

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees
October 13, 2011
(Adopted November 10, 2011)

Board Members Present: Gil Belaval; Sarah Berke; Gregg Burton; Patricia Duff; Sandra Frawley; Sue Linsley, Alan Price; Larry Rizzolo; Jesse Whitehead

Board Members Absent: Lisa Anderson; Thea Bourke-Martin

Also Present: Kathleen McTigue; Tansey Birenbaum; Carol Cheney

S. Berke called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. and G. Burton recorded the minutes. A quorum of Board Members was present, and the meeting proceeded with S. Berke presiding.

Minutes

MOTION by G. Belaval to approve the minutes for the meetings on September 8, 2011 and October 4, 2011.

Seconded and passed without dissent

Silver Sundays Fundraiser Report

C. Cheney reported on the success of the Silver Sundays Fundraiser. Noted that the final amount raised is expected to meet the \$10,000 goal for the event. Feedback indicated a high correlation between postcards and direct personal communication and increased awareness and contributions made.

MOTION by P. Duff to apply all proceeds from the Silver Sunday Fundraiser toward furlough elimination. **Seconded**

Discussion: Concerns raised about the impact of earmarking funds on budgeting and finance. Discussion about the positive and negative impacts that the application to furlough relief may have on targeted canvass campaign. Suggestion made that the board refer the question to the Finance Committee for its recommendation. Concern raised that the deadline for the targeted canvass is prior to the next meeting of the Finance Committee.

CALL FOR THE PREVIOUS QUESTION by S. Linsley; **calling the question passed without dissent**

VOTE ON THE MOTION: 2 in favor; 6 opposed; 1 abstention. **Motion failed.**

Vacancy for Liaison to the Nominating Committee

S. Berke noted that a board liaison to the Nominating Committee was needed. P. Duff volunteered to serve as the liaison. All board members present assented to P. Duff' appointment as liaison.

Treasurer's Report

S. Frawley presented the Treasurer's Report. Noted that the reconciliation of the prior year's budget is ongoing, but is anticipated to be complete prior to congregational meeting. S. Frawley's goals for the current year are to: (1) improve the available financial reporting; (2) develop budget projections for canvass to use in goal setting; (3) assist and promote the stewardship working group's proposals for addressing congregational financial issues; (4) work with staff to improve financial detail and accuracy; (5) complete the budget reconciliation process by the end of August; (6) evaluate and consider payment systems. Concern noted that pledge units have declined from last year and current pledges are below the amount budgeted, but that additional pledges are anticipated from members joining during the year.

Support and Improvement of Welcoming and Membership

J. Whitehead met with the Welcoming Committee for guidance on support and assistance that the committee wishes to have from the board. It was noted that the welcoming committee serves to welcome visitors, but is not involved in connecting people to groups and opportunities to make connections within the congregation. Development of a program or team to serve this function would support the initial efforts of the Welcoming Committee. The committee also asked that the board commit to staffing the welcome table the first Sunday of each month as a way to support the committee and connect board members to newcomers. Board members present agreed to staff the welcome table for the first Sunday of each month. The board also discussed ways to continue the board members' commitment to acting as ambassadors to new members during social hour. The board also discussed creating a position for a volunteer to act as a coordinator for new member support, and plans to take up discussion of a job description for such a volunteer at its next meeting.

ACTION ITEM: K. McTigue to prepare a volunteer job description for consideration by the board.

ACTION ITEM: T. Birenbaum to obtain trustee/board member name tag ribbons and to work on a posting of board member pictures in the social hall.

Staff Report

K. McTigue presented the staff report.

Social Hall Painting

S. Berke informed the board that an effort is underway among the rental committee, building and grounds committee and Turnpike Players to paint the social hall and sanctuary. T. Birenbaum noted that current estimates have been approximately \$10,000. The board questioned whether it would be feasible to have the social hall painted by congregation volunteers. The board anticipates that building and grounds committee will submit a proposal to the board once a plan is formulated.

Parking

T. Birenbaum updated the board on efforts to secure use of the parking lot across the street for overflow parking. The property is currently owned by the state and Yale, but they are uncertain about plans for the property and at this time are unwilling to allow it to be used for parking.

Directors & Officers Insurance

The board inquired as to the status of director's and officer's insurance that was to be procured. T. Birenbaum confirmed that insurance was obtained.

ACTION ITEM: T. Birenbaum to circulate evidence of insurance to the board members.

Congregational Calendar

The board discussed the status of the congregational calendar. The calendar is available at usnh.org and now allows viewing by month. Noted that the event for K. McTigue's book has been scheduled for the third Sunday in November. The board discussed whether it is feasible for the congregational calendar to be posted periodically in the social hall. Concern was noted that the posting hard copies of the calendar presents challenges given the various types of events (e.g. rentals, congregation-wide events and small group meetings) and frequent changes as events are added and moved/rescheduled.

Board Goals

S. Berke requested that the board consider a way of narrowing or focusing the current draft board goals in order to make them more tangible and measurable and to finalize them in time for the congregational meeting. Suggestion made to focus on goal #2 (welcoming and growing new members) with a suggested target to increase overall membership and goal #3 (shifting financial culture to generosity and stewardship) with a suggested target of achieving a surplus budget for next year. Concern raised that these goals can only be achieved through goal #1 (engaging the congregation to deepen connection and community). Noted that the board has received advice and guidance from K. McTigue and the Welcoming Committee on #2 and from the Stewardship Working Group on #3 but has not expanded on #1.

ACTION ITEM: A. Price and L. Rizzolo volunteered to expand on, and provide measurable targets for #1.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.