

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees
November 14, 2019

Accepted December 12, 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; Rev. John Marsh (ex-officio)

Board Members Absent: Pat Trotta

Others Present: Gwen Heuss-Severance and David Stagg (MT)

1. Gather

Al called the meeting to order at 6:33.

Craig read the poem *America the Beautiful Again*, by Richard Blanco. A life event and guided check-in followed: following Blanco, What do we know how to sing to as a board, as members of USNH?. The Board read the Board Covenant. Bernice is scheduled for the chalice lighting and guided check-in for December

2. There were no changes to the agenda

3. Assess the Past

Board Reps after Sunday Services: A member of the MT suggested that MT members be included in the rotation for after Sunday services. The Board agreed with this proposal. Becky will send slightly revised language to the Worship Committee.

Board/MT Reps for December are:

December 1	Jeanette Faber (Board)
December 8	Craig Machado (Board)
December 15	David Stagg (Management Team)
December 22	Becky Friedkin (Board)
December 29	Peggy Myers (Board)

Financial Reports: Linda walked us through the FY20 Q1 report.

Budget Update: David reported that when the FY20 budget was developed there was about a \$25,000 deficit, to be made up from several funds and reserves. Due primarily to some changes in staff health insurance enrollment, we now anticipate a deficit of about \$40,000. This is manageable this year but could exhaust our cash reserves. The Finance and Stewardship Committees are working with the MT to address the issue for this year and next.

4. Create the Future & Learning

Congregational Meeting on 11/17/2019:

Al reviewed the agenda.

David will review the FY19 budget, which resulted in a \$6,000+ deficit, the status of the FY20 budget, and the projected deficit discussed above. Based on preliminary budgeting for FY21, we will need pledges of about \$500,000; our FY20 pledges are about \$450,000. The MT feels strongly that we need to present a balanced budget for FY21 in order to attract a strong ministerial candidate.

Gwen – MT has SOPs, created over the last three years, standardized format. Is there a place in the congregational meeting to let people know these SOPs exist and let people know where they can find them? Agenda can be amended at the beginning of the meeting. Can also be communicated in the newsletter.

Second Board Meeting on December 18:

Al is calling a second meeting on December 18 at 6:30 to discuss the financial situation. Everyone who attends should read the Next Steps Weekend Report to the Stewardship Committee. Stewardship, Finance and MT are able to send representatives. David will invite Endowment and Legacies to attend as well.

Discussion included the following points:

We should take a lesson from the kitchen fundraising – people will give to concrete projects
Frame the request for additional contributions this year and pledge increases for FY21 as needed to enhance our ability to attract a strong minister

If everyone increased their pledge by 10% we would get to the level needed.

Strategic planning is needed, possibly followed by a capital campaign.

Reducing our mortgage debt now will have a strong ripple effect in the future.

Nov. 20 Listening Circle: Nancy shared plans for the Nov 20 Listening Circle about intergenerational communications and inclusion, to be led by the Covenantal Relations Committee (Nancy Apfel and Amanda Dettmer). Bernice, Amanda, and Nancy planned the evening. Amanda emailed a lot of newer and younger members and Nancy has personally invited younger members she sees in the social hall. Board members are invited to do the same. Jesse has publicized it widely. The time (6:30 – 7:45) was set to let people come after work but also leave in time to put children to bed. Childcare will be provided. Emily will stream on Facebook Live. Participants can see and hear and can send comments, which Emily will relay to the group.

7:48 John Marsh joined the meeting.

Board members are welcome to attend, but if the group is small, having the entire Board were to be present it could be overwhelming. Some Board members might want to participate remotely. Board members in the circle should think about what space they take up and contribute appropriately.

Confidentiality – what’s being said will not be personally identifiable but unattributed notes will be taken so we can provide a summary to the Board. Becky will take notes; Bernice will be the secondary note taker if we have two circles.

Emily reports that the process so far has been very uplifting and encouraging – the fact that long-term members are interested and want to hear from people is appreciated.

Minister’s report: John highlighted some items discussed by the MT, including the parking and the projected deficit, both of which overlap into board territory.

The Rabbi at Mishkan Israel is interested in potentially making the parking arrangement more formal and would like the two board presidents to meet.

