

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees
March 9, 2017
Accepted April 13, 2017

Board Members Present: Kathy Garner, Daniel Gelperin, Holly Hawkins, Russell Heinrich, Megan Lloyd Joiner, Bernice Marie-Daly, Pamela Miller, Peggy Myers, Bobbi Pace, Pat Trotta

Board Members Absent:

Also Present: Gwen Heuss-Severance , Georgia Jennings, David Jones

D. Gelperin called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm and P. Miller recorded the minutes. A quorum of Board Members was present, and the meeting proceeded with D. Gelperin presiding.

Gather

P. Trotta lit the chalice and did the opening reading “Do not ask me”. Attendees read the Leadership Covenant of USNH. We checked in with the question ‘what is a recent success you’ve seen at USNH?’.

Meeting Preparation for this evening

Consent Agenda Minutes are from February 16, 2017.

Assess the Past (Monitoring)

1. Management Team Report for past month

a. Management Team Executive Limitations report

The Executive Limitations report is attached at the end of the minutes.

The MT has received the proposal from the finance committee and needs time to consider it. It will be brought to the BoT at the April meeting.

This year’s pledge goal is 4% higher than last year’s. We did not meet our goal last year. The draft budget is close to last year’s budget. MT will prepare a capital budget and an operating budget. The timing is difficult for MT since they will be waiting on pledges to come in.

Elizabeth Howard is working on communications tools for MT including FaceBook.

b. Minister’s Ends report

The Minister’s Ends report is attached at the end of the minutes.

Lisa Anderson was asked for advice about the neighbor’s request regarding the Black Lives Matters banner. The City of Hamden was also contacted. There are no regulations on message signs. What type of neighbor do we want to be? M. Lloyd Joiner will contact the neighbor to talk about his concern.

How does M. Lloyd Joiner perceive members treating one another? She's noticed some less than congenial conversations. We need to live our covenant. How can we make the covenant more present?

2. Finance Report

The Finance report is attached at the end of the minutes.

Incidental rental income is higher than anticipated.

There is a need to clarify the management relationship with our bookkeeper, who is a contractor. A line is drawn between contractors and employees. Contractors do not have supervisors.

Create the Future & Learning

1. Sustainability of Management Team model. Come to a shared understanding with the MT what the major issues contributing to unsustainable demands on the MT are. The aim is for the board to have a clear understanding, NOT to offer solutions at this time.

MT Experiences were shaped by the moment in time. Things have changed quickly. MT members present at the BoT meeting were asked whether the notes were an accurate reflection of their experiences. A lot of progress has been made. We still have a way to go. It has been difficult to find replacement members. We need more leadership development within the congregation. There is concern that the minister not become burned out if there is no budget for a business manager. We need to be flexible and be patient. We need to allow time to resolve more problems but it does seem doable.

How can we look at structural things that might help? Do we need more clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the MT and committees? What can be done to determine priorities? Is there a role the BoT can play to help resolve issues? This is an attempt to recognize challenges and see if anything can be done to improve the situation for the MT.

Which of the items in the document are still relevant to the current MT members?

Leadership replacement is an issue for committees as well as for the MT. How can we get new members engaged in these areas? Since M. Lloyd Joiner came here 38 people have joined the congregation and nearly 20 more will be joining very soon. The Labor Day Retreat had been a good way to get people involved. We would need somebody to lead it. "Moving on from Church Folly Lane" is a book that addresses similar issues. The Nominating Committee can't handle the leadership development role. Programs are being created at the regional level which may help with leadership development.

2. Discuss quorum size with Board, re-decide question of authorizing sole source and expenditure to repair sanctuary roof if necessary.

MOTION P. Myers, to accept the MT's proposal to use a single source bid process to replace the sanctuary roof; **SECONDED B. Marie-Daly**;

PASSED unanimously, with 9 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

MOTION D. Gelperin, the MT is authorized to spend up to \$50,000 from the gifts and donations fund to replace the sanctuary roof in a timely manner; **SECONDED P. Myers**;

PASSED unanimously, with 9 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

3. Set date of Spring Congregational meeting

The Congregational meeting should be in June. June 18 is last service. The meeting is to hold elections and approve the budget. June 11 is the proposed date. The meeting will start at 11:45am, after the service.

4. Update on "cottage meetings" with congregation. See notes from Feb 28th meeting. We will volunteer for dates and groups to meet with.

