

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees
September 12, 2019

Accepted October 10, 2019

Board Members Present: President Al Bosch, Vice President Nancy Apfel, Clerk Becky Friedkin, Treasurer Linda Mehta, Past President Peggy Myers, Trustees at Large Jeanette Faber, Craig Machado, Bernice Marie-Daly, Emily McCave, Pat Trotta

Others Present: Gwen Heuss-Severance and David Stagg (MT), Rev. John Marsh

1. Gather

Al called the meeting to order at 6:33.

Linda lit the chalice and read a selection from the Bhagavad Gita. A combined life event and guided check in followed. Linda's check in question was: How has taking action required the need for you to overcome the obstacles to doing so, and can you describe a time when you have been successful in doing so? The Board then read the Board Covenant.

Peggy is scheduled for the chalice lighting and guided check-in for October.

2. Changes to the Agenda

The agenda had been amended prior to the meeting to allow for additional matters.

3. Assess the Past

Minister's Report

Rev. Marsh noted that the USNH staff had a retreat on September 10th, where they discussed the Board's priority for "celebrating, embracing, nourishing and supporting our community." He has met with most key committees except Membership, which he will meet with on 9/19. John is raising this priority at these meetings and is finding openness to exploring new events and for reviewing existing events to make sure they are still meeting the needs of the congregation. Related to this is a desire to create learning opportunities to build skills of the entire congregation to make USNH a place of radical hospitality and welcoming to diverse newcomers. This might entail making better use of relevant UUA resources.

There are four memorial services in the next six weeks. Fortunately, this is not typical.

Kitchen Report

The Kitchen Committee report distributed on Sunday is attached to the minutes. Although there was a dedication on Sunday, the Fire Marshal has not yet given the OK to use the stove, oven, and microwave. The Management Team is waiting to hear the final cost of the project, and waiting for bookkeeper Antonia to provide the current uncommitted cash balance. These should be available by the October Board meeting.

Monitoring of policies

We reviewed the general process for monitoring Management Team compliance with policies and reviewed the Management Team's compliance report for Policy 1.8, Communication and Support to the Board. The Management Team also noted that there are no interpretations for the policy elements, which seem self-evident. The MT recommended that we amend the Government Policy Book to indicate "No interpretation required" for each element of Policy 1.8.

MOTION: Peggy moved and Bernice seconded to accept the Management Team's compliance report. Passed unanimously.

Approval of Governance Policy Book 1.5

MOTION: Peggy moved and Emily seconded that we approve version 1.5 of the Governance Policy Book. Motion passed with nine in favor and one abstention.

MOTION: Becky moved and Linda seconded that we amend the Governance Policy Book 1.5 with the changes proposed to section 1.8 ("No interpretation required") and consider it approved. Motion passed with nine in favor and one abstention.

4. Create the Future & Learning

Potential By-Laws Changes

Al reported that he drafted additions to the relevant sections of the By-Laws to allow for a Youth Board member. Al met with Jesse to review; Jesse will take it to the CYRE Committee. Al will also ask Lisa Anderson to review.

Sunday Board Representatives

Board members volunteered to be Board Representative for October. Becky will notify Rich Stockton, chair of the Worship Committee.

We discussed how to aggregate and track the feedback we get from Sunday Board Representative. Becky will start a document, to which Board members can add feedback received. Members may also send a summary of feedback to Becky, who will amend the document.

We agreed to stand near the Welcome Table, to make it easier for people to find us.

Board Liaison to Nominating Committee

Becky volunteered to be the Nominating Committee Board liaison member.

Appointment of Negotiating Team for the Ministerial Search Committee (MSC)

MOTION: Becky moved and Craig seconded to appoint Bob Congdon (MSC co-chair), Nancy Apfel (Board VP), and Jean Rosenthal (chair, Personnel Committee) as the Negotiating Team for the 2019-20 Ministerial Search Committee. Motion passed unanimously.

Jamie Johnson's request for sponsorship for the UU ministry

MOTION: Nancy moved and Linda seconded to support Jamie Johnson's request for congregational sponsorship for her application to the UUA for aspirant status. The motion passed unanimously.

Al and John will develop a covenant between Jamie and the Board and congregation.

Transforming Hearts online course on transgender inclusion

Gwen reported that USNH needs to re-certify our status as a Welcoming Congregation, which has expired. One way to do this is for members and staff to take a six-session online course entitled *Trans Inclusion in Congregations*, developed by the [Transforming Hearts Collective](#).

Jamie has registered the congregation - any congregant or staff member can take the course. Maggie Goodwin is the point person for the Welcoming Congregation re-certification process. The congregational license is \$500. Various committees have committed funds towards the cost. Gwen requested \$75 from the Board. Board approval for expenditure of this amount is not required, but the Board is unanimously supportive.