Regarding the financial situation, John will write a note saying that the church has done very well this year and those who are able might give an extra gift at the holidays.

Gwen left the meeting at 8:07

Discussion:

There was some discussion of the focus group with the Ministerial Search Committee on October 16 and of the Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop.

5. Consent agenda:

There were no changes to the minutes from Board meeting of 10/10/2019; they are accepted

6. Announcements

Board members are encouraged to attend the CONECT Fall 2019 Delegates Assembly on Thursday, November 21 at 7 pm. Carpooling from USNH will be available.

7. Adjournment

MOTION: Craig moved and Linda seconded that we adjourn; motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Submitted by Becky Friedkin

Attachments:

FY20 Q1 Financial Report

November 17 Congregational Meeting Agenda

November 20 Listening Circle handout

Minister’s report

FY20 Q1 Financial Report

USNH 1st Quarter Report Compared with Annual Budget, 2019 -- 2020

	2019-20 budget	1st quarter 9/30/2019 Actual	Running Total	% of Budget	Notes
INCOME					
Pledges	458,000.00	128,000.27	128,000.27	27.95%	
Other Congregational Income	24,000.00	5,173.61	5,173.61	21.56%	
Rentals	67,216.00	17,484.33	17,484.33	26.01%	
RE Tuition Income	500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Fundraising Income	18,500.00	1,636.76	1,636.76	8.85%	
Interest income	5,200.00	1,367.47	1,367.47	26.30%	
Restricted Funds released	15207.66	15,208.17	15,208.17	100.00%	
Misc. Gain/Loss		101.88	101.88		
Endowment Contribution	30,615.66	9,428.73	9,428.73	30.80%	
Total Income	619,239.32	178,401.22	178,401.22	28.81%	
EXPENSES					
Facility	63,200.00	10,850.98	10,850.00	17.17%	
Communication, Media					
Office Supplies, wi-fi, cable service, etc.	17,500.00	4,893.59	4,893.59	27.96%	
Committee Support/Member Services					
All committees, lay ministry, Library/Archives, Stewardship, E&L, Small Groups	17,300.00	438.92	438.92	2.54%	
Denominational Affairs	17,800.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Financial affairs					
Mortgage	37,714.92	9,428.73	9,428.73	25.00%	
Insurance, Accountant, Bank fees, Paypal, CT sales tax, other	12,850.00	7,610.71	7,610.71	59.23%	Insurance paid in full.
Personnel					
Salaries (Minister, DLRE, Administrator, Directors of Music, Associate Director of Music), Hourly employees, benefits, etc.	424,628.98	94,515.11	94,515.11	22.26%	

FY20 Q1 Financial Report

USNH 1st Quarter Report Compared with Annual Budget, 2019 -- 2020

	2019-20 budget	1st quarter 9/30/2019 Actual	Running Total	% of Budget	Notes
Trustees Research and Development	1,500.00	333.80	333.80	22.25%	
Management Team Contingency Fund	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Music	1,800.00	495.99	495.99	27.56%	
Religious Education	6,800.00	860.73	860.73	12.66%	
Social Justice: \$15,000.00		1,562.54	1,562.54	10.42%	
CONNECT:\$7,000.00		0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Total Social Justice	22,000.00				
Worship (Speakers, supplies, flowers, other)	3,950.00	428.00	428.00	10.84%	
Capital Fund Contribution	1,194.62	1,194.62	1,194.62	100.00%	
Total Expenses	629,238.52	132,613.72	132,613.72	21.08%	

November 17 Congregational Meeting Agenda

Unitarian Society of New Haven

Fall Congregational Meeting

November 17, 2019

12 noon

Sanctuary

AGENDA

- 1) Call to order - establish quorum for minutes approval vote.
- 2) Invocation - Rev. Marsh
- 3) Reading of Covenant – John Kennedy, Covenantal Relations
- 4) Approval of minutes from Congregational meeting – 6/2/19
(elections and budget approval)
- 5) Vote on revisions to USNH by-laws re: Youth Trustee
- 6) Report from Management Team
 - a. Council of Chairs Report - Gwen Heuss-Severance, MT
 - b. Budget update - David Stagg, MT
 - c. Capital Budget update – Jason Kyle (Building and Grounds)
- 7) Stewardship – Sally Connolly, Dan Gelperin
- 8) Motion to Adjourn