April 2, TBD to facilitate

P. Miller to take notes

April 9, B. Marie-Daly to facilitate

P. Trotta to take notes

April 23, B. Marie-Daly to facilitate

P. Trotta to take notes

5. Get feedback from board members on idea of Dan running for a second year as president

P. Myers noted that the cycle of work meant that the BoT spent too much time churning. Repeating the president's term would help to avoid this. We would need to work on messaging to the congregation to explain the reason for this proposal. D. Gelperin is willing to serve a second term.

6. Clarify purpose of 2nd board meeting, distribute Hotchkiss book to members. Propose to discuss book at April, May & June 2nd meetings. Share proposed agenda items for remaining board meetings through June

Read the Hotchkiss book in the next 3 months.

Talk about chapters 1 - 4 on 3/28/17.

Talk about chapters 5 - 8 on 4/25/17.

Talk about chapters 9 -11 for 5/22/17.

Consent Agenda

a. February 16, 2017 BoT minutes

b. January 12, 2017 BoT minutes

MOTION D. Gelperin, to approve the consent agenda; **SECONDED B. Marie-Daly**;

PASSED with 6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 3 abstentions.

Action items

Read the Hotchkiss book.

P. Trotta will write the next newsletter article.

Announcements about the April meetings can be included in the weekly newsletter.

Work on publicity for the April meetings: D. Gelperin and B. Marie-Daly

The next BoT meeting will discuss finances. Be ready for the topic. Watch the finance webinar.

Announcements

None

Thank-you's

Barbara Orrok for the chocolate auction; Kevin Chapin and Patrick Korth for work on the BLM sign.

Adjournment

MOTION – D. Gelperin, to adjourn; **SECONDED – H. Hawkins**;

PASSED unanimously, with 9 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 pm.

Attachments

Management Team Executive Limitations report

Minister's Ends Report

Finance Report

Board Meeting Notes 2/28/17

Sustainability Notes

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NEW HAVEN

EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS MONITORING REPORT TO TRUSTEES Management Team – March 9, 2017

1. Leadership Responsibilities and Limitations

The Management Team shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance which is either unlawful, imprudent, or in violation of USNH Bylaws, or commonly accepted business and professional ethics.

1.1 Treatment of Congregants, Friends and Visitors

- a. "... the MT shall not cause or allow conditions, ... that are unnecessarily intrusive, or that fail to provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy."

1.2 Emergency Management Team Succession

1.3 Treatment of Paid and Volunteer Staff

1.4 Compensation and Benefits

1.5 Financial Planning/Budgeting

"... the Management Team may not jeopardize the programmatic or fiscal integrity of the Unitarian Society of New Haven."

The MT is in the process of reviewing a proposal from the Finance Committee regarding refinancing the mortgage and reallocating unrestricted cash assets and will bring a recommendation to the BoT in April.

1.5.1 Budgeting *"The Management Team shall not fail to:*

- a. *Use realistic assumptions of income and expenses when creating budgets.*
- b. *Create an annual operating budget for congregational approval at the Annual Spring Meeting of the Society."*

The Stewardship Campaign was launched on Sunday 3/5 and will conclude on Sunday 3/26. A pledge goal of \$483,000 has been set. The approximately 4% increase was necessary to maintain our current operating expenses as our accountant recommended that we no longer include a transfer of unrestricted funds as income in the budget. Plans for the Stewardship Campaign and the draft budget were reviewed by the Council of Chairs at its meeting on 2/15.

- c. *Create an annual capital budget with the means to pay for one to present for congregational approval at the Annual Spring Meeting.*

1.5.2 Reserves

1.5.2.1 Operating Reserve

1.5.2.2 Capital Fund

1.6 Financial Condition and Activities *"... the Management Team shall not allow: ...*

e. restricted funds to be used for purposes other than those specified by donor.

f. Non-contracted program and facility expenses projected to be more than \$2,500 to be paid without procurement and evaluation of two or more price proposals or by getting approval from the Board for a sole-source justification.

g. Fundraising activities without approval of the Management Team.”

1.7 Asset Protection

1.7.1 Insurance

1.7.2 Other

a. The buildings and grounds and equipment are maintained to allow continued value and use.

1.8 Communication and Support to the Board

The MT has begun to work with a professional communications specialist and USNH member. She is currently working on our Facebook page to make it more welcoming to newcomers and will be consulting with the MT on various aspects of internal and external communications.

The Black Lives Matters banner was successfully installed on 3/3. A neighbor in the adjoining property on Hartford Turnpike has registered a complaint with the office asking that it be blocked from his view. The MT is seeking an internal legal consult.

