

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees
January 8, 2015

Accepted February 12, 2015

Board Members Present: Mary Donohue, Dan Gelperin, Rod Groff, Holly Hawkins, Russell Heinrich, David Jones, Merrily Kaplan, Mary Losee, Suzanne Miller, Peggy Rae

Board Members Absent: None

Also Present: Fritz Hudson, Sandy Frawley

M. Donohue 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 M. Donohue presiding.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of 12/11/14 Board Meeting Minutes

P. Rae offered an addition to the Treasurer's Report section to clarify the disposition of the Massey gift, and the Minutes were approved as amended.

MOTION H. Hawkins, to approve Minutes as amended; **SECONDED** R. Groff; **PASSED** unanimously, with one abstention.

2. Approval of Governance Policies agreed upon at 11/8/14 Governance Retreat and 12/16/14 Board Governance Meeting

- Definitions
- Governance Process policies
- Board-Management Team Relationship policies

The policies are compiled in USNH Governance Policy Book Draft 1/6/15, which also contains previously approved policies and works in progress. The book's Table of Contents is attached to these Minutes to indicate which policies were approved at tonight's meeting. Note: numbering of policies and format may change.

MOTION S. Miller, to approve the policies; **SECONDED** M. Losee; **PASSED** unanimously, with one abstention.

Management Team Report

D. Jones presented the Management Team's Jan. 8, 2015 Ends and Executive Limitations Monitoring Reports, which are attached to these Minutes. The Ends report has been reorganized to reflect the ordering of priorities decided upon by the Board at its December 11 meeting.

The Team is developing a plan for the 2015-16 Stewardship campaign and the FY15-16 operating budget it will support. The Board has yet to approve Executive Limitations policies concerning budgeting and other financial activities to guide the Team. The Board has asked the Finance Committee to recommend draft policies for consideration at the Board's February Governance meeting; S. Frawley reported the Finance Committee has not reached consensus on its recommendation, but a draft is available for the Board to examine. In the interest of providing guidance to the Management Team sooner than mid-February, it was decided that the draft will be circulated to Board members for discussion at the Board's January 20 Governance meeting, so that conditional approval can be given to policies the Board finds acceptable and the Management Team can go forward on that basis.

F. Hudson reported he met with staff members Jesse Greist and Linda Pawelek to discuss trial changes in the Sunday worship services, including experimentation with a single service. Because OWL RE classes take place at 9 am, the trials will be deferred until after April 12, when the classes will be finished.

D. Jones reported that costs for building repairs remain unclear at this time. Only one bid was obtained by the Buildings & Grounds Committee for certain work on the gutters and repair of the window gaps, and estimates were received for only a part of a job. The Management Team is following up on this with the Buildings & Grounds Committee. In light of demands placed on the volunteers on the Building and Grounds Committee, the Team has begun to look at the possibility of more staff involvement in matters relating to buildings and grounds operation and maintenance.

M. Donohue asked if the Management Team has a plan to roll out Church DB to USNH members. Members can already access the on-line membership database through a link on the USNH website, which also has instructions on how to do so, but this has not been publicized, and members are unaware of Church DB and the benefits it provides. These include access to the Church Directory, ability to edit one's contact information, and access to one's pledge and donation records, which will be especially useful for the Stewardship campaign.

ACTION: Prior to the Board's February 12 meeting, F. Hudson will talk with Congregational Administrator Tisha Ferguson about a plan to acquaint the USNH membership with Church DB.

M. Donohue noted that requests from committees for staff time and other resources were coming directly to the Congregational Administrator rather than through the Management Team, raising concern that committees might expect too much of the Congregational Administrator. F. Hudson explained that T. Ferguson makes decisions based on the priorities he has given her, and that if there's a question, she comes to him. The Management Team plans to hold a meeting with committee chairs soon that will help them know about priorities and sharing of resources. This should clarify that the Congregational Administrator cannot be expected to do everything that everyone wants done.

M. Kaplan pointed out that it would be helpful for the Management Team to communicate with the congregation about the Congregational Administrator's role and other things that it is doing. Board members suggested the Team write a few sentences in each USNH newsletter. M. Donohue noted that updates about the Team could be included in the Board's article once a month.

ACTION: In the second newsletter of the month, the Board's article will include Management Team information.

Treasurer's Report

M. Losee distributed a balance sheet, a detailed year-to-date profit-loss statement, and her summary of where the budget stands mid-fiscal year.

As of January 2, 2015, 55% of the budgeted income has been received, while expenses are at 44% of the amount budgeted.