Intergenerational Listening Circle Handout

Intergenerational Listening Circle November 20th, 2019

WELCOME AND OPENING WORDS

We have come into this space of listening
where our hearts and minds can be opened to the new.
We have come into this space of honesty
where we set aside our fears and freely name our truths.
We have come into this space of love
where we know that all lives are significant.
We have come into this space of reflection
where we can share our hopes and intentions.
And hear one another into wholeness. (adapted from Libbie D. Stoddard)

Overview:

We promise to listen deeply to one another.
Our talking piece will allow us to recognize who is speaking and give each person a chance to speak their truths.
Option to pass: If you do not wish to speak when the piece comes to you, you can pass it on. For the first questions we will pass the talking piece around the Circle.
We promise to be aware of sharing the time to speak; we will say what we need to and then let others say their thoughts.
Confidentiality of each participant will be respected by all of us in this listening Circle.

READING:

Community, however important to full human life, is not easy. Living with others evokes all kinds of difficulties. When we get close enough to one another to offer love and support in intimate ways, our old family patterns, our fears, our needs, our limitations show up as well. They're all right there in front of our nose.... If we go to spiritual community in search of perfect peace, we will inevitably meet failure. But if we understand community as a place to mature our practice of steadiness, patience, and compassion, to become conscious together with others, then we have the fertile soil for awakening." Jack Kornfield

QUESTIONS:

What experiences at USNH have led you to feel a sense of belonging here?

In what ways have your ideas, perspectives, or contributions been lifted up or dismissed at USNH?

Have there been times when you felt undervalued because of your age or because you are newer to UNSH?

(Popcorn style) What could we do to promote authentic intergenerational connections here at USNH?

(Popcorn style) What do you need in order to feel like a valued member of this community?

Minister's Report

Interim Minister's Report to the Board

November 14, 2019

A number of people have offered to host other church members for Thanksgiving, including one new member, Manya Lisse, whose invitation is an effusive literary treasure. It includes: "There is no end time - come when your shift gets out, you wake up, or you get free from other obligations. If you are coming from far away or you really like my fish-house punch feel free to sleep over. We'll have pie for breakfast."

The Management Team and I have been in communication with Congregation Mishkan Israel about either making more formal, or simply renewing the informal agreement invitation to use each other's parking lots in times of need. We are also acknowledging that it has been mostly one sided—we are invited to park up to 40 cars on their lot once a week. They are invited to park on our lot for the Jewish high holy days (twice a year). Next month's report should have more to say.

The Management team is planning to build a gravel walkway between their parking lot and our side entrance near the sanctuary.

The management team has taken note that we have a projected deficit for this year that could be as high as \$40,000. This is attributed to 1) the deaths of some long time generous pledgers, 2) overall increased operating costs, 3) some one-time costs involved in hiring an interim minister and preparing to call long term parish minister.

David Stagg will talk about the deficit at the upcoming Congregational Meeting. I, John Marsh, will write a letter with a special one-time appeal for the December newsletter. There are plans afoot for some fundraising programs this spring, and fun and energetic stewardship campaign.

The aim going forward is to keep things as transparent as possible and as positive as possible. The positive attitude seems justified in that 1) This is a relatively new problem 2) Many people in the Congregation will be learning of it for the first time and 3) A positive campaign is more likely to produce positive results.

On January 3rd our Congregation will host a memorial service for the pioneering sociologist and futurist, Wendell Bell. Bell, as chair of Yale's Dept. of Sociology, helped to found Yale's program of African American Studies. Wendell and his wife, Laura-Lee Bell, were never members of the Unitarian Society of New Haven, but have been visitors and have friends in the Congregation. Their choice to hold the memorial service here was based partly on this and partly because we, unlike Yale's Batell Chapel, have ample parking.

On another note: my soon to be 90 year old father was in a car accident this week. He was not injured, but the car was totaled and there is some question as to whether he will be able to continue driving. He lives in the area of Boston, MA and I will be visiting him next Monday and Tuesday.