

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

Accepted January 9, 2020

**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, Emily McCave, Pat Trotta; Rev. John Marsh (ex-officio)

**Board Members Absent:** Bernice Marie-Daly

**Others Present:** David Stagg (Management Team)

### 1. Gather

Al called the meeting to order at 6:33.

The Board read the Board Covenant. David lit the chalice and Peggy, on behalf of Bernice, read Blessed Are You Who Bear the Light, from Jan Richardson's *Circle of Grace*. We followed with a life events check in.

Nancy is scheduled for the chalice lighting and check-in question for January 9, 2020.

### 2. There were no changes to the agenda

### 3. Assess the Past

**Monitoring of Policies:** Policy 1.10 Safety

Monitoring: The value of a camera for the front door seems to be of minimal value, as the current system is working well. There are concerns about the front door not closing fully and/or people intentionally leaving it ajar.

Pat Trotta and Linda Mehta joined the meeting at 7:00

Regarding the proposed interpretation, we amended the first paragraph to end "our goal of offering radical hospitality."

**MOTION:** Linda moved and Craig seconded to accept the Interpretation of Policy 1.10 – Safety, as amended. Passed unanimously.

**Minister's Report:** John reported that hospitality for Thanksgiving was successful, with several households offering hospitality and at least a dozen, possibly more, USNHers accepting.

John considers the decluttering of the Coat Room to be a way of offering hospitality and making the space welcoming to newcomers. He is discussing with staff and the MT.

The MT has been talking about new/more chairs for the Social Hall. We are close to an understanding that we will not get ~200 new chairs, but perhaps 84, which will fit on the rack that has been

purchased. The proposal was that the rack of chairs would go in the coat room, which would add to the cluttering issue. Other spaces are being explored, should the chairs be purchased.

As an experiment, we are going to try to put only four tables and add four small standing tables in the Social Hall for social hour to make it more welcoming.

A Mishkan Israel staff member has concerns that USNH members parking on Sunday sometimes drive too fast entering and exiting the parking lot. Jamie Ross has similar concerns about our own parking lot, particularly with respect to the child care parents.

Three people have donated a total of \$2,000, so far, in response to John's Santa Claus appeal.

**USNH FY20 Budget Update:** David reported that four months of financial data are available and most items are on track, at about 33% of the budget, as expected.

The remainder of the Emerson Fund has been transferred to the operating budget. Insurance is paid early in the year. Workers Compensation insurance payment was made in October. CONECT dues are at 56%.

#### **4. Create the Future & Learning**

##### **Stewardship Discussion on 12/18 at 6:30 in the Children's Chapel**

Representatives from the Management Team, Stewardship, Endowment, Finance, and John Marsh are expected to attend, in addition to as many Board members as can attend. Dan Gelperin, co-chair of Stewardship, will be the facilitator of the meeting. We would like the Board to support the Stewardship campaign as fully as possible.

Craig Machado left the meeting at 7:29

Linda Mehta left the meeting at 7:32

##### **Board/MT Reps for January are:**

January 5 Jeannette Faber

January 12 Linda Mehta

January 19 Al Bosch

January 26 Emily McCave

Pat Trotta took December 22 from Becky Friedkin

**Brief update on the MSC**, which is on track.

**Listening Circle Follow up** – we will talk about this on January 15. In advance of that meeting, please consider the following:

- What comments are worthy of follow-up and if so, what are ideas for implementation?
- Do we need to gather more information?
- How should we share the results and our actions with the congregation?

**5. Consent agenda:** There were no changes to the minutes of the 11/14/19 Board meeting or of the 11/17/19 Congregational Meeting; they are accepted.

**6. Thank yous**

Lisa Anderson, for assistance with the by-laws revision.

Jesse Greist and the CYRE Committee, for collaboration with the by-laws revision.

**7. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** Peggy moved to adjourn; Nancy seconded; motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50.

Submitted by Becky Friedkin

Attachments:

- Policy 1.10 – Safety, report from the Management Team
- Minister’s report

## **Monitoring of Policy 1.10; Safety**

Rev John Marsh, Gwen Heuss-Severance, David Stagg and Jeremy Hill

### **1.10 Safety**

#### **The Management Team shall not fail:**

- a. To ensure that all appropriate activities and actions are performed to ensure that staff, visitors, and congregants are provided with a safe environment.
- b. To assess and report to the Board as appropriate regarding safety issues in order to give the Board information that should be addressed in the budget for the next year.

***Approved by the Board: March 12, 2015***

#### **MT Interpretation:**

We assume that a safe environment includes protection from threats such as fire and burglary as well as protection from acts of terror. We also assume our responsibility extends to maintaining and improving aspects of personal safety such as freedom from harassment and any situation that would diminish our goal of offering radical hospitality.

We will work with our B&G Committee on safety aspects of our buildings and our grounds and with all staff, committees and the congregation on all aspects of personal safety.

***Submitted for approval: December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019***

#### **MT Report:**

There were three additional physical changes made early in the year in consultation with B&G; a) a lock and deadbolt was installed for the Children's Chapel door b) Glass panels were installed in the main office doors, the Minister's office and the DLRE office and c) one way film was installed on the lobby sanctuary doors.

The Emergency Management Procedures have been revised by our DLRE. The MT is editing these procedures into our standard operating procedure format for inclusion in the documentation in the office and on our web site.

We continue to evaluate a system for emergency broadcasting throughout the building. The concrete masonry block construction of our building makes running wires to every room very difficult and expensive. We are hoping that wireless technology will soon be an industry approved standard. We also continue to evaluate the installation of a camera at our front door to improve both safety and convenience.

We report compliance with section 1.10

MT December 2019

Interim Minister's Report to the Board, December 12, 2019

### Hospitality

Manya Lisse, one of our newer members, offered a broad invitation to Thanksgiving at her home, in response to our nudging through the Membership Team. She is a doctor and invited not only members and friends from our Congregation, but also interns at the hospital where she works. I am told that she had over 60 guests (around 15 from our Congregation) coming and going and a good time was had by all. I believe there were other families in the Congregation that welcomed one or two guests, but I do not have a report on this.

I consider the decluttering of the coatroom to also be a matter of extending hospitality, and am in conversation with the staff and Management team about that and also the desire for more folding chairs and a more accessible Social Hall. We will try an experiment in January.

Al Bosch and I had a meeting with the Board President and Congregational Manager of Congregation Mishkan Israel about our parking lot agreements. They are interested in making that arrangement more formal. They are concerned about issues of liability and also traffic calming. When speaking with our Administrator (Jamie), I learned that she considers traffic calming to be an issue for our lot as well. She reports she has seen a number of near accidents narrowly averted—the main problem being parents of day care students. The solution being perhaps a combination of signage and possible traffic calming humps or bumps (humps are the smaller ones).

We are consulting with our insurance to see what a rider that would cover our members who park in the Mishkan Israel lot would cost.

The plan to build a gravel walkway between their parking lot and our side entrance near the sanctuary is temporarily on hold.

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.

I wrote an appeal in the December newsletter, and so far three people have donated a total of \$2,000. In response. We will be meeting on December 19 and look forward to a fun and energetic stewardship campaign in March.

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.

I have some personal information to share with the Board at the meeting.

John Marsh, Interim Minister