

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees
March 10, 2016

Accepted April 14, 2016

Board Members Present: Mary Donohue, Daniel Gelperin, Holly Hawkins, Mary Losee, John Manning, Pamela Miller, Bobbi Pace

Board Members Absent: Bernice Marie-Daily, Suzanne Miller, Russell Heinrich

Also Present: David Jones, Megan Lloyd Joiner, Georgia Jennings, Mary Beth Congdon

H. Hawkins called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and P. Miller recorded the minutes. A quorum of Board Members was present, and the meeting proceeded with H. Hawkins presiding.

Opening Words were read by P. Miller, "Another Reason Why I Don't Keep a Gun in the House" by Billy Collins.

Attendees read the Board of Trustees Covenant and had a brief Check-in.

Stewardship

Mary Beth Congdon spoke to the BoT about the Stewardship plans and how the BoT members can help. Stewards are "Keepers of the Hall." The Stewardship team is grateful for the BoT and MT commitment and support. The Stewardship Campaign Question this year is – Why USNH? Why are you here? Stewardship Sunday will be April 3. Each Sunday in March more member comments shown on posters for the campaign. The question will be answered at each service leading up to April 3. BoT members are asked to pledge and increase their annual pledge. The Campaign wants to be able to say that there is a 100% pledge from the board at the April 3rd event. The first wave of envelopes for the congregation members went out today. The last wave should be sent by the end of March. The on line pledge process is being tested.

Mary L. is BoT liason to the stewardship campaign. She noted that BoT volunteers are requested to staff a table to collect pledges each Sunday. BoT members are also asked to bring a soup for that day.

Mary Beth left the meeting after the stewardship discussion.

Meeting Preparation

Confirm the meeting objectives: stewardship; assess the past; create the future and learning; cash management policy proposal; consent agenda; announcements

Review any Agenda changes – None reported.

Assess the Past (Monitoring)

- a. Review MT report from Feb 11, and fit items to policies

The agenda should have said to match the report to USNH ends rather than policy. It is very difficult to fit the report to ends but relatively easy to match to policy. The only item that some BoT members could not find a policy for was staff cross training. Ends are very much church oriented, not detailed at the policy level. Some of the ends are more suitable for a Minister's report rather than an MT report. The Linkage WG may find it useful to work with ends rather than policy.

- b. Management Team Report for past month

David presented the MT report, which is attached to the minutes. Much of the past month has been focused on office functionality due to Leslie's departure. MT will handle primary administrative oversight.

MT succession was discussed. Sandy will be on the team until the end of June and David will stay until the end of the calendar year. MT was asked if the board should start looking for a successor. The response was that it is too soon to need the board to start working on this. If we can hire a business manager it might reduce the need for a numbers person on the MT. We do not have a person with these skills on staff now.

The other main topic this month for the MT was the draft capital budget. The ideal process is to have the congregation review and approve the capital budget before funds can be moved to the capital line item. MT does not want to wait until June to sign a contract for the roof. The BoT will schedule a special congregational meeting to approve the capital budget. April 17 was proposed for this meeting, to be held at 12:45pm in the sanctuary. The congregation must be informed in advance.

- c. Finance Report

Mary L. presented the treasurer's report. We are still in good financial shape. Income is \$464,159 and Expenditures are \$420,630 leaving a positive balance of \$43,529. A meeting will be held with the accountant to review current reports to validate our cash balance. This needs to be completed before the capital budget can be presented to the congregation.

- d. Summary and feedback from Feb workshop

Dan will complete the organization of the notes from the workshop.

Create the Future & Learning

a. Reports from working groups

Linkage WG: The first planned event will be focus group on 3/20 from 10-11. A specific group of 22 people associated with RE will be invited. It will focus on how having a full-time DRE is helping to achieve our ends related to Lifespan Education. Bobbi read the invitation. There may be similar sessions once per month with different BoT members present. Members suggested that we have a conversation with Jesse prior to the focus group meeting.

