

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees
January 12, 2012
(Accepted February 9, 2012)

Board Members Present: Gil Belaval; Thea Bourke-Martin; Gregg Burton; Patricia Duff; Sandra Frawley; Larry Rizzolo; Jessie Whitehead

Board Members Absent: Lisa Anderson; Sarah Berke; Sue Linsley, Alan Price;

Also Present: Kathleen McTigue; Tansey Birenbaum; Bobbi Pace

T. Bourke-Martin called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. and G. Burton recorded the minutes. A quorum of Board Members was present, and the meeting proceeded with T. Bourke-Martin presiding.

Report from Justice Workshop

B. Pace reported to the board on the congregational based justice workshop held by the Clara Barton District that she attended with Alison Cunningham. They plan to host a follow-up workshop on March 17 at USNH and ask that the board members and staff attend as well as the Social Justice Council members and chairs of all committees. Focus of the workshop is to integrate justice into all activities of the congregation. Approach uses a similar model to the one upon which the Social Justice Council is based. The board expressed support for the workshop and asked that the group plan additional next steps events after the March 17 workshop in the hope of creating momentum to carry the effort forward. Social Justice Council will be involved in mapping the next steps events.

ACTION ITEM: Assemble board attendance for March 17 Congregational Based Justice Workshop.

Canvass Report

K. McTigue reported to the board on the status of the Canvass effort. Lovefest is planned for March 3. There will not be sufficient time to organize face to face canvassing before Lovefest. The Canvass Committee is postponing face to face canvass so that Lovefest promotion will be the sole focus leading up to Lovefest and

face to face canvass will be conducted with anyone that does not register to attend Lovefest or has not pledged by the time of Lovefest.

Update on Actions from Listening Board

T. Birenbaum is obtaining the first quote for making changes to the heating system in the social hall to take advantage of savings by changing to natural gas.

G. Burton has not made progress on efforts to post minutes to the USNH website, but will work toward doing so by the next board meeting.

Fundraising Report

T. Birenbaum provided the board with a brief update on S. Berke's fundraising efforts. A USNH Cookbook effort will begin publication this weekend. The effort has a fundraising goal of \$1,000. S. Berke is working on a Teddy Bear Tea to be held in May. This event will need good outside publicity. Cost will likely be \$25/per person. Work will begin in early April in order to host the event the weekend before Mother's Day.

There is uncertainty about the expected fundraising contribution from Seussical. Turnpike Players has made some indication that profits from the production will go to USNH's general funds. Concerns were raised that in the past, Turnpike Players has not generated revenue in excess of expenses on musicals. Additionally, Turnpike Players has requested exclusive use of the social hall for the last two weekends of May and the first three weekends in June for performance dates and significant additional time earlier in the spring for rehearsals. Rental requests for those periods are currently being turned away in favor of Seussical's use of the social hall. Concern was expressed that USNH is foregoing funds from rental offers for a substantial period of time when the prospects for a positive fundraising contribution from Seussical are questionable. Attempts to reach a firm agreement with Turnpike Players about their use of space and their contributions to fundraising have been unsuccessful.

ACTION ITEM: G. Burton to contact K. Krieg to discuss board concerns regarding use of space and to work out a clear understanding of arrangements and contribution to fundraising.

Staff Report

K. McTigue presented the staff report. K. McTigue reported to the board concerning recent developments in the investigation into thefts of cash from the USNH safe.

The board expressed serious concerns about the theft and also about the actions taken in response to the developments. The board discussed the implications for the congregation and discussed possible actions to be taken in response.

MOTION by J. Whitehead to direct the Finance Committee to review the current policies and procedures for handling and securing cash and to recommend changes to mitigate the possibility of theft; **Seconded and passed without dissent.**

Treasurer's Report

S. Frawley presented the Treasurer's Report. The status of revenues and expenses to date in comparison to the budget was discussed and it was noted that fundraising is ahead of targets and that expenses for snow removal have been minimal given current weather conditions.

Endowment Report

T. Bourke-Martin presented a report on the activities of the Endowment Committee. The Committee held its first Sunday tea for the legacy society. The Committee is drafting Frequently Asked Questions about the operation of the USNH endowments and the Committee. Special focus is being given to the restrictions under which the endowments are currently operated. These restrictions prevent the Committee from using funds from the endowments other than for special projects outside the budget. The Committee is working to draft proposed changes to the bylaws to allow income and growth from the endowment to be contributed toward meeting operating budget items at the discretion of the Committee. It is anticipated that there will be several opportunities for discussion of any proposed changes and for input from the congregation before bylaw revisions are put to the congregation for a vote.

The Board discussed the possible changes being considered and also the procedural requirements that must be followed in order for any change to be made to the bylaws. Concern was raised about whether the restrictions on the endowments can be changed after they are funded. It was noted that there is a distinction between endowment

bequests, which are subject to the endowment rules as they may change from time to time and restricted bequests/gifts, which are subject to restrictions and limitations imposed by the donor that must be honored.

Future Listening Boards

T. Bourke-Martin asked the board to consider dates for the next listening board. February 19 was selected for the next listening board. Efforts will be taken to address the action items from the prior listening board before the February listening board.

DRE Search Report

K. McTigue reported that the DRE Search Committee is making the first phone call interviews. There are presently 3 candidates being seriously considered.

Minutes

Correction of the minutes noted by J. Whitehead to correct the spelling of her name and to correct a typographical error.

MOTION by S. Frawley to approve the minutes for the meeting on December 8, 2011.
Seconded and passed without dissent

New Business - USNH Website/Webcasting

G. Burton raised a concern about efforts being pursued by the Communications Committee with respect to live webcasting on the USNH website. K. McTigue has requested that this project be put on hold until the board has an opportunity to consider it. The board expressed initial concern about the implications of live broadcasts. It was noted that we do not currently utilize the website very effectively as a tool to support our efforts and the activities of the congregation. The board discussed improving the committee information that is available on the website in order to provide new members with opportunities to get involved at USNH.

ACTION ITEM: The board is to consider webcasting of services at the next meeting.

ACTION ITEM: G. Burton to discuss board concerns regarding the website with the Communications Committee and work with the committee to improve information on the website regarding involvement opportunities and to support other congregational activities.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m. by **MOTION** of L. Rizzolo; **seconded and passed without dissent**