John noted that there will be a lot of side benefits to this course, educating us about welcoming people who are, in any way, different from the majority.

Board Photo

We paused to take a group photo of the Board for the USNH website.

Recommendations on the 2nd Board meeting

The volunteers from the Board Retreat (Becky, Bernice, Craig, and Pat) reported on their discussion, recommending cancellation of the September 18th and December 18th meetings. The group recommends that the November 20th meeting be devoted to an intergenerational Listening Circle about how we can be more receptive to people of different age groups so that all can be more fully engaged in the life of the congregation.

Craig Machado left the meeting.

5. Consent agenda

With no corrections or additions, the minutes from the 8/8/10 Board meeting and the special Board meeting at the 9/7/19 Board Retreat were accepted.

6. Thank you's - Jeanette will thank Lisa Anderson and Carol Cheney for their support of the Board Retreat.

7. Adjournment - Bernice moved and Pat seconded to adjourn; passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:34.

September 2019

Board Report from Interim Minister, John Marsh

Congratulations to you on your tower building activity with Spaghetti, tape and Marshmallow.

To learn more about this exercise see: Ted Talk by Tom Wojek

https://www.ted.com/talks/tom_wujec_build_a_tower?language=en

Or visit: <https://dschool.stanford.edu/resources/spaghetti-marshmallow-challenge>

Nourishing and Supporting Our Community

The Board's priority for "celebrating, embracing, nourishing and supporting our community" was discussed at our staff retreat on September 10. I have also discussed it with other individuals and it will be an important topic when I meet with the Membership Team for the first time next Thursday night, September 19.

What I am hearing thus far is an openness to sponsoring new events (such as a Thanksgiving Dinner). There is also interest in bringing fresh energy to ongoing events. This includes evaluating whether to continue them, and considering how to make them (and our Congregation as a whole) more welcoming to people of diverse backgrounds. The fall learning opportunity on Trans issues and renewing our status as a "Welcoming Congregation" is part of this. I expect it will be part of the "Beyond Categorical Thinking" workshop tentatively scheduled for Nov. 9 and there is interest in seeing what other opportunities there might be to use UUA created materials for welcoming new people.

The Unitarian Society of New Haven

Kitchen Information, September 2019

2017-2019

Construction of the USNH kitchen was completed in September 2019. A two-year process of needs assessment, planning and design, fund-raising, and the demolition of a fifty-year old kitchen-pantry area preceded the creation of a completely new kitchen in the summer of 2019.

June-September 2019

- . Old kitchen cupboard contents and five freestanding cupboards were triaged to: storage in the Social Hall and outdoor shed; Tag Sale in June; discard.
- . The contracted builder, Litchfield Builders of Hamden, began work in late June.
- . Asbestos remediation was completed.
- A partial wall dividing the old kitchen and pantry area was removed.
- A lockable sexton's closet was created from a previous sexton storage space in the old kitchen, and now opens only to the Social Hall.
- . The cinderblock wall between kitchen and Social Hall was modified to relocate and expand the pass-through window.
- . A manual pull-down shutter was installed to close the pass-through window.
- . The Social Hall doorway was relocated and a new double swinging door was installed.
- . The kitchen drain vent was modified.
- . One stainless steel double sink and one stainless steel hand-washing sink, and new brushed nickel faucets were installed.
- . A new electrical system was installed; the panel box was relocated to the lobby to maintain kitchen counter space.
- . The time-switch controlling the two outdoor overhead entryway lights was moved from the kitchen cabinet to the Social Hall wall.
- . Electrical outlets were installed to support multiple major appliances and countertop appliances.
- . A dropped ceiling with panels and LED lighting was installed.
- . Under-cabinet LED lighting was installed
- . Continuous Armstrong Excelon vinyl tile was installed throughout the area.
- . Support structure and dry wall was installed in the former pantry wall area to accommodate cupboard installation.
- . The space under the counter at the back of the pantry is designed for rolling utility carts, laundry bin and large recycling and trash bins.
- . Countertops proximal to ovens and cooktop, and cooktop-area backsplash are quartz for heat and stain resistance.
- . Other counter areas are laminate.

- . The kitchen walls were painted prior to cabinet installation
- . The Social Hall and lobby hall walls affected by the work were completely repainted.
- . NO form of tape should be used on any kitchen surface - cupboards, counters, walls or appliances. Permanent damage can be done.
- . Bulletin/white boards, TBD, will be mounted in the kitchen for postings.

