

Unitarian Society of New Haven  
Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
April 10, 2014

Accepted May 8, 2014

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

Board Members Absent: None

Also Present: Emily Melcher

A. Cunningham called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and P. Rae recorded the minutes. A quorum of Board Members was present, and the meeting proceeded with A. Cunningham presiding.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes of the 3/18/14 Board Meeting: Minutes amended to remove a statement in the Financial Report section that incorrectly referred to a pledge payment as a donation.

**MOTION B.** Pace, to approve Minutes as amended; **SECONDED** M. Donohue; **PASSED** unanimously, with one abstention.

Financial Report

G. Seaman reported that USNH is mostly on target for income and expenses for this point in the year. Facility expenses are over budget because of roof repairs, as well as increased snow removal this winter. Snow may also have impacted attendance at Sunday services, resulting in lower than expected collection plate revenue.

G. Seaman apprised the Board that \$1,200 has been donated in honor/memory of USNH member Anna Deming, who died this winter. Under USNH Bylaws (Art. XII, Sec. 6), such tribute gifts are to be placed in a Board-Designated Fund unless they are designated for Endowment, which these gifts were not. Upon discussion, it was decided to put the gifts in a Board-Designated Fund for contingencies.

**MOTION G.** Seaman, to establish a Board-Designated Contingency Fund to hold A. Deming tribute gifts; **SECONDED** M. Donohue; **PASSED** unanimously, with one abstention.

## Stewardship Campaign Update and Projections

H. Hawkins and G. Seaman gave an update on the Stewardship Campaign, which at the time of this meeting had pledges totaling \$431,711. H. Hawkins estimates another \$25,000 to \$26,000 may come in from people who have not yet responded but who pledged last year, assuming they pledge the same amounts as last year. The total projected amount (\$457,000) is well below last year's pledge total of \$493,000.

H. Hawkins noted that there are 20 to 25 people listed as members who have not pledged either this year or last and who no longer come to USNH. She suggested they should be removed from membership. P. Rae noted that the Board reviewed existing membership policy at its February 18 meeting but deferred full discussion of how to handle non-pledging members to a later meeting.

**ACTION** The May 8 Board Meeting Agenda will include a complete report on the Stewardship Campaign and a discussion of Membership. H. Hawkins to send P. Rae the Stewardship Report for posting on the Board website; P. Rae to prepare materials for the Membership discussion.

## Delegate Selection for the UU General Assembly (GA)

More USNH members have indicated an interest in being GA delegates than there are available slots. The Board re-visited the decision made at the March 18 Board meeting to hold a lottery.

The Board agreed that President-Elect M. Donohue should be a delegate. Other Board members agreed to attend as non-delegates, leaving seven delegate positions and eight would-be delegates from among the congregation.

**ACTION** M. Donohue will contact each person to explain the situation and to see if one person is willing to withdraw; if no one steps down, a lottery will be held to determine the delegates.

## Right Relations Task Force Report

B. Pace reported the Task Force met for the first time and is reviewing materials from the previous USNH Right Relations initiative and from the UUA's website as it decides on the best way to move forward. Present members of the Task Force include B. Pace, A. Cunningham, N. Lesh, Peggy Myers, Bruce Levison, Gail Figliola, and possibly Paul Trotta. The group expects to have a report for the Board after its next meeting, which is at the end of April.

B. Pace contrasted the previous USNH Right Relations proposal with the approach being considered now. In the previous proposal, a team was to be trained to deal with resolving conflicts. The current Task Force seeks to integrate right relations into the congregation

fully, so that a culture of treating each other well and with respect becomes part of the USNH identity. The group envisions training programs for the entire congregation, as well as programs dealing with education and practices.

S. Miller suggested that having a young person involved with the Task Force, either as a member or in a less formal way, would augment the group's perspective.

M. Donohue suggested the Task Force work out a formal Grievance Procedure.

### Interim Application and Next Steps in Ministerial Search Process

Because no match for a new minister was found in the first round of the ministerial search, the Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) is continuing with a short second round search, to be concluded within the next few weeks. To prepare for the possibility that no match is found, the Board voted to submit an application for an interim minister, due at the UUA Transitions Office by April 17. The UUA is aware that our search is continuing and will expect us to notify them when we are certain an interim is or is not needed.

**MOTION** P. Rae, to enter into a second interim ministry, if needed, for the period of one year; **SECONDED** B. Pace; **PASSED** unanimously, without dissent or abstention.

**ACTION** A task force of A. Cunningham, M. Donohue, and D. Jones will handle the application, review of interim candidates, and negotiations. The application will be modeled on the one submitted in 2012 and will mention right relations, policy governance, authority, and appropriate staffing as specific areas of concern.

### Budgetary Challenge and the Ministerial Search

A. Cunningham voiced concern about the FY14-15 pledges made so far and the potential impact on our ability to offer a called minister the amount indicated in the MSC packet. The pledges are about \$36,000 lower than last year's if everyone who is expected to pledge does. E. Melcher noted if the ministerial search continues into next year, there will be about \$30,000 in additional expenses in next year's budget related to MSC costs and moving expenses.

Board members agreed the congregation must be made aware of the situation and be asked to contribute more, preferably through increased pledges. It was decided that A. Cunningham, accompanied by the rest of the Board, will make a presentation/pitch at the Easter Sunday services; pledge slips will be distributed and collected. A letter will also be sent out.

A. Cunningham will meet with the other members of the Ministerial Search Negotiating Team (David Stagg and Lisa Anderson), Finance Chair Sandy Frawley, Personnel Chair Jean Rosenthal, and Vice President M. Donohue to discuss budget implications and potential adjustments.

## Minister's Report

E. Melcher will inform the Worship Committee that funds for summer ministry will not be available this summer because of the anticipated barebones FY14-15 budget.

She noted that another Interim Progress Appraisal is due. As with past appraisals, she and the Board will work separately on their appraisals, then share them before each files its appraisal with the UUA. It was decided that the appraisals will be shared at the May Board meeting.

**ACTION** A. Cunningham and S. Miller to work on the Board's appraisal and post it on the Board website's discussion page for review and comment before the May 8 Board meeting.

## Other business

Tribute to E. Melcher – E. Melcher departed at 9:03 pm, and the Board discussed the festivities planned for after the June 15 service (her last at USNH) to celebrate her time with us.

Monthly Thank You – At H. Hawkins' suggestion, the Board will thank Lois Smith for organizing the Sunday morning coffee-making.

Date of June Annual Congregational Meeting – The Board decided that the Meeting will be held Sunday, June 1, at 11:30 am, after the (single) service. A. Cunningham will alert Tisha Ferguson to post this date in the calendar.

## Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:22 pm.