

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees
April 9, 2015

Accepted May 14, 2015

Board Members Present: Mary Donohue, Dan Gelperin, Holly Hawkins, Russell Heinrich, David Jones, Merrily Kaplan, Mary Losee, Peggy Rae

Board Members Absent: Rod Groff, Suzanne Miller

Also Present: Fritz Hudson, Sandy Frawley, Greg Seaman, Mike Kaczynski

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

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes from 3/12/15 Board Meeting

MOTION D. Gelperin, to approve Minutes; **SECONDED** M. Losee; **PASSED** unanimously, with one abstention.

2. Approval of Minutes from 3/17/15 Board Meeting

MOTION H. Hawkins, to approve Minutes; **SECONDED** M. Losee; **PASSED** unanimously, with one abstention.

Management Team Report (Part 1)

D. Jones, S. Frawley, and F. Hudson presented the Management Team's April 9, 2015 Ends and Limitations Monitoring Reports, which are attached to these Minutes.

The 2015-2016 Stewardship Campaign is progressing well, with 175 pledges having been received so far for a total of \$420,221. Most people have increased their pledge over their FY14-15 amount, and 87 increased their pledge by 10% or more. The Stewardship Committee is contacting FY14-15 pledgers who have not yet responded, and initial follow-ups have been very successful; 62 remain to be contacted.

It appears FY15-16 pledge income may fall short of the target the Management Team set in its preliminary FY15-16 budget worksheet, presented in February. The Team is making adjustments and considering options for increasing income/decreasing expenses. Dialogue with the Board and committee chairs will continue over the next few weeks as the Team finalizes a budget for congregational approval in June.

At this point, the Management Team interrupted its report to allow Greg Seaman and Atty. Mike Kaczinski, who had arrived at 7:25 pm, to speak on a legal matter: the recovery of monies due USNH from the 401k account of deceased member Lisa Comen.

Recovery of Lisa Comen's IRA/401k

Lisa Comen, who died in 2005, named USNH as beneficiary of her IRA/401k account, held by Morgan Stanley. Morgan Stanley has not responded to repeated requests by Atty. Diane Polan and, more recently, USNH member Atty. Thea Bourke-Martin, to turn the funds (about \$9,000) over to USNH.

The Board discussed a proposal by G. Seaman to initiate legal proceedings against Morgan Stanley. T. Bourke-Martin's law partner, Mike Kaczinski, has volunteered to file suit against Morgan Stanley to recover the funds. He would work pro bono.

Mike described the process in more detail and answered questions. L. Comen's Morgan Stanley beneficiary form clearly indicates USNH is beneficiary, so there does not seem to be a legal reason for Morgan Stanley's non-response. It may be that a strongly worded letter sent to Morgan Stanley by certified mail will be enough to bring about a satisfactory resolution, especially if Mike is able to work through contacts provided by R. Heinrich. If this proves unsuccessful, Mike will then file suit.

The Board agreed to authorize M. Kaczinski and his law firm, Pathways Legal Group, to file the lawsuit and authorized the funds to cover filing costs.

MOTION M. Kaplan, to authorize Pathways Legal Group to file a lawsuit to reclaim money being held by Morgan Stanley in an IRA and 401k left by Lisa Comen naming USNH as beneficiary; **SECONDED** H. Hawkins; **PASSED** unanimously, with two abstentions.

MOTION D. Gelperin, to approve up to \$500 to file the lawsuit against Morgan Stanley; **SECONDED** M. Losee; **PASSED** unanimously, with two abstentions.

A Legal Service Agreement must be signed before action can be taken. Mike will send M. Donohue the agreement for Board discussion and approval. He will present an action plan at the May Board meeting.

M. Kaczinski departed at 8:10 pm.

Management Team Report (Part 2)

D. Jones reported that he is serving as de facto head of the Building & Grounds Committee and that Walter Gayeski has joined the committee. A contract to fix the front gutter has been signed, and repairs will begin in mid- to late-April.

Greg Seaman reported on bids to repair the parking lot and driveway, which were badly damaged this winter and require complete resurfacing. Three bids have come in so far, and a fourth is expected. Greg estimates costs will be about \$80,000.

In light of the urgent need to repair the lot and driveway, the Board voted to allocate a portion of unrestricted liquid funds to cover the repair cost.

MOTION P. Rae, to authorize up to \$80,000 for the Management Team to contract to have the parking lot and driveway repaired; **SECONDED** R. Heinrich; **PASSED** unanimously, with one abstention.