. KraftMaid cupboards were supplied and installed by the USNH recommended subcontractor, Kitchen Advantage of North Haven.

- * The exterior surface is Thermafoil to resist chipping and scratching. The style is simple for ease in cleaning. Each cabinet and drawer will have an affixed label holder identifying its contents.

Appliances

Most appliances are residential models and were purchased by the Kitchen Project Committee (KPC) from Art's Television and Appliance in North Haven.

. Double wall ovens, cooktop, and countertop microwave are GE Profile series. The ovens will accommodate multiple baking and cooking items, caterer trays and large pizzas.

. A Zephyr adjustable-speed vent to the outside was installed over the cooktop.

. Refrigerator is a Whirlpool French door refrigerator with bottom freezer. The shelves and cooler drawer will accommodate four sheet cake size/caterer trays. The door shelves will accommodate gallon jugs.

The ice cube maker is not operational because of high-risk breakability and high-cost replacement. There is a freezer bin for bags of ice/ice cube trays.

. There is a free-standing self-defrosting Danby freezer in the back of the kitchen intended only for specific programmatic storage. Programs currently identified include Columbus House, Abraham's Tent in period prior to our hosting, Pastoral Care meals, Membership BBQ provisions in season.

The Champion commercial dish washer was purchased from Warehouse Store Fixture Co, in Waterbury.

. All appliances were installed by the builder

Relevant excerpts of Customer Instructions for use and care of each appliance have been provided in a Kitchen Notebook for reference.

Appreciation

The initiative for the new kitchen was proposed by the Management Team in the winter of 2017-18. Members who volunteered to be part of the "Kitchen Project Task Force" represented a range of relevant expertise and experience.

TF members have been Linda Barrett, Anthony Clark, Pam Niles, Becky Sandmann, Greg Seaman, Lois Smith, David Stagg, and Paul Trotta. Lois volunteered to coordinate the Task Force efforts, and Greg volunteered his professional experience to become Project Manager.

The new kitchen has been completed within the projected eight-week schedule and the expenses have been within the contracted budget.

USNH member and professional fund-raiser, Carol Cheney, provided early and continuing strategic and practical fund-raising expertise (pro bono) from the earliest days of the initiative. Her strong belief in the project was a major factor in the success of our fund-raising. Forty-one pledges for \$104,000 were received; 97% has been collected. The remainder is being paid as scheduled.

Subsequent individual donations have totaled \$5,000. \$4,000 was raised in fundraising events, including the "Kitchen Promise" breakfast coordinated by Carol and the Sunday Morning Team, and a wine-tasting offered by Nina Benin and Greg Berg. Liz Appel and Carol applied for and were awarded a \$3,000 grant by the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven. The difference between funds raised and actual expenses will come from funds to be designated by the Board.

USNH member and architect David Thompson joined the Project early, and provided uncounted hours of pro bono consultation. His experience with building contractors and subcontractors was invaluable. He and his assistant, Nathan Pudlin, listened to the KP group and its needs' assessment and ideas. They prepared a series of design drafts over many months to facilitate a shared understanding of objectives and creative ways to achieve them.

Susan Godshall provided additional legal expertise with contracts which was comprehensive, responsive and timely.

The Management Team, with David Stagg's representation on the KP, and the Board of Trustees, initially with Peggy Myer's presidency, continuing with Al Bosch's, maintained communication and oversight of the project for three years. USNH leadership offered unflagging organizational and moral support with a sense of accountability to the Congregation, and a mission-oriented focus.

gs/lvs 9/8/19

(over)

A Reflection on the Old and New USNH Kitchens

On transitions

When a minister leaves a congregation, there's a denominational protocol to help members identify their responses to that event. The process addresses individual and collective experience, goals and hopes, and is intended to prepare us for the next stages of ministerial-congregational engagement.

When a Naval vessel ship will no longer be used, it's usually decommissioned. It may be obsolete or even unsafe, but is retired with honor. There may be a ceremony, with recognition of its proud service.

We have essentially decommissioned our old kitchen after its fifty years of service. That's happened after lengthy evaluation and discussion, but without ceremony. Our new kitchen is now a reality. So how do we now honor the one that is gone? and feel "at home" in the new one?

A kitchen represents many things that can only be "installed" by the people who use it- a place of service to the community, a place to share personal joy, or worry. or grief, shared in confidence as you work. Our old kitchen echoed with the happiness of celebrations, and was part of the comfort of memorial services. It supported traditions with holiday foods, and relationships with potlucks and simple enjoyment after plays and musical events. It was often a focal point in our effort to live our philosophy about food, energy, the environment. And it was a source of coffee on Sunday morning.

