

Unitarian Society of New Haven  
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
October 11, 2018

Accepted November 8, 2018

**Board Members Present:** President - Peggy Myers, Vice President - Craig Machado, Treasurer - Linda Mehta, Clerk - Pamela Miller, Past – President - Dan Gelperin, Ex Officio – Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner, At Large: Bobbi Pace, Al Bosch, Dan Wade

**Board Members Absent:** At Large: Pat Trotta, Jeannette Faber

**Also Present:** Gwen Heuss-Severance, Jeremy Hill, David Stagg

**Gather:**

P. Myers called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm. D. Gelperin lit the chalice and read a poem by William F Schultz. Attendees read the covenant. This was followed by a life event check in and a check in with each person answering the question, “What do you do for fun?”

No changes were made to the agenda.

**Assess:**

**Minister’s report**

The Minister’s report is attached at the end of the minutes.

There has been positive feedback on the policy site on the Online Library. A new disruptive behavior policy may be presented to the board next month. We have 14 new members signed up for the upcoming new members class.

**Monitoring of policy (1.3)**

The MT interpretation and report on policy 1.3 is attached at the end of the minutes. The USNH Employee Handbook is available on the Board site but has not been attached to the minutes.

The board standard is that a “reasonable” interpretation is required for policies. Interpretations do not have to be “perfect”.

The MT is trying to arrange a presentation on responding to emergency situations. We have standard testing done on fire extinguishers, elevators, etc. A schedule of required safety tests should be maintained for inspection. A risk schedule can be maintained and prioritized to manage mitigation of risks. B. Pace will provide examples of this type of record. The MT should seek input from Buildings and Grounds before reworking the interpretation for the next report.

## **Create the Future & Learning:**

### **Report on September Board Chat and looking forward**

L. Mehta, A. Bosch, and B. Pace are coordinating board chats. Each meeting will review the last chat, get volunteers for the next chat, and prepare subjects for the chats.

The last chat was intended to be an energy scan. Other issues came up to prevent that discussion.

The first concern raised was dissatisfaction that the sanctuary does not have clerestory windows. P. Myers followed up with the individual who raised this issue, asking what the person would like to hear. The person only wanted the issue to remain visible. No action needed at this time. Issues such as this fester if people feel that they are not being heard.

The second issue was the need for leadership development for committees. People are not groomed for leadership. This needs to be kept on our radar.

Issue three was communications within USNH. Communication may not be effective. How do people receive information?

What should be discussed at the October 28 chat? Should there be a theme? Anything that can get people to talk about what is important to them is useful. This could be a variant on an energy scan. We should get the subject out to the congregation prior to the chats. D. Gelperin volunteered for October 28. The committee will have at least one person at the chats.

### **Schedule for Board representative after 10:30 service**

10/14 D. Gelperin

10/21 P. Myers

10/28 P. Miller

11/4 A. Bosch

11/11 B. Pace

### **Kitchen Project:**

Letters from L. Smith, P. Myers, and D. Stagg are attached at the end of the minutes:

The motion from the retreat on the Kitchen project was read. " The Board gives approval for the kitchen project to move forward with an upper financial limit of 125K dependent upon a financial feasibility report acceptable to the Board and congregational approval."

What is meant by financial feasibility? The board approved up to \$125K subject to proof of financial feasibility and congregational approval. MT needs to meet with the Kitchen Project committee to determine feasibility. The KPC must commit to raising a certain

amount and have a plan for raising an additional amount. MT must determine how to raise the remaining amount. A variety of methods could be used at MT's discretion.

Steps required:

- Determine the cost
- Determine how to raise the funds
- Decision to be made by board/congregation

The board will be an advocate for the project.

What level of control is to be exercised by the MT? The KPC must report to the MT. Preparation must be thorough to answer questions raised by the congregation. \$76,000 has been raised from 12 people. The board must clarify the relationship between the MT and the KPC. We must establish a precedent to enforce policy governance. The Board needs to inform the KPC that the MT has authority over the committee. The MT has fiduciary responsibility. Tone may be an issue when communicating with the KPC. We share the same goal. We will have to meet with them, but a written document will be needed.

How many meetings do we need with the congregation? A vote should not be taken at the November congregational meeting. Who will be involved in the conversation with the MT? P. Myers, D. Gelperin, P. Miller and possibly B. Pace will meet with the KPC. P. Myers will contact the KPC (G. Seaman, L. Smith, and C. Cheney). The meeting will be to establish process for the project.

### **Agenda for the congregational meeting on 11/11**

The Kitchen project will be major part of the congregational meeting.