1.9 Grants and Contracts

1.9.1 Grants

1.9.2 Contracts

1.10 Safety

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NEW HAVEN

MINISTER'S ENDS MONITORING REPORT TO TRUSTEES

March 9, 2017

We are a diverse, multi-generational faith community that
- inspires lives of compassion and generosity
- nurtures spiritual growth
- cultivates transformative connections, and
- creates a more just world

AMONG

USNH is a congregation of welcome and connection, where people of all ages:

** Treat one another with respect*

The Permanent Committee on Right Relations facilitated a restorative circle on the name change from Small Group Ministry to Small Group Meeting on March 8, 2017.

I observe that the ways many members of USNH treat each other and others, including staff, even concerning the smallest or most routine matters, is often harsh and disrespectful. I believe we have work to do on living into our covenant and plan to preach on this in the coming months.

** Give and receive support in times of joy, sorrow and transition*

A support group for people with bi-polar and other mental illnesses has started at USNH. The group meets weekly and is led by an outside facilitator.

** Give generously of ourselves and our resources*

The Stewardship Campaign kicked off on March 5 with a goal of \$483,000. This ambitious goal is a result of not using any unrestricted funds in the operating budget this year as we have done in years past. We have had dozens of pledges come in. So far, pledges are steady or increasing. The campaign is scheduled to culminate in Celebration Sunday on March 26. We anticipate making follow-up calls in the weeks after.

** Embrace diversity*

See below, Black Lives Matter banner.

** Engage in life-long learning*

Two discussions on the UUA's Common Read, The Third Reconstruction by William Barber, were hosted by the ARE Committee and P.J. Deak on 2/19 and 2/26. Both were well attended and well received.

Social Cinema was held on 2/25.

K-1 and 4-5 classes will transition this coming week to Our Whole Lives curricula.

WITHIN

Respecting different spiritual journeys, the people of USNH find inspiration and

a safe place to

- * Develop our best selves*
- * Grow spiritually*
- * Live with more joy and open-heartedness*
- * Experience a connection to something larger than ourselves*
- * Find meaning and purpose in our lives*
- * Articulate our Unitarian Universalist identity*

Worship

Attendance: We are working with Ushers and Volunteers to improve our attendance figures. Approximate counts: 2/12/17 (snow) 160; 2/19/17 203; 2/26/17 265; 3/5/17 231

The following services were presented over the past month:

2/12/17 Bruce Knots UU United Nations Office

2/19/17 Rev. Audette Fullbright Fulson "Love Is The Water That Wears Down the Rock"

2/26/17 USNH Voices "Wild and Precious Life"

3/5/17 Rev. Megan "Strong Roots, Growing Branches" Stewardship Kickoff

BEYOND

*The people of USNH, together and with our partners, act on our values in the larger world.
We:*

- * Advance justice in our community and beyond*
- * Develop new understanding of ourselves and others through our justice work*
- * Expand our understanding and awareness of social and environmental issues*
- * Strengthen Unitarian Universalism*

Our Black Lives Matter banner was installed Friday, March 3, 2017. The congregation celebrated the installation in the March 5 worship service. We had received feedback that a number of congregants were concerned with the delay in installing the banner; some considered this to be fueled by racism, however unintentional. On Monday, March 6, we received a call from our immediate neighbor requesting that we install some sort of barrier between our property and his, since the banner is visible from his property. As we formulate our response to his request, I would like the Board to consider the impact of constructing such a barrier on the members of color in our congregation as well as white allies. I would like us to ask ourselves: "who are our neighbors?"

Matt McDermot, lead organizer for Congregations Organized for a New Connecticut (CONNECT) met with interested congregants on February 19, 2017. We are planning to do further education about the organization and potentially bring the possibility of USNH joining CONNECT for a congregational vote at the spring congregational meeting.

Minister's Report – February 10, 2017 – March 9, 2017

Within Our Walls:

- Pastoral connections: phone, post, email, in-person visits (office)
- Meetings attended: Weekly Worship Team (4), Lay Ministry, Management Team (2), Worship Committee, Music Director Search Committee, Personnel Committee, Council of Chairs, Website Planning Meeting
- Weekly supervision meetings: Jamie, Jesse, Jane
- Worked with MT, Council of Chairs and Jamie Ross to revise and redesign our weekly and monthly newsletters
- Worked closely with Stewardship Committee and Jamie Ross to prepare online and print materials for 2017-2018 Stewardship Drive

Nurturing Spiritual Growth:

- Preached one service
- Led three services
- Newsletter column and worship blurbs
- Attended Common Read Discussion sessions 2/19 and 2/26

Beyond Our Walls:

- Denominational/Regional Service
 - Provided consultation for ministers in search
 - Met with UU students at Yale Divinity School
 - Attended UUMA Chapter Meeting
- Community Service / Social Justice
 - Met with Hamden Clergy re: sanctuary for immigrants
 - Provided logistical support for 2/19 accompaniment "introduction"

Rites of Passage:

- Wedding Consultation: 1
- Memorial Service: Phillip Wexler, Sunday, February 19 3pm
- Memorial Service Consultation: 1

Respectfully Submitted by Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner

Finance Report

3/8/2017

Submitted by Kathy Garner

Operating P&L notes

Overall, Income and Expenses are overall in line with expectations for 8 months into the fiscal year. Total Income is at 69% and Expenses are at 62%. At 3/5/2017, USNH shows \$48,805 for net operating income. See below for items of note.

