

Minutes of the Monthly Board Meeting via Zoom

March 7, 2021

Present: Moderator Fern Culhane (FC); Assistant Moderator Bruce Pollack-Johnson (BPJ), Treasurer Nicole Bartle (NB); Secretary Jane Hain (JH); Trustees Peter Johnstone (PJ); Leslie Ferron-Smith (LFS), Anam Owili-Eger (AOE), Stephen Workman (SW); Minister McKinley Sims (MS).

Absent: None

Chalice & Gathering Words: 1:25.

1. MINUTES AND REPORTS:

- 1.1. **Minutes from Previous Meeting(s):** Amended minutes from the February Board Meeting: SW moved to approve; Second: PJ. Minutes were approved.
- 1.2. **Minutes from Name Change Congregational Meeting** - Moved: BPJ; Seconded: NB. Minutes were approved.
- 1.3. **Minister's Report:**
 - 1.3.1. The Wednesday evening vespers service and the Sunday coffee hour gave congregants opportunities to voice their feelings about the name change vote. Board members were asked to add any feelings/comments. Some feelings were: happiness for the people on the Name Change committee, relief, acceptance, a sense of loss, guilt, sadness for those who felt strongly for keeping the old name, and stress over all the details to come. The process worked, so all in all, it was a lesson learned for future hard decisions. Next steps would be to look back on this process when other big decisions arise – consider modified consensus, effects of white supremacy etc.
 - 1.3.2. We will feature some guest ministers in the next months. The month of May will feature a full month of “Wild and Precious Lives”. The Committee on Ministry (COM) met to begin the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) renewal that needs to be filed by July.
- 1.4. **Treasurer's Report:** February's expenses topped revenues by \$6,711 partly because of pledges being \$3,000 less than expected for the month and a \$1,500 oil payment. Financially, we're still in good shape. We have the opportunity to finish the fiscal year stronger than the proposed budget. If income and expenses continue as expected, we may be able to put some of the extra (\$8,000-\$10,000) into our endowment or use some for projects.
- 1.5. **Buildings & Grounds:**
 - 1.5.1. Bathroom: The full request is posted on the board webpage. Larry H. presented a document showing updated costs for the Hale bathroom after the architect reviewed and changed plans prior to submittal to L&I. The major change was adding a fire-resistant, self-closing door. The architect advised us that the plans would be denied without this addition. NB has spoken to the representative of the anonymous donor and that person may make more funds available. The board supported continuation of the project with the possibility of additional

monies being accrued from a small fund-raiser if it looks like we will be operating at a deficit by the end of the year.

DECISION: PJ moved to approve continuing the project. BPJ seconded. The board gave their approval.

1.5.2. Kitchenette: The cost for refurbishing the Hale kitchenette is about \$7,000 with half of that being a proposed grant from the TPUC. It was suggested that maybe \$3,000 of the funding could come from the \$8,000 interest from the Bradburd investment... another fund-raiser after the pledge campaign?

1.6. **Religious Exploration:** The full report is posted on the board webpage.

1.6.1. FC stated that she was thrilled with all the projects/class work JS has implemented. The anti-racism class is nearing conclusion, and JS is now planning several outdoor activities for the spring.

1.6.2. We could also try to again run the Our Whole Lives (OWL) program, this time at our own building, or perhaps middle-school aged racism/inclusion programs. AOE: When “church” opens up again, there may be more kids joining and it would be good to have programs ready to go.

1.6.3. FC asked what the age level was for “young adults” (18-35). We may be able to re-attract this sub-set of people – perhaps those who were in the coming of age program several years ago. The UUA may also offer direction.

1.6.4. Murray Grove is offering an overnight summer camp for 4th-8th graders (Camping in the Grove) that might be attractive to a couple of our children.

1.6.5. Do we need to consider beginning a search for a new RE Coordinator?

2. STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN/SETTING A GOAL FOR THE PLEDGE DRIVE:

2.1. Timetable: these dates allow for the 2-week notice time before the budget meeting.

- March 21 Kickoff.
- April 18 End of drive. It would also be good if the board members pledge before the kickoff. (board will then begin phoning those who pledged before but haven’t responded this year)
- May 2 Board meeting to approve the 2021-22 proposed budget.
- May 16 Annual Budget Meeting.
- June 20 Annual Congregational Meeting.