Governance WG: Dan spoke for this WG. They are looking into governance coaching and want to determine the costs. Most consultants are around \$200/hour. Mary D. mentioned Cluster Connection will have a session on this topic. \$2500 will be requested from the \$3000 budget item to cover the cost of a coach.

Monitoring WG: John talked about the progress made by the WG. Sample monitoring plans were prepared for two policies. Policy interpretations must be available in order to determine the appropriate metrics for a given policy. The WG will meet again to refine the monitoring suggestions.

Bylaws WG: The WG has completed work on proposed changes to the bylaws. The changes need to be presented to the board for review before bringing them to the congregation. A doodle poll has been sent out to set up additional board meetings on this topic. Bill Goward and Bob Congdon, members of the WG, will come to these meetings.

b. Cash Management policy – work towards a policy for the proposal

The Board discussed a suggested cash management policy. It would be hard to say that any of our unrestricted funds will not be needed in the next 5 years. Should we be setting aside funds for future capital needs in our budgets? We do not seem to have a capital reserve fund. This reserve should come from the operating budget.

The proposed cash management policy is somewhat theoretical. There is no bylaw or policy that would allow us to create an investment fund should it become an option. The 5 year outlook for investments is in conflict with the 3 year budget proposal process. Mary D. suggested that the policy be simplified. The topic will require additional work before a draft policy is ready for a vote.

Consent Agenda

To approve the Minutes from the February Board of Trustees meeting

MOTION Dan, to approve Minutes; **SECONDED Bobbi**;

PASSED 7 approved, with 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

Announcements

- a. Ministerial Start-up Retreat with MT, BoT, Megan, and Joe Sullivan will take place in the USNH library, Saturday, April 16 9-3:00.
- b. Bylaw update – Two meetings will be held to review changes.

- c. Newsletter article. We need a volunteer for this month. – Pam will write about the congregational meeting for the capital budget
- d. Update on Lisa Comen estate. – We have allocated funds to an escrow account to act on this.

Meeting Summary

Decisions Review, Action Items and Assignments:

Organize a congregational meeting for the capital budget.

Hand in pledges.

Linkage WG to meet with Jesse.

Monitoring WG to meet again.

We need to have interpret the operating reserve on the agenda for next meeting.

Adjournment

MOTION Mary D., to adjourn; **SECONDED Mary L.**;

PASSED unanimously, with 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Attachments: MT Report

MT Report to BOT on 3/9/16

1. Everything is better with Megan back!
2. MT spent the last month preparing for the departure of Leslie H. with the emphasis on covering her job functions once she was gone. MT has increased Jamie R.'s hours to full time, and she will take over the entries in Church DB. To handle Quickbooks entries, MT has interviewed and hired Antonia Baroga on a trial basis. She was able to start while Leslie was in her last few weeks in order to be trained in our system. Greg Seaman and our treasurers will provide oversight and guidance. Georgia Jennings will continue to be our acting business manager and assess staff functions and needs. Rev. Megan will continue to focus on Sunday mornings and getting to know the congregation.
3. MT succession has also been discussed this month. Due to the minister's absence, Sandy F. has extended her departure from the MT to the end of June. In order to provide some transition after Sandy's departure, David J. will extend his time on the MT until the end of December. The shape of the MT going forward will be decided in the next few months, but the focus will be on reducing the responsibilities of the MT lay members and increasing the staff responsibilities. This will go hand in hand with the staffing needs assessment.
4. The first draft of a capital budget has been compiled with a copy provided for the BOT. The current capital budget has \$110,000 of fairly immediate needs, with another \$70,000 for the HVAC units due in the next few years. The MT is transferring \$50,000 from unrestricted funds to the capital improvement fund to cover immediate needs including to replace the L shaped roof, security improvements, and to replace the floor of the chancel. Final overall costs to USNH are still undetermined as Green Bank funding of the oil to gas burner changeover is being evaluated.

Prepared by David Jones