Income

- RE Tuition, Miscellaneous donations (Flowers and Coffee), and Interest are underperforming. These lower amounts are offset by higher than expected Incidental Rentals.
- As of February 3, pledges for 2016-17 total \$455,999. The budgeted amount was \$465,000.
- Greg Seaman has worked with the Endowment committee to set up a regular distribution (the amount agreed for each year) to the operating budget. Going forward, they will distribute half in November and half in May. For the current fiscal year, the entire amount will be distributed in May. The schedule was proposed to avoid timing issues.
- There is \$23,500 that can be released from Restricted Funds for operating costs. This has not yet been completed.
- When budgeting for 2017-18, the amount for Interest Income should be adjusted downward if not removed altogether. This may be revisited if an aggressive cash management plan is agreed to and implemented.

Expenses

Committee and program expenses are relatively restrained which are the primary contributors to the overall net income. As a reminder, money not spent in this fiscal year is forfeited. Antonia indicated that the committee chairs are actively managing their budgets and she anticipates April being a busy month with report requests.

- The Office/Communications /Media budget is at 83% of budget. The Management team has reviewed and will adjust the number for the 2017/18 budget. There is an office contingency of \$400 that can be used to help offset the expenses. It is unclear at this time what the intention is behind that amount. Antonia has suggested that Sandy Frawley may have insight regarding that account. Additionally, an Assistant position budgeted at \$6400 has not been filled.
- Medical Insurance and Insurance categories remain high at 75% and 83% respectively.

Finance Committee notes

Sandy Frawley has transitioned the administrator role of the Citizens Bank online access to Kathy Garner. Remaining items to transition are pledge database review, update to Citizens signature (used on checks, currently shows Sandy), and update to Citizens signature cards (remove Sandy and add Susan Godshall).

Board meeting 2/28/17

Present: Dan Gelperin, Holly Hawkins, Pat Trotta, Bobbi Pace, Peggy Myers

Meeting to formalize our conversation strategy to monitor “what difference are we making, and for whom?”

After much discussion, the overarching statement to be discussed is:

USNH is a place where I can feel safe to be myself, treat one another with respect and advance justice in our community and beyond
The grammar here is not quite right

This will be broken down into 3 sub-questions:

- What aspects of life at USNH have made you feel more safe – or not? Examples might be: SGM, our being a welcoming congregation, Hope’s Nest, YRUU. Where have you not felt safe?
- The Right Relations team has sponsored training in restorative circles, created a covenant with the congregation and helps with one-on-one interactions when asked. What difference has this made, if any, in your feelings of respecting others or being respected here. Are there times you have felt disrespected?
- How do you feel that you personally or USNH has made a difference in our community and beyond? Examples might be: East Rock Mentors, our food bank, Immigration issues. What do you see that indicates making a difference?

Holly pointed out Unity Consulting’s guidance on what makes a powerful linkage question (brought to us by Joe Sullivan at our September 17th retreat). Particularly “Is this question likely to generate hope, imagination, engagement, creative action and new possibilities or is it likely to focus on past problems and obstacles?” Accordingly, we may wish to remove the negative forms of the questions.

Holly helped us to see that we already have some conversation groups in place, such as Tuesday Conversations, some committees, YRUU, choir etc, and that we might find it easier to start work with what is already in place rather than setting up a whole home “cottage meeting” program when time is such a factor for participants. We want to maximize participation by the congregation.

We will have a facilitator and a note-taker for each conversation.

The format would be giving each person 2 minutes to respond to each question. All would answer question 1 before going on to question 2. There would be no responses from others in the group. Obviously the length of the session would depend entirely on the number of people in the gathering. If 8 minutes were set aside for each person to allow for a little breath between questions, we could tell the groups quite accurately how much time they might set aside. We would not need the whole meeting time in all cases.

Dan met with the Social Justice Council last week, but not in this structure, so Dan will ask them if there is a time that they could put aside for this activity.