The bulk of the income is from pledge payments, which are at 54% of the amount budgeted (which also equals the amount actually pledged). Among the 232 people/pledge units who made a FY14-15 pledge, 52 have paid in full already, another 148 have paid part of their pledge, and 32 have yet to make a payment. R. Heinrich asked how this compared with other years. M. Losee will look into this; according to S. Frawley, the information should be retrievable from Church DB, although the database records only extend back a year or so.

On the expense side, about 82% of the office supplies budget has already been spent, and T. Ferguson has been alerted to this. Paypal and EFT fees already equal or slightly exceed the amounts budgeted for them (\$250 each), reflecting members' increased use of these payment methods. Contributions for Sunday service flowers have lagged, and only 22% of the flower budget remains; if this is exhausted, an artificial bouquet will be used instead. Worship Committee chair Meredith Fahey will bring this to the congregation's attention, and it is expected this will stimulate donations.

Members will soon receive a quarterly letter with information about their pledge payments for tax purposes; the letter will also show their pledge balance. M. Losee plans to put a short monthly budget report in the USNH newsletter to make the budget more visible to the congregation. She will also send the budget to committee chairs so that they can monitor their budgets.

Nominating Committee

M. Kaplan reported that she and M. Losee attended the December meeting of the Nominating Committee, and that the Committee would like to speak with the Board before it begins its work on nominations. The Committee will be invited to attend the Feb. 17 Board Governance meeting.

Interim Progress Appraisals (Executive Session)

The Board met in executive session from 8:10 pm to 8:50 pm to discuss with F. Hudson the Interim Progress appraisals prepared by the Board and by F. Hudson. The two appraisals will be filed with the UUA Transitions office.

Discussion of Finance Committee proposals concerning liquid unrestricted funds

At the Oct. 9, 2014 Board meeting, Finance Committee Chair Sandy Frawley reported that an analysis of USNH finances revealed substantial liquid unrestricted funds and that the Finance Committee had developed some proposals as to their possible allocation. The Committee's proposals, which are detailed in the 10/9/14 Board Meeting Minutes, were (1) to set up an operating reserve equivalent to 25% of the average USNH operating budget; (2) to add about \$100,000 to the Board-designated Capital Fund; and (3) to create a mission-related contingency fund.

It now appears that some of the unrestricted funds will be needed for essential repairs. In light of this, the Board decided not to discuss a set number for the operating reserve and to defer discussion of the Capital and mission-related contingency funds to a later time.

Board members were in agreement that an operating reserve should be set up, but felt that governance policies need to be in place first to cover such matters as who has access to the reserve, how decisions about its use are to be made, and what sort of limits there will be on maintaining and/or replenishing the reserve. The Board voted to give conditional support to the setting up of an operating reserve, contingent upon such policies being adopted.

MOTION by D. Gelperin, that the Board supports the establishment of an operating reserve, to be governed by Executive Limitation policies to be developed and approved; **SECONDED** by R. Heinrich; **PASSED** unanimously, with one abstention.

Other Business

Thank you notes will be sent to Terry Vidal, for making the torches for the Christmas Eve service, and to Lurline DeVos, for connecting the congregation with its Philipino pen pal, Rheylyene, through the Christmas star *parol* project.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm, there being no other business before the Board.

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(Note: policy numbering and format may change)

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UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NEW HAVEN

EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS MONITORING REPORT TO TRUSTEES

Management Team – January 8, 2015

We are a diverse, multi-generational faith community that

- inspires lives of compassion and generosity**
- nurtures spiritual growth**
- cultivates transformative connections, and**
- creates a more just world**

["+" = activity initiated in this month

["~" = activity continuing from prior months

GLOBAL EXECUTIVE RESTRAINT

The Management Team shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance which is either

- unlawful,***
- imprudent, or***
- in violation of USNH Bylaws,***
or commonly accepted business and professional ethics.

TREATMENT OF CONGREGANTS, FRIENDS, AND VISITORS

With respect to interactions with members, friends and visitors of the church, the Management Team shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are

- unsafe,***
- disrespectful,***
- unnecessarily intrusive, or fail to provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy.***

*** *Unsafe***

~ The Building & Grounds Committee received bids for

> Front rain gutter replacement

> Drain vacuuming.

Work will be authorized & scheduled ASAP

~ The Building & Grounds Committee is negotiating for bids for closing the window gaps in Rooms 203, 205, & 207. Mold remediation in these rooms will be addressed once the gaps are closed.

~ An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) has been installed. Use procedures are being formulated

*** *Disrespectful***

~ The Right Relations Task force Covenant "Community Conversations" are scheduled for January 18 & 25.