#### **Consent Agenda:**

**MOTION – C. Machado**, to approve the consent agenda: Minutes of September 13, 2018 Board meeting; **SECONDED – D. Gelperin**;  
**PASSED unanimously**, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions

**Announcements:** None

**Thank you's:** None

#### **Adjournment:**

**MOTION – D. Gelperin**, to adjourn; **SECONDED – L. Mehta**;  
**PASSED unanimously**, 7 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions  
The meeting was adjourned at 8:31pm.

**Submitted – P. Miller**

**Attachments:**

Minister's report

Interpretation and Monitoring policy (1.3)

Response from L. Smith to P. Myers

Financial feasibility study clarification

Letter from D. Stagg for MT

**Minister's Report**  
**October 11, 2018**  
**Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner**

**State of the Congregation** (*recent successes, challenges, observations about the congregation's functioning in relationship to the mission, ministries, members, staff, or other Board concerns*)

The work on the Kitchen Project between the Kitchen Project Committee, the Management Team and the Board has proven complex (as could have been expected). I believe it is important to clarify roles of all player and understand that that is a goal of this month's Board meeting. The project is exciting for USNH and interest clearly shows that the undertaking is central to how the congregation sees itself as a center of hospitality.

**Major Accomplishments** (*Large, new, or not regular-duty projects*)

The 10/7 Israel/Palestine-themed service feels like a major accomplishment. A lot of work went into planning the service and striking the tone we wanted. I believe we were successful.

**Primary Ministry Focus** (*Areas of intellectual, mental, or spiritual study*)

- October's theme of SANCTUARY
- November's theme of MEMORY
- Israel/Palestine
- Immigration and the Sanctuary Movement

**Upcoming Time Away** (*vacation, study leave, UUMA or UUA gatherings*)

- I will be out of the pulpit (but in the building) on October 21.

**Activity Report for Areas of Ministry for Preliminary Fellowship Evaluation**  
(*not exhaustive*)

**Counseling and Pastoral Care**

I have made myself available this year with office hours on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. I reiterate my availability in each monthly newsletter. I will also continue my efforts to meet with member in area retirement homes.

**Practical Arts** (*administration, organizational development in and out of congregation, management of staff, attention to detail, support and leadership development, recognition and appreciation of others, delegation of responsibility and authority, follow through and completion of tasks, time management, attention to finances, fundraising, funding ministry, public relations and publicity skills, ability to work with boards and committees, clarity of roles, attention to long range plans, etc.*)

I am still working on staff reviews and hope to have them completed by the end of October.

We have worked with the Membership Team to onboard our new Membership Coordinator, Anna Flores. She is settling in quite well.

I am in the process of recruiting a Communications Team as well as a Stewardship Team.

A revised organizational chart was presented to the Council of Chairs on October 4<sup>th</sup> and will be presented at the Congregational Meeting November 11.

Discussion was held about the role of the Council of Chairs. Solidifying their role is an ongoing process between the Management Team and the Council of Chairs.

The Management Team is working to codify USNH policies and procedures with a Standard Operating Procedure template. Jeremy Hill is leading this effort. All operating policies and procedures are available online at: <http://www.usnh.org/about-us/usnh-archives/operational-policies-and-procedures/>

We are working specifically on a Disruptive Behavior Policy using best practices from other congregations and the UUA. The policy has been reviewed by the Permanent Committee on Right Relations and is currently in review by members of USNH who are attorneys and will likely be ready for review by the Board next month. This is a different process than most of our policies and procedures because of the sensitive nature of this policy.

We have, with the Personnel Committee, completed a revision of the Employee Handbook which contains all our personnel policies. All staff have received a revised copy. We are determining whether and how it will be incorporated into our standard format for Standard Operating Procedures. It will be available on the website soon. A copy has been uploaded to the Board package for this meeting.

**Organizational Ministry** (*integration of new members and clients, creates a welcoming environment, encourages a sense of community, encourages growth, supports broad variety of programs, involvement of others in planning and conducting programs, nurtures lay leadership, professional presentation of self, pastors to various age groups, etc.*)

Our first series of New to UU/USNH New Member classes begin on October 14 (21 and 28). We have 6-8 new members signed up.

I will also offer with Jesse Greist (DLRE) a small group for new members beginning November 4.

We have worked to continue widening our welcome to include parents with small children by adding a children's/family corner in the sanctuary with space to play on the floor and quiet toys. Feedback has been positive from families.

We raised \$1260 toward our \$3500 contribution to Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism at our 9/30 service.

#### **Personal and Professional Growth**

Continuing to work with my coach and spiritual director and mentor

Working with the Committee on Ministry and the Board to complete my (hopefully) final preliminary fellowship renewal evaluation. This requires significant work on the part of the congregation and significant self-reflection on my part. Thank you to all who have put work into this.

#### **Teaching**

- See above: Small Group for New Members; New Member Classes

#### **Worship**

*Sermons Preached/Services Led*

September 16, 2018 "A Vision for the New Year" (High Holy Days)

September 23, 2018 "Where There is Vision, The People..."