Bobbi and Peggy will meet with Tuesday conversations and the Right Relations team.

Holly will ask YRUU, Dan will assist with that conversation.

Peggy will ask Jamie about possible Sundays after services that do not already have something scheduled to catch folks who come with their children or are not able to join a lot of groups or committees during the week at this time in their lives. Child care would be provided.

Other possible groups are:

Social Justice Network, Lay ministers, BOT, choir.....

room 207 has been reserved on the 2nd - and 9th - and 23rd of April at 12 noon for an hour and a half. We can get volunteers to facilitate and take notes, arrange child-care and publicity. The BoT education budget is available to pay for these items.

Summarizing the Sustainability Conversations

Sandy Frawley, Georgia Jennings, David Jones, Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner, David Stagg,

In an effort to help identify the factors that have made sustainability of the Management Team model an issue, we got together with each of you to hear your thoughts and experience with the team. We have pulled together the comments and insights that you all shared with us. Thank you so very much for your time and thoughtfulness. You all are doing such an awesome job!

We have added nothing of our own to your comments below. Everything below is simply trying to capture your comments. We sorted them by theme to make things a little easier.

Thanks, Dan Gelperin, Pat Trotta, Peggy Myers

3/2/17

Frequently recurring themes?

- Setting priorities – major challenge throughout. Within MT, within committees, by staff, working groups, etc. Everything is not equally important.
- Management teams come and go. Staff remains. Major job of leadership is to strengthen staff. Helping staff increase their capabilities and become more independent are clear goals.
- Committee function, leadership and authority must be addressed.
- Structure needs to be established for the handling of congregation questions and issues. Do all questions and issues come to the MT first? Need for congregation education when the structure is set up.
- Leadership development is major and deep challenge. As a congregation grows, the way people connect to the organization changes. Instead of bonding with the minister, people bond in subgroups. Examples might be: choir, SJ groups, lay ministers, etc. How do we promote this cultural change? Is there a way to tie it in with strengthening committees (which are their own sub-groups)? Our mission calls us to help people find their gifts. Need to begin to cycle new leadership in.

MT functioning:

- How do new people get oriented? Process beginning with MT.
- How does knowledge pass from older members to incoming members?
- How do incoming questions and issues get handled? How triaged? How do priorities get established?
- How structurally reduce the burst of things requiring immediate attention?
- How does team get structured so that members are doing what they are good at?
- Is everything everybody's responsibility?
- Do all questions that congregants have initially go through MT?

- Setting priorities is an issue throughout USNH. Is there a way the Board can help with that?

MT member's experience

- One's history on the MT is powerful in shaping the experience of being on the team. Original members had major organizational trauma and role stresses. Things better now.
- "Feels like working full-time"
- "Changing my life in ways I had not intended"

Structure of MT

- If we had the money would we move to staff operations or stick with lay MT? Different opinions.
- There is an important cultural component to how this gets structured.
- "This is a good model and sustainable as long as there are retired people available"
- What skills are needed?
- Key is right mix of people
- Must be compatible with Megan
- "Probably will move toward a staff model"

Relationship with Committees

- There is confusion about the role of committees. Are they working groups that report to the MT, but have no authority of their own?
- Is there a way for the MT and committees to be working more as partners with clearer expectations both ways? How transparent is the MT to committees?
- Do committees have policies?
- Is there a way to develop a "budget lubricant" between committees? Ex. Finance and stewardship; or finance and personnel? Do finance numbers make sense to personnel?

Relationship to Board

- Initially felt challenged by the Board
- How is the Board/MT culture clarified and nurtured?
- Board needs to develop ways to get information in addition to monthly reports
- Is there a role for Board representative on committees? (actually several already have this: finance, personnel, nominating, ??others)

Committee functioning

- How members selected? With some committees have the same people aging in place. How get new people? How make room for new people? How find out about the skills that congregation members have?
- Follow through by committees is major problem. Lack of clarity re how committees supposed to “follow through”. Some felt that committees just turned things over to MT, but this was never clearly discussed. Confusion about what they are supposed to be doing.
- Identifying project managers for committee tasks
- Committees are not where things should go to die
- Where do ad hoc committees fit in? Stewardship, reserve/mortgage??

Leadership development

- How do peoples’ skills get identified?
- Need for leadership development came up over and over. See theme discussion

Staff support

- Additional 10 hours needed for support for Jamie
- Is Oscar being used to his potential. Concerns re his having been told he would grow into a fulltime position
- Antonia is major resource
- Staff is permanent and their development is key. Lay groups come and go.
- Helping staff become more independent is a clear goal.