2.2. 2020-21’s goal was \$200,000. We received pledges for about \$194,000 and actual income so far of \$184,300. The 2019-20 pledge goal was \$175,000 and we collected about \$162,000.

2.3. The board felt that raising the goal by another \$25,000 was too ambitious but we do need to consider increases in salaries¹ (UUA recommends 1.2%) and refunding B&G and the music program. NB said we need a pledge increase of 3% to gain \$6,000. PJ stated that we keep the \$200,000 goal and “sell” it on enhancing the music program. The majority of our pledge units pledge \$0 to \$3,000. We could suggest that each person

¹ At the moment, all staff is earning above the \$15/hour wage.

increase his/her pledge by \$100 or maybe 1% to meet the proposed goal. The % option would cause an unfair impact on the high-end givers.

- 2.4. Additional budget items planned for this year that should be rolled over to next year:
 - 2.4.1. 200th Anniversary: \$3,000.
 - 2.4.2. Installation: We need to provide more than the \$1,000 that was budgeted. Rev. Ellis' was a good bit higher 8 years ago. The caterer alone was more than that. SW could check.
 - 2.4.3. Sabbatical: We hadn't been accruing for this in the past so this was new this year.
 - 2.4.4. Additions: helping to fund delegates for GA. There is a line item of \$1,000 for leadership training that would fall under this category. Last year it was \$1,500.
- 2.5. **DECISION:** the board recommended setting the goal again at \$200,000 with a hope to actually collect \$195,000 in pledges. FC and NB will relay this information to the Finance Committee.

3. NAME CHANGE, NEXT STEPS:

- 3.1. FC shared a list of items with the board – some of which we have done. NB reported that we need to legally stop using the name “Unitarian Universalist Church of the Restoration” by the end of 2021 unless we re-register with the state. PJ felt that the other big changes necessary to take place are to update our bylaws, tax ID number, bank accounts, and filing with the IRS. MF says it would be good to apply for a 501(c) now to be eligible for grant opportunities. There are, however, financial implications with this choice. FC will look into resources through the UUA. Board members are asked to look for changes that need to be implemented. JH is creating a list of changes mostly involving the web: pages, forms and documents. The new domain name was discussed – <https://www.uumtairy.org> (PJ moved and LFS seconded). The name was approved if it is available. JH will discuss the procedure with our provider ICDSOFT Support to determine how long we should maintain two websites etc. JH thinks we can purchase the domain but we can't use the new domain until we have legally changed our name.
- 3.2. Mission, Vision, Tag Line: BPJ has received several responses to the invitation for wording options. Linda H has asked for more wording from the Congregational Covenant. Some other suggestions were more substantial than mere word tweaking. **DECISION:** It was decided to schedule a Town Hall on Sunday, April 25 for more discussion. BPJ will ask the Admin. Assistant (AA) to send out some of the suggestions anonymously in the upcoming weekly eNewsletters.

4. OTHER ITEMS:

- 4.1. PJ noted that we have older congregants who need to have their stories/experiences/histories told and saved. (There are 10 who have been members prior to 1980.)
- 4.2. Who might be keeping track of congregants who have been vaccinated? That could be a factor for our re-opening.

TABLED ITEMS:

1. Questions that may be important to consider at some point in the future, from McKinley's view:
 - What does a hybrid style of worship look like when we can meet in person, and will someone always have the option of digitally attending?
 - What's our role as a connector of jobs and people in our neighborhood, post-pandemic?
2. Coordination of church's calendar, need to use and teach others to use? A policy, procedure? Not a practice lately... ahem, Fern!
3. Sustainability of current systems

TASKS: See also, the tasks from previous minutes since they were not addressed at the February meeting.

FC Discuss plans for the presentation on March 21 with MS.

FC Send sympathy note to the Smithton congregation.

SW Either send sympathy note to Rachel Falkove or ask AA to do so.

BPJ Ask AA to send out Mission/Vision/Tag Line wording suggestions anonymously in upcoming eNewsletters.

JH Consult support at ICDSOFT about domain name procedure.

NB **(Was this done?)** Fill in some financial information on the TPUC grant request.

MS **(Was this done?)** Text BW asking him for his new phone number.

AOE ... **(Was this done?)** Inform FC on his intentions concerning staying on the board for another term.

Meeting Adjourned: 3:45.

Next Regular Meeting: Second Sunday, April 11

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane L Hain, Secretary