

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees
February 9, 2012
(Accepted March 8, 2012)

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

Board Members Absent: Lisa Anderson; Thea Bourke-Martin; Larry Rizzolo;

Also Present: Kathleen McTigue; Tansey Birenbaum

S. Berke called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and G. Burton recorded the minutes. A quorum of Board Members was present, and the meeting proceeded with S. Berke presiding.

Canvass Update

S. Frawley presented an update on the canvass effort. Face to face canvassing had been pushed to after Lovefest. Due to a significant push by the canvass and finance committees, face to face canvassing is now moving forward ahead of Lovefest. Accordingly, face to face canvassing is to be conducted over the next few weeks. Board members were given folders with canvass information and their respective canvass candidates. 2/3 of the volunteers for face to face canvass have been trained.

ACTION ITEM: K. McTigue to coordinate with G. LaRoche to train remaining volunteers.

Director of Religious Education Search Committee Report

K. McTigue reported to the board on the status of the DRE search. The search committee is concerned about the sufficiency of the compensation and benefits. In consultation with the personnel committee, the search committee is planning to make a request to the board to revise the compensation for the position. The committee was unable to finalize the proposal in time for the board meeting, but will need to be able to inform candidates of the final salary determination during face to face interviews in a few weeks, prior to the next board meeting. It is anticipated that the revised proposal

will be for a salary of \$43,000 with an expense account of \$1,500 and full benefits for a 3/4 time position.

MOTION by P. Duff to empower the Executive Committee to approve a modified salary and benefits package for the Director of Religious Education position. **Seconded and passed without dissent.**

Treasurer's Report

S. Frawley presented the Treasurer's Report. S. Frawley reported that, with research by G. Burton and Susan Godshall on the application of sales tax to USNH activities, sales tax for 2011 was computed and paid. S. Frawley also discovered that sales tax has not been paid for 2008-2010. The total tax due, including penalties is approximately \$2,000. The past sales tax returns will be filed and paid by the end of the month.

Update on Turnpike Players

G. Burton researched the concerns raised at the last meeting regarding the contribution Turnpike Players offered to make to the USNH budget needs. After discussing with T. Birenbaum, it appears that Turnpike Players is using roughly the same amount of time for performances of Seussical as have been used in the past. Also, if there are rental opportunities, Turnpike Players rehearsal times are rescheduled to accommodate the rentals. It was also noted that Turnpike Players funds are held as a restricted USNH fund which is used at the discretion of Turnpike Players for future productions. A similar arrangement is in place for the Music group's performances at USNH. G. Burton has not spoken to Carl Krieg of the Turnpike Players yet, but expects to do so in the next few days to confirm the contribution from Turnpike Players for the current year.

ACTION ITEM: G. Burton to contact Carl Krieg to confirm contribution for current year and to consider all restrict fund groups to prepare a proposal for modifying the current restricted fund arrangements the board's consideration.

Fundraising Report

S. Berke presented a fundraising proposal for a Teddy Bear Tea to be held in May. Concern was raised that while this fundraiser has the potential to draw from outside our

community, doing so will likely require significant advertising investment. It was suggested that Melinda Tuhus be contacted regarding newspaper promotion. S. Berke noted that since the event will require reservations, supplies will only be purchased based on the number of reservations.

MOTION by P. Duff to approve the proposal for the Teddy Bear Tea. **The motion was not seconded.**

It was noted that since the fundraiser does require funds to be committed to expenses for the fundraiser that the proposal should be referred to the fundraising committee.

ACTION ITEM: the Teddy Bear Tea fundraiser proposal is to be referred to the finance committee for advice on how the expenses of the fundraiser will be funded if the revenue is insufficient to cover expenses.

Staff Report

K. McTigue presented the staff report. K. McTigue asked that board members volunteer to introduce new members at the March 11 service. This is to replace having an assigned 'mentor' make the introductions because there is insufficient support for the mentor program.

In an effort to improve connections with new members, K. McTigue asked board members to consider hosting a potluck dinner for groups of new members, perhaps with some longer time members included. A. Price shared the exceptional experience he had hosting a potluck with new members recently.

ACTION ITEM: T. Birenbaum will inquire with board members about dates and plans for hosting new member potluck dinners. Board members are asked to state clear plans: date, time, address, food provided, food to be brought by guests, and whether children are invited. T. Birenbaum will assist in coordinating invitations and RSVP's.

K. McTigue updated the Board on the status of the partnership between USNH and JUNTA following the taco delivery in East Haven. K. McTigue reported that JUNTA wishes to strengthen its partnership with USNH and to use it as a template for partnerships with other religious organizations. JUNTA is currently engaged in opposition to the implementation of Secure Communities and has asked whether USNH would be willing to shelter people for a short period if they are unable to return to their homes due to a fear of being arrested if they return home. The Board discussed

various questions and inquiries (e.g. legality, logistics, mechanics, readiness requirements, etc.) that should be made in order to provide the information necessary to decide whether USNH can and should make this commitment.

ACTION ITEM: K. McTigue to deliver the Board's questions to the JUNTA task force.

T. Birenbaum presented a request that the Board approve the use of \$2,000 from the surplus in the communications budget line item for the purchase of round tables to be used for Love Fest, other USNH events and rentals of the social hall. T. Birenbaum indicated that communications are under budget due to heavier reliance on email and reductions in the number of mailings. Concern was expressed about how and where the tables could be securely stored.

MOTION by S. Berke to approve the expenditure of up to \$2,000 from the communications budget for the purchase of round tables for the social hall on the condition that the Building and Grounds committee confirm, prior to purchase, that safe, dry and secure storage space is available and that a safe means of transporting tables from storage to the social hall is in place. **Seconded and passed without opposition and 2 abstentions.**

Listening Board

S. Berke noted that the next listening board will be February 19, 2012. Board members were asked to attend at least one of the listening board sessions that will be held after each service.

Prior Meeting Minutes

G. Burton asked for any corrections to the minutes of the Board's January 12, 2012 meeting. No corrections were indicated. The minutes were accepted as drafted.

Finance Policies and Procedures

The Board inquired whether changes had been made to policies and procedures for cash handling as requested by the Board at its last meeting. S. Frawley indicated that some changes have been implemented.

ACTION ITEM: G. Burton to follow up with Finance Committee to ask for a report on the changes made to mitigate the possibility of future thefts.

USNH Website/Webcasting

The board discussed whether to pursue live webcasting of sermons on the USNH website. A distinction was made between podcasting, which is posted online at some point after services, and webcasting, which is a live broadcast. Concern was expressed that live webcasting could undermine efforts at increasing involvement by and connections between members of the congregation. It was noted that podcasting is an important part of our outreach to people outside the congregation as well as a medium for those that are home bound to be able to experience services. Before any live webcasting efforts are pursued the Board would require a specific proposal to be made to explain the details of such an effort.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.