September 30, 2018 "A Visionary Faith" (Black Lives of UU Collection)

October 4, 2018 "Being an Oasis of Peace" (Israel/Palestine)

*Attendance*

September 16 – 194 adults in service; 42 children and youth in RE; 4 adults in RE = 240 total

September 23 – 193 adults in service; 56 children and youth in RE; 20 adults in RE = 269 total  
September 30 – 190 adults in service; 47 children and youth in RE; 11 adults in RE = 248 total  
October 4 – 180 adults in service; 38 children and youth in RE; 10 adults in RE = 228 total

**Denominational Activities**

- I attended the UUMA cluster gathering in October and will attend the chapter (wider area) gathering in November.

**Prophetic Outreach**

- I attended the 10/4 CONECT Clergy Luncheon.
- I attended the 10/9 observance of 1 year in sanctuary for Sujitno Sahuti at the UU Church in Meriden
- I am working with CONECT to get a meeting with local representatives.

Respectfully Submitted by Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner

## **MT Interpretation and Monitoring of Policy Governance Section 1.3**

### **1.3 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 Management Team shall not:

- a. 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.
- b. 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.
- c. Subject paid or volunteer staff to unsafe or unhealthy conditions.

#### ***MT Interpretation.***

*Section 1.3 a. and b. are explicit and require no interpretation. However, we note that the USNH Employee Handbook elaborates the requirements of 1.3 a. and describes in detail the rules and procedures called for by 1.3b.*

*Section 1.3 c indicates two areas to be addressed. USNH must comply with longstanding regulations from the fire marshal and the building inspector. Examples include inspection of fire extinguishers, the sprinkler system and testing of the fire alarm. More recent safety concerns require that we develop new procedures e.g. lockdown procedures and new ways of alerting building occupants to emergency situations.*

**All staff were asked to report any issues covered by 1.3. There were no complaints. We report compliance with sections 1.3 a. and 1.3 b.**

**Because section 1.3 c. is evolving, we report non-compliance at this time.**

---



## Memorandum

Date: 9/27/18  
To: Peggy Myers  
From: Lois Smith  
Re: Kitchen Renovation Project

### Who is "We?"

The kitchen project committee was formed in January 2017 and has continued to meet and deliberate for the last 18 months. Lois Smith, chair, is the spokesperson for the renovation project. Greg Seaman will serve as project manager of the construction phase; Carol Cheney is directing the fundraising efforts. The responsibility and decisions for all aspects of the project will reside with the Kitchen Project Committee, which will be using expert help from USNH Members David Thompson, Architect, Susan Godshall, Attorney, and others, as the initiative moves along. We will provide regular design and construction updates to the MT.

### Board Report—Fundraising

We intend that our report to the Board in October will include the results of Phase 1 ("the quiet phase") fundraising efforts, i.e. the total of donations that individually solicited members have pledged through that date. The goal for Phase One is \$50,000.

We will also provide an estimate of anticipated Phase Two fundraising, characterized by "full court press" congregational participation in one or more planned congregational events, and a broad appeal that may include non-members (TBD).

The goal for Phase Two is currently \$10,000. We may increase the goal.

### Preliminary Project Budgeting and RFPs

We have an estimate from one contractor, selected by David Thompson. That estimate, obtained several months ago, has no official standing, and was intended to give us a ballpark number to consider.

With the Board's official commitment to construction, we will send out detailed, updated requests for proposals (RFPs), prepared by David Thompson, to at least three contractors. We have been advised that RFP's should be sent out only after there is commitment to proceed, as it is a time-consuming task for prospective contractors. Susan Godshall will be a consultant to that process.

David Thompson and Greg Seaman will review the bids and recommend one to the Board for a single fixed-price contract.

### November Congregational Meeting

We ask that the Board recommend congregational acceptance of the proposal for the kitchen renovation project, based on the thoughtfulness and rationale of that proposal and the feasibility of adequate funding.

We will provide details of the proposal at the congregational meeting in a PowerPoint presentation, and answer questions.

The Phase 1 results will provide evidence of congregation members' belief in the project and confidence in the fundraising goal. We will outline details for Phase 2 fundraising, and encourage continuing member engagement with the KPC in fundraising activities.

### **Getting the Word Out**

The KPC has presented to the MT and Board, in response to their charge from the 2017 Management Team:

- The results of a year's planning to renovate our kitchen/pantry area to provide us with a safe, efficient and attractive place to support our volunteers and programs
- A feasible fundraising strategy
- Agreement that the proposal will be presented at the congregational meeting November 11 for members' questions and comments.

