU fundraiser coffeehouse.

Conflict Resolution: Mark Benson has been buried with work, and will be undergoing hip surgery next week, but I have a line on some names to work with me. My goal is to get a process and 3-member team before I go.

Strategic Planning: The team is still working on a plan for a vision process. Stay tuned...

Lay Pastoral Care: Cynthia and the caregivers/visitors continue to do great work, but so far we haven't been able to find a good candidate to replace her.

Pastoral Care: Requests for short-term support continue to be slightly higher than before December. I'm also getting more requests from gay couples to sign marriage licenses.

Lenten Supper/Service: We'll be hosting on March 15. Jane Mahone is kindly taking the lead on our end. We'll partner with Northside Presbyterian on the meal.

Sanctuary Projection System: UUC member, Will Schneider, has submitted a proposal for just under \$9,600. I haven't looked for a second estimate, but Will was the installer for the sound in the sanctuary, and I'm told his costs were well under his competitors.

Options: Wait until after the generosity campaign is concluded, and enact a plan combining fundraisers and donations from identified members who support the system; 2. Purchase a second TV monitor (roughly \$650) so we can begin showing lyrics, images, online content to the entire sanctuary, but continue to raise funds for the projection system. (Note that Karen is strongly interested in having two monitors once the overhead system is active); 3. Buy the second monitor/stand and don't pursue a projector; 4. Live with the whiteboard, wait until the generosity campaign concludes, and begin raising funds toward a projection system; 5. Other ideas?

Social Justice Model: Janet Sawyers and I laid some basic plans for getting started on the model I recommend, but she began getting negative feedback on three main counts: 1. The congregation has already designated mental health advocacy as its primary focus; 2. The SJ model would distract from the MHJM's work; 3. The congregation should wait until a settled minister arrives.

My responses: 1. A ballpark 25 members/friends have talked with me about identifying a second area of focus as a way to broaden UUC's efforts; 2. SJ teams in my previous congregations have had little or no problem keeping the two separate; 3. It's the congregation not the staff that drives the selection process.

Options: 1. I can solicit folks to help me get back on track or 2. Support the current ad hoc efforts.

Candidating Week: Boards and interim ministers negotiate the IM's duties during candidating week. We're absent from administration and the campus as the candidate meets with staff, board and many other persons/groups. And we continue to handle communications (email, texts and phone calls) and emergency pastoral care, but some boards allow us to leave the area for part or all of that time without counting it against our vacation/continuing education totals.

Request: As an exception, I'm currently scheduled to participate in the next new member orientation, on 5/6. May I use 3-4 extra days to go home during that week?

Miscellaneous Activities Since Last Meeting:

- Facilitated 2 staff meetings (Lisa and Karen)
- Attended 1 Blacksburg Ministerial Association
- Attended the following meetings: Worship; Strategic Planning; Stewardship; Transitions Team; Connections; Executive Committee; monthly meeting with Carol
- 1 Coffeehouse
- 3 Sunday services
- 1 meeting with VT president and Ellen Plummer
- approximately 30 office hours
- 1 wedding
- 5 pastoral counseling sessions
- 1 congregational meeting
- 1 after church video screening

**Administrator's Report to the Board
February 9, 2017**

Webhost: Our current webhost, UUism Networks, has been down for too many extended periods of time over the years which results in our website being down and an inability to send emails using our uucnr.org aliases. Therefore, I believe it's time for us to find a new, more reliable webhosting company and will start doing some research.

Committee Meetings: Attended Stewardship Committee meetings last month.

Blacksburg Refugee Partnership: Once the latest check is prepared and mailed, we will have fulfilled our commitment of \$1200 for this year.

Attendance/Members: See online Google Doc. Note also that we have had an exceptional number of visitors the past few weeks for this time of year including families with children. Seven people signed the membership book last month. There will be a new member ceremony Feb. 19 so more may join.

