

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees
January 30, 2014

Accepted February 18, 2014

Board Members Present: Alison Cunningham, Mary Donohue, David Jones, Nancy Lesh, Rod Groff, Greg Seaman, Peggy Rae, Bobbi Pace, Holly Hawkins

Board Members Absent: Suzanne Miller

Also Present: Emily Melcher

A. Cunningham convened the meeting at 7:05 pm, and the Board met in Executive Session to hear from E. Melcher on a matter of concern. The regular meeting was called to order at 7:25 pm and P. Rae recorded the minutes. A quorum of Board Members was present, and the meeting proceeded with A. Cunningham presiding.

Report on Jan. 26, 2014 Special Congregational Meeting

About 65-70 UNSH members attended the congregational meeting, at which the Board laid out the basis for policy governance and introduced draft Values, Mission, and Ends statements for feedback. Response from attendees was both positive and instructive, and the question and answer session following the meeting revealed areas where the Board will want to work as it hones statements and proceeds with policy governance this spring.

Several avenues for additional congregational feedback exist – members can attend one of three cottage meetings with Board members the first week of February, email comments to a special address (governance@usnh.org), or drop comments in an envelope on the Board's bulletin board in the Social Hall.

The Board discussed how it will handle questions and comments as they come in from these other avenues. In keeping with the Board's desire to maintain good communication with the congregation, the plan is to post questions and answers on the Board bulletin board, as well as on the Board's public webpage once it exists. To enable the Board to "speak with one voice", questions and comments will be shared among all Board members before answers are crafted and posted publicly.

E. Melcher will look into having the Values Wordle from the Jan. 26 meeting printed on the Sunday Order of Services, and B. Pace will write a newsletter article based on the governance portion of the Board's presentation.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes of the 12/12/13 Board of Trustees Meeting: Minutes amended to indicate Board meetings in December and January differed from planned schedule.

MOTION D. Jones, to approve as amended; **SECONDED** R. Groff; **PASSED** without dissent or abstention.

Financial Report

G. Seaman distributed Summary and Detailed YTD reports for Jan. 3, 2014, along with his comments on where USNH stands at mid-fiscal year.

Of major concern is that the entire year's budget for Building & Grounds Maintenance and Repair has already been used for necessary repairs to the air conditioner compressor and the roof, and more roof repairs are yet to be included.

Income from collection plate and from incidental rentals are tracking a bit low; income is 38-39% of the budgeted amount, instead of the expected 50% for midway through the year.

G. Seaman reported the Finance Committee is considering getting a bill counter and a check scanner to expedite processing cash and checks for deposit. The check scanner would require a commercial checking account.

G. Seaman reminded the Board that he is stepping down as Treasurer at the end of his term in June, but he will continue to serve on the Finance Committee and will continue many of the activities he has undertaken while Treasurer, including account reconciliations, monitoring payroll and benefits, and reviewing Quickbooks. He will prepare a financial overview for the new minister and new treasurer.

Proposed Lockdown Procedures

The Board discussed a proposal for USNH lockdown procedures drafted by DRE Jesse Geist and CYRE committee members Linda Barrett and Maureen Gilmore-Hebert. There was agreement that the draft needs to be fleshed out further, in particular with regard to a plan for implementation, training, and costs, but also that the work done so far is a good beginning and the Board supports the effort.

A. Cunningham asked Board members to review the draft proposal and send further comments, if any, to N. Lesh within the next week after the Board meeting.

ACTION N. Lesh to convey the Board's message to J. Geist and CYRE representatives and to act as the Board contact with the group.

Financial Priorities for 2014-15 Budget

M. Donohue has sent Finance Chair Sandy Frawley a summary of the Board's priorities for funding in next year's budget, based on individual Board members' rankings of items laid out by S. Frawley and by J. Rosenthal, Personnel Committee chair.

H. Hawkins raised the subject of funding for ministerial coverage and summer services during the time between E. Melcher's departure at the end of June and the arrival of our new minister, presumably at the beginning of August. Marion Visel will be present some of that time but will be away for 3 weeks mid-July through early August, leaving USNH with no professional pastoral coverage then. If Sunday services continue during the summer, speakers will be needed for 5 services. E. Melcher estimated the cost for ministerial coverage and speakers to be on the order of \$1,750-\$2,000.

Upon discussion, the Board decided funding for summer coverage and services was very important and should be considered a necessity in the budget, rather than an optional item.

ACTION A. Cunningham to meet with S. Frawley to convey the Board's decision about funding for summer coverage and services and to discuss the Board's priorities. E. Melcher, M. Donohue, and N. Lesh to attend also.

E. Melcher suggested the Board might consider whether it wants its role in the budget process to be reactive, responding to the things others put before it, or if it wants to look at a bigger picture and propose larger things that may require more thought and tough decisions. As an example of a big picture-tough decision item, she mentioned administrative staffing.

Rental Committee Needs

A. Cunningham reported that Susan Godshall is stepping down as chair of the Rental Committee and that a replacement is needed. Further discussion was postponed until the next Board meeting, when the Board will have time to discuss the committee's functions.

Adjournment

There being no other business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:13 pm.