G. Seaman departed at 8:35 pm, upon completion of the Management Team Report.

Treasurer's Report

M. Losee distributed a balance sheet and a year-to-date budget vs. actual profit-loss statement. As of April 9, income is about \$100,000 less than budgeted, with \$91,000 in pledges still outstanding. She anticipates an income shortfall when FY14-15 ends June 30, and she suggested offsetting the shortfall by decreasing discretionary expenditures between now and then. The Management Team will present the budget situation to committee chairs when it meets with them in mid-April. Some committees may be willing to forego or decrease further spending to help bring the budget into balance.

Congregational Vote to Call the Minister

The Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) was successful in finding a ministerial candidate, Megan Lloyd Joiner, and at a Special Congregational Meeting on May 3, USNH members will formally vote on whether to call her as settled minister. M. Donohue clarified the terms of the voting. There will be no absentee voting. The candidate must receive approval of at least two-thirds of the ballots cast to satisfy our bylaws, but this is much lower than the UUA's recommended approval level and what a candidate will expect (>90% of votes). These facts will be publicized, and every effort will be made to have a high turnout.

P. Rae outlined a general procedure for the voting process. As specified by USNH bylaws, the vote will be by secret ballot. A membership list prepared May 1 will be used to identify members. People will be urged to check a preliminary list, posted in the lobby on the three Sundays prior to May 3, to confirm their membership status and to clear up questions of membership before the May 1 list is prepared.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NEW HAVEN

ENDS MONITORING REPORT TO TRUSTEES

Management Team – April 9, 2015

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 Right Relations Task Force, within the next month, will submit to the Management Team - a draft Covenant for Right Relations, and
- a draft Charge to a permanent Committee on Right Relations**

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

+ "Hope's Nest" Welcome Program is now established with regular monthly meetings

** Give generously of ourselves and our resources*

+ 2015-16 Stewardship Campaign Progress Report

- 175 pledges received totaling \$420,221

108 pledges increased 2014 amount; 87 pledges increased by 10% or more

62 pledgers from 2014 have yet to respond; their 2014 pledges totaled: \$74,135

2014-15 End of Campaign Comparison

- 232 pledges received totaling \$469,149

86 pledges increased 2013 amount; 60 pledges increased by 10% or more

** Embrace diversity*

+ The Sanctuary Hearing Assist system has been serviced. Users report satisfactory use.

** Engage in life-long learning*

+ Stewardship Campaign goal to increase RE Director to full-time would provide expanded staff support for life-long learning .

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NEW HAVEN

ENDS MONITORING REPORT TO TRUSTEES

Management Team – April 9, 2015

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*

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*

** Expand our understanding and awareness of social and environmental issues*

+ 54 USNHers were recorded on-site for Abraham's Tent week

** Develop new understanding of ourselves and others through our justice work*

+ The Anti-Racism<>Dixwell-UUC Sacred Conversations workshop is scheduled for April 25.

** Strengthen Unitarian Universalism*

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NEW HAVEN

EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS MONITORING REPORT TO TRUSTEES

Management Team – April 9, 2015

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**

1. In compliance with Policy 1.8: *The Management Team may not ...*

b. Fail to report to the Board in a timely manner any significant information it requires, including anticipated media coverage, threatened or impending legal issues, claims, or lawsuits.)

The Management Team reports:

- Greg Seaman proposes that USNH pursue legal suit against Morgan Stanley to recover monies due as beneficiary of Lisa Comen's 401K account**

2. In compliance with

- Policy 1.8: The Management Team may not ...*

e. Fail to report in a timely manner any actual or anticipated noncompliance with any Executive Limitations policies of the Board, regardless of the Board's monitoring schedule.
and

- Policy 1.10: The Management Team shall not fail to:*

a. Ensure that all appropriate activities and actions are performed to ensure that staff, visitors, and congregants are provided with a safe environment.

The Management Team reports:

- DeNisi Tree Service has removed all insecure tree limbs from our property.**

- Eagle Rivet Company has signed a contract to replace the gutter above the front entryway. It has promised to begin the work during the week of April 20 or 27.**

- Litchfield Builders has assessed the requirements to repair the rear gutter and seal leaks above the rear windows. A bid is expected.**

The Building & Grounds Committee is pursuing a second bidder.

- Greg Seaman is soliciting and evaluating bids for resurfacing the driveway and older parking areas.**

The Management Team requests authorization to expend reserve funds as prove required to complete the work.