Community Assistance Fund: Just as an update on the CAF: there is currently \$2928 in the account. Don has used \$507 since July 1 to help those in both our UUC and local communities. \$1230 was raised during the special collection on Christmas Eve.

DLFD Report to the Board – February 2017

Submitted by Karen Hager, Director of Lifespan Faith Development

Registration

- Current CYRE: 120 (unique children/youth)
- Children & Youth UUC “slots”: 174

Visitors continue to come at a much higher rate than past years. Our conversion from visitor to registrant is quite high (usually happens on third visit).

This month:

- Our spring semester began last Sunday, with 7 new teachers, and 13 teachers returning from fall.
- Dumbledore’s Army’s fight against the Hatred Horcrux was met with strong approval by parents and congregants. Several congregants without children contacted me with positive feedback about the fight, and the information shared with the entire congregation. This Horcrux was also shared across the country with previous purchasers of the *Harry and UU* curriculum, several of whom contacted me with plans for implementation this spring.
- OWL continues this month, with a final count of 13 children registered for K-1 OWL and 14 children registered for 4-5 OWL. Since parents also attend the K-1 class, these class offerings affect nearly 50 congregants. The K-1 class is using classrooms 1-4 downstairs, while 4-5 meets upstairs in the Library. Our request of a voluntary donation of a \$25 activity fee for participating congregants and a \$50 for non-congregants resulted in \$465 being applied back to the OWL budget; supplies for the orientation were taken from these donations, which included lunch for the K-1 class, a snack break for the 4-5 class, and a copy of “It’s Perfectly Normal” for all 4-5 youth. OWL runs through April.
- Adult RE’s UU Prayer Beads and Meditation Art classes have been postponed indefinitely, at the request of teacher Nancy Norton.
- Planning is starting this Sunday for a Jeopardy fundraiser, to benefit YRUU. Thanks to Linda and Joe Powers for heading up this effort! The fundraiser is scheduled for April 7.

2017-18 Class Size Projections

Based on current registration, we are making a preliminary projection on class sizes for 2017-18:

- Nursery: 9
- PreK: 10
- Gr. K-1: 21
- Gr. 2-3: 14
- Gr. 4-5: 14
- Gr. 6-7: 14
- Gr. 8 (COA): 5
- MSYG: 19
- YRUU: 28

We have officially begun planning for the 2017-18 year.

Budget

LFD’s budget request for 2017-18 contains a reach budget that includes an increase in my hours. Here is more information on that request:

I was originally hired for 20 hours/week, with responsibility for children’s programming from Nursery through grade 8. Since then, these changes have occurred:

- My responsibility was increased to include all ages, adding high school programming (YRUU); Our Whole Lives, which has grown to 4 classes; the Coming of Age program; and adult RE programming.
- My hours were increased to 25 hours/week.
- An LFD Assistant was hired, who works (on average) 6 hours/week.
- The size of the children’s and youth programs have increased by about 30%.

This year, support of the children’s RE program, YRUU, two classes of OWL and the Coming of Age program has taken all of my 25 hours/week plus the LFD Assistant’s time. It has left no time for adult RE programming, and, as a result, very little has occurred. Our congregation has clearly expressed a desire for a full adult RE program.

The 2017-18 reach budget request proposes increasing the DLFD's hours to 32 hours/week. This would allow me to adequately support the increased size of the children's and youth program, and provide for additional hours to devote to adult RE.

If my hours are not increased, I would expect that adult RE programming would, again, be limited next year, unless some other program was cut from LFD. In 2017-18, I will, once again, be supporting the children's program, YRUU, two classes of OWL, and Coming of Age.

Consulting

UUCR has recently discovered that a very large amount of construction work will need to happen to their building immediately. This has pushed the start of their LFD program back until construction is finished, which is not expected to happen before May, at the earliest. We are currently figuring out Plan B.

I continue to find new ways for our two churches to partner in the future and hope that the relationship being established between our two congregations will be supported and expanded under the new settled minister.