As we continue Phase One, meeting with individuals and inviting pledges of financial support, we are evaluating early interest in the initiative, and testing our goal setting. Anyone wishing more information or an opportunity to donate during Phase One is encouraged to contact Lois Smith.

## Financial feasibility study clarification

Hi Lois,

The BoT spent a good amount of time on Tuesday evening trying to gain clarity as to what the requested financial feasibility report would look like and when in the process it would be indicated. Let us share with you our thoughts and questions. Please understand that we are asking so that we can keep our own heads clear and maximize congregational enthusiasm and buy-in. We continue to be enormously excited about the project?

The final product we're working toward is a presentation to the congregation stating why we think remodeling the kitchen is a priority, with the details of the plan and the details of how to pay for it. The kitchen group has presented a plan that costs at most \$125,000 and we are now trying to figure out where that money could come from, as well as refine the cost estimate.

As we understand it, Carol and the kitchen group suggested that they could raise a minimum of \$50k in an initial quiet phase (Phase I), followed by a minimum of \$15k in a public phase (Phase 2) that involves the entire congregation. The final \$60k would be raised by the MT, kitchen group and the whole congregation working in concert.

Several questions came up:

- 1) What is the time span do you imagine for these different stages?
    - a) Will phase 1 be completed by the fall congregational meeting on 11/11/18?
    - b) When and how long do you anticipate phase 2 taking?
    - c) When (roughly) do you anticipate that phases 1 and 2 will be complete?
    - d) Is there a danger that the fundraising for the kitchen will now directly bump up against the stewardship campaign?
  - 2) Is phase 2 silent as well? Exactly what does that mean?
  - 3) Is the plan that people in the congregation will be contacted prior to a formal public introduction and education process?
    - a) The Board was of the feeling that there would need to be some education and approval process by the congregation before embarking on Phase 2
-

(presumably with a report on phase 1 included). Might this be done at the fall congregational meeting?

- b) The Board also felt that broad education leading to wide-spread support for the project will be critical.
- 4) How would the final phase be handled? It would be our understanding that the kitchen group would collaborate with the MT and the congregation at large to explore other ways of fund-raising for the final \$60k.

So summing up: what we would be looking for in a financial feasibility study would be:

- 1) Assurances that you have \$65k in hand or promised from phases 1 and 2
- 2) A reasonably detailed plan for fundraising the final \$60k with realistic estimates of what we could raise. The level of detail and confidence we're looking for is something that would be put in front of the congregation to gain its final support for the project.
- 3) Some more refined sense of project cost. When is it realistic to formally request bids?

Once again, we ask these questions to gain clarity. Please know that we are eager to be supportive and to maximize the chance of congregational buy-in.

Blessings,

Peggy - for the Board of Trustees

---

## Letter from D. Stagg for MT

### The Kitchen Renovation Project

MT response to the Memorandum from Lois Smith to Peggy Myers 9/27/18

1. Policy Governance makes it clear that operational aspects of USNH are delegated to the Management Team (MT) with clear authority to make decisions and clear guidelines about matters that are to be brought to the Board for discussion and ratification.
2. Paragraph 3.4.3 of the Policy Governance Book states "...the MT is authorized to establish further procedures, make decisions, take actions, establish practices and pursue activities".
3. The MT delegates much of the work of the Society to the Committees and the Committees report to the MT. This relationship is shown on the Org chart and managed by the MT at meetings of the Council of Chairs.
4. The MT commissioned the Kitchen Project Committee (KPC) in January 2017. The KPC is not shown on the Org chart because it is not a permanent committee. However the KPC reports to, and has looked for guidance from the MT since January 2017.
5. Given the projected cost of the Kitchen Renovation project (\$125,000) the MT brought the proposal to the Board to seek guidance on the wisdom of dedicating such a large amount to that specific project. The Board confirmed their support for the project. At that time MT assumed the project would go back to the MT for overall management.
6. The MT has not delegated authority for execution of the project to the KPC at this time. The assertion "The responsibility and decisions for all aspects of the project will reside with the KPC..." does not mesh with the principles of Policy Governance as adopted by the Society nor is it necessarily in the best interests of the Society.
7. The MT will determine which aspects are delegated exclusively to the KPC and which aspects are to be decided jointly. Critical steps such as preparation of the RFP, selection of contractors to be asked to bid, selections of the final bid and all fiscal aspects of the project will be done in consultation with the MT. When necessary, the MT will coordinate fundraising activities that involve the congregation and other related aspects of the project such as the impact on rentals.
8. The MT is very appreciative of the work done by the KPC. We assume that the KPC will continue to be the source of the majority of steps needed to accomplish this complex project. It is our intention to work with the KPC according to our covenant. However, the way the business of the society is carried out has changed in recent years, particularly with the adoption of policy governance. The MT believes the points outlined above comply with and are necessitated by this change.