Honor the memories of that previous kitchen. Enjoy it, and volunteer to work with others there. We'll be making new memories and meaning together, and we'll begin the "installation" of spirit and purpose in this new space.

LVS 9/8/19

(over)

MT monitoring of Policy Governance Section 1.8

(MT responses in red)

1.8 Communication and Support to the Board

The Management Team shall not permit the Board to be uninformed, misinformed, or unsupported in its work.

Accordingly, the Management Team may not:

- a. Fail to inform the Board in a timely manner of relevant trends, public policy initiatives, public events of the organization, material external and internal changes.

There have been no trends, initiatives, public events or changes of the type described here.

- b. Fail to report to the Board, in a timely manner any significant information it requires including anticipated media coverage, threatened or impending legal issues, claims, or lawsuits.

There have been no incidents of the type described here

- c. Fail to submit the monitoring data required by the Board policy "3.5 Monitoring Management Team Performance" in a timely, accurate, and understandable fashion, and which includes the Management Team's interpretations of the policy.

MT has provided reports as required by 3.5.2 a) according to the schedule determined by the Board. These reports have included statements confirming compliance or non-compliance in accordance with MT interpretations previously determined or with proposed amendments.

- d. Fail to advise the Board if, in the Management Team's opinion, the Board is not in compliance with its own policies on Governance Process and Board-Management Team Delegation.

There has been no occasion where MT has formed any such opinion

- e. Fail to report in a timely manner, any actual or anticipated noncompliance with any Ends or Executive Limitations policies of the Board regardless of the Board's monitoring schedule.

MT has not observed any such actual or anticipated noncompliance

- f. Fail to recommend changes in Board policies, when the need becomes known to them.

MT has made proposals to change the interpretation of several policies in the 1.1 to 1.10 sections in the past year. These have been incorporated into the policy governance handbook

- g. Fail to gather and consider as many staff and external points of view, issues, and options as needed, for fully informed Board choices.

MT has consistently sought the opinion of staff, committee members and others before bringing recommendations to the Board. MT has attended monthly Board meetings with the intention of keeping the Board informed of any matters requiring Board attention

- h. Fail to provide a mechanism for official Board, officer, or committee communications.

MT has worked closely with our congregational administrator to facilitate all forms of communication on behalf of the Board

- i. Fail to deal with the Board as a whole except when (a) fulfilling individual requests for information or (b) responding to officers or committees duly charged by the Board.

MT dealings with the Board have taken place mostly at Board meetings and retreats. Some matters have been discussed beforehand with the Board president before being brought to a Board meeting.

- j. Fail to limit public statements about the official position of the congregation or Board on controversial social, political, and/or congregational issues to what the congregation or Board has formally and explicitly adopted as positions of record. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to infringe upon the fundamental principle of freedom of the pulpit.

MT has not made public statements about matters described in this section

Approved by the Board: March 12, 2015

We report compliance with sections a. through j. above

We note that there are no MT interpretations in section 1.8 and suggest including “MT interpretation - No interpretation necessary” for consistency with other sections.

MT 9/12/2019

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MT Interpretation:
No interpretation required

- b. Fail to report to the Board, in a timely manner any significant information it requires including anticipated media coverage, threatened or impending legal issues, claims, or lawsuits.

MT Interpretation:
No interpretation required

- c. Fail to submit the monitoring data required by the Board policy "3.5 Monitoring Management Team Performance" in a timely, accurate, and understandable fashion, and which includes the Management Team's interpretations of the policy.

MT Interpretation:
No interpretation required

- d. Fail to advise the Board if, in the Management Team's opinion, the Board is not in compliance with its own policies on Governance Process and Board-Management Team Delegation.

MT Interpretation:
No interpretation required

- e. Fail to report in a timely manner, any actual or anticipated noncompliance with any Ends or Executive Limitations policies of the Board regardless of the Board's monitoring schedule.

MT Interpretation:
No interpretation required

- f. Fail to recommend changes in Board policies, when the need becomes known to them.

MT Interpretation:
No interpretation required

- g. Fail to gather and consider as many staff and external points of view, issues, and options as needed, for fully informed Board choices.

MT Interpretation:
No interpretation required

- h. Fail to provide a mechanism for official Board, officer, or committee communications.

MT Interpretation:
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MT Interpretation:
No interpretation required

- j. Fail to limit public statements about the official position of the congregation or Board on controversial social, political, and/or congregational issues to what the congregation or Board has formally and explicitly adopted as positions of record. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to infringe upon the fundamental principle of freedom of the pulpit.

MT Interpretation:
No interpretation required

Approved by the Board: March 12, 2015

MT Interpretation Approved by the Board: September 12, 2019