*** *Unnecessarily intrusive, or fail to provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy.***

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NEW HAVEN

EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS MONITORING REPORT TO TRUSTEES

Management Team – January 8, 2015

TREATMENT OF PAID AND VOLUNTEER STAFF

With respect to treatment of staff/volunteers, the Management Team may not act in a manner inconsistent with UU Principles or cause or allow conditions that are inhumane, unfair, or unprofessional. Furthermore, the Executive Team shall not:

1. Discriminate against existing or potential paid or volunteer staff based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, physical disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender characteristics, identity, or expression.

2. Operate without or fail to comply with written personnel policies that clarify personnel rules for staff, provide for effective handling of grievances, and protect against wrongful conditions.

+ Personnel Committee is actively engaged in studying appropriate Committee role in Policy Governance, including its role in handling grievances.

3. Subject paid or volunteer staff to unsafe or unhealthy conditions.

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~ An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) has been installed. Use procedures are being formulated

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

With respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers, and volunteers, the Management Team shall not cause or allow jeopardy to the fiscal or institutional integrity of the Society.

Accordingly, the Management Team may not:

1. Change any minister's compensation, benefits, or allocated professional expenses previously established by the Board.

2. Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.

3. Recommend compensation and benefits that create obligations over a term longer than revenues can be safely projected.

4. Establish current compensation and benefits that deviate materially from the non-profit, geographic, and professional market for the skills employed.

+ Compensation & benefit proposals are under consideration for funding in 2015-16 to address deviations from market

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NEW HAVEN

ENDS MONITORING REPORT TO TRUSTEES

Management Team –January 8, 2015

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- nurtures spiritual growth**
- cultivates transformative connections, and**
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AMONG

USNH is a congregation of

- welcome

and

- connection,

where people of all ages:

**** Treat one another with respect***

+ The Right Relations Task force Covenant "Community Conversations" are scheduled for January 18 & 25.

**** Give and receive support in times of joy, sorrow and transition***

+ "Hope's Nest" Welcome Program will hold initial monthly session January 11

~ Pastoral Services oversight and coordination structure is in development

~ Music program support is under assessment

**** Give generously of ourselves and our resources***

+ Operating Budget 2015-16 Stewardship Campaign Plan is in development

+ Administrative support for Stewardship Campaign is in development

+ The Kid's Service Team Mitten Tree collected and distributed winter wear to Waverly partners and Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Service clients

~ Our Time & Talent stewardship success is under assessment

**** Embrace diversity***

+ The Sanctuary Hearing Assist system is undergoing experimentation to improve performance or provide a basis for an upgrade proposal

+ Proposals to enhance wheelchair accommodations in Sanctuary are under consideration.

**** Engage in life-long learning***

+ A proposal to expand staff support for life-long learning, spiritual growth and personal support programming is under development

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NEW HAVEN

ENDS MONITORING REPORT TO TRUSTEES

Management Team –January 8, 2015

WITHIN

Respecting different spiritual journeys, the people of USNH find

- inspiration

and

- a safe place to

**** Develop our best selves***

**** Grow spiritually***

**** Live with more joy and open-heartedness***

**** Experience a connection to something larger than ourselves***

~ Sunday Service music success under assessment

**** Find meaning and purpose in our lives***

**** Articulate our Unitarian Universalist identity***

~ Visitor follow-up process is under development

~ CYRE programs success is under assessment

BEYOND

The people of USNH, together and with our partners, act on our values in the larger world. We:

**** Advance justice in our community and beyond***

~ Justice advancement through Health Care Reform Advocates, Economic Justice (Group) Immigration Rights (Group) is under assessment

~ Justice advancement potential through USNH potential for involvement in CONECT (congregation-based social justice organization) is under assessment

**** Expand our understanding and awareness of social and environmental issues***

+ The Peace Task Force held a study session on military recruitment in high schools December 14. Members will participate in a statewide "Counter Recruitment Workshop" February 1.

~ Environmental understanding/awareness expansion through Green Sanctuary program is under assessment

~ Poverty understanding/awareness expansion through Columbus House monthly dinners, Waverly educational programs, East Rock mentors program, Interfaith Cooperative Ministry, Food Bank is under assessment

~ Mental Health understanding/awareness expansion through Mental Health Awareness (Group) is under assessment

**** Develop new understanding of ourselves and others through our justice work***

+ The Anti-Racism<>Dixwell-UUC partnership discussion #4 is scheduled for January 26

**** Strengthen Unitarian Universalism's Mission***

~ Request: interpretation/clarification of this end:

? Does the UUA have a mission statement?