

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees
July 12, 2018

Approved August 9, 2018

Board Members Present: Al Bosch, Dan Gelperin, Megan Lloyd Joiner, Craig Machado, Linda Mehta, Pamela Miller, Peggy Myers, Bobbi Pace, Pat Trotta,

Board Member Absent: Jeannette Faber, Dan Wade

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

Gather:

P. Myers called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. D. Stagg lit the chalice and P. Miller read *Community Means Strength* by Starhawk. The covenant was read. This was followed by a life event check in and answering the question, "What hopeful thing have you seen, heard about, or experienced recently?"

Sacred Spaces International

V. Avery presented a proposal that USNH join Sacred Spaces International. Supporting material has been distributed to board members. She quoted Mircea Eliade, "The Experience of Sacred Space makes possible the founding of the world: where the sacred Manifests itself in space, the real unveils itself, the world comes into existence." What might we found together after experiencing each other's sacred spaces?

The program is called Sharing Sacred Spaces. Members visit one worship space each month. There is a design to each program. It is very structured. It starts with an architectural religious tour. Some of the congregations in New Haven are in houses. Others are more like Congregation Mishkan Israel. How does the space enhance the religious experience? The program goes on to discuss the history of the space. There may be a shared activity. Each would last 2 – 3 hours. Food is typically included.

The length of the program will depend on the number of congregations that join. The program would go on for a few years and become less structured over time. The goal would be to deepen the relationship and understanding over time. In Chicago the group signed a document stating that they would support each other. The third year focused on strategizing an inter-religious civic action. The program will run in New Haven and Greenwich. New Haven has a local steering committee. The first person she contacted was Paul Bass. Rev. Bonita Grubbs, Rabbi Brockman, and others were also contacted. Positive responses have come in from five congregations. Two others are probably going to join. Major transitions and lack of band width are the typical reasons for not joining this program.

How many people should a congregation expect to have involved? Two people would be on a planning committee. The committee would meet between now and early September. A second committee would be needed to host the meeting. The planning committee would continue to meet monthly.

How many people from each congregation would go to the visits? In Chicago, there were 60 – 80 people at each event. It does not normally involve worship. It becomes a spiritual journey for those who attend.

The financial commitment would be about \$500 per year. The cost will vary depending on the food served. The other cost will be preparing the brochure for the host visit.

What is the real date for a decision? V. Avery needs an answer by the end of the month. Some students from her Divinity School class will help with the program.

What civic action would be anticipated? In Chicago, work was done on anti-violence and mental health.

V. Avery left the meeting at 7:18 pm.

We will discuss this at the next meeting and decide how to respond then.

Assess the Past (Monitoring) part I:

Minister's report

The minister's report is attached at the end of the minutes.

J. Greist has been accepted in the UUA RE Credentialing Program. He was invited to apply for credentialed and master's level at the same time, with the hope of finishing in 2021. His professional expenses budget will help with the cost of the program.

How are we to respond to the issue with a family being asked to leave the service? We don't have a standard response. How do we make it explicit that families with babies are welcome? We have no information on who requested the family to step out of the sanctuary.

Monitoring of policies

Monitoring of policies 1.1, 1.8, and 1.10. Update on policy 1.4.

The MT's report on policies 1.1, 1.8, and 1.10 is attached at the end of the minutes.

MOTION – D. Gelperin, to have the Management Team policy 1.4a statement be added as an interpretation in the policy book; **SECONDED – B. Pace**;
PASSED unanimously, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions

Are board members covered by professional liability insurance? The Society's insurance provides needed coverage.

Create the Future & Learning:

Policy Governance

B. Pace and D. Gelperin gave an overview of Policy Governance. A move to Policy Governance was considered in 2005. The actual change was made several years later. Policy governance defines roles, responsibilities, authority, and accountability. The board's responsibility is to figure out where the congregation is supposed to go. It communicates this to the Management Team to set goals. The Management Team acts as an executive committee. We can then measure our success in achieving those goals. M. Joiner is ex-officio member of the board, a member of the Management Team, and is chief of staff. The senior MT member sets agendas, the next senior member takes notes at the MT meetings. The MT is accountable to the Board. Policies define what can't be done. Anything else is allowed. It is expected that mistakes will be made, which is why monitoring takes place. We are evolving committees' accountability to the Management Team. We live with some uncertainty and collaboration. The congregation needs to be brought along with the board and management team.

In Nov. 2013, D. Jones wrote a FAQ policy governance. It can be found on the board site.

It has been a challenge to establish priorities for the congregation. What does the congregation want to be? Can we ask the congregation to explain the "Why"?

Who's interested in joining a little group addressing how Board Chats should be done in Sept.?

B.Pace and D. Gelperin will consider it. A. Bosch will participate. Any others should contact P. Myers if they are interested.

Consent Agenda:

MOTION – P. Myers, to approve the consent agenda; **SECONDED – D. Gelperin**;
PASSED unanimously, 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions

Announcements:

Please let all members know if you are not able to attend a board meeting. This is to improve accountability to each other.

Thank you's:

There are no thank you suggestions at this time.

Adjournment:

MOTION – P. Myers, to adjourn; **SECONDED – C. Machado**;
PASSED unanimously, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions
The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Attachments:

Minister's Report
MT Monitoring Policy 1.4 Compensation and Benefits
MT Monitoring Policy 1.1, 1.8, and 1.10

Minister's Report
July 12, 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)*

By the end of the congregational year, I got the sense that the congregation as well as staff were ready for the relative quiet and calm that comes in the summer months. Staff are in the office throughout the summer. Vacation and personal time is being taken as well as time for professional development and study leave.

Summer services are underway with guest ministers and lay leaders alternating each week.

I heard one report from a family with a small child who were asked by someone sitting near them to leave the sanctuary when the baby got fussy. We have work to do on our welcoming of young families.

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

None to report at this time

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

- Preparing for next year's services including a number of sermon series and the Soul Matters themes

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

- I will be away on vacation July 22-25
- I will be in town on vacation July 30-Aug 1
- I will be on Study Leave August 2-10

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

Counseling and Pastoral Care

I have a number of pastoral meeting scheduled and hope to also meet with members in area retirement and nursing homes this summer.

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.)*

My focus this summer is staff reviews and setting priorities for 2018-2019

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.)*

I am working with the Anti-Racism Team to hopefully bring Beloved Conversations (<http://www.meadville.edu/fahs-collaborative/fahs-curriculum-catalogue/beloved-conversations/>) to USNH in 2019

I am working with staff and members to increase our welcome of Transgender and Gender Non Conforming people. We will be sending out a communication of some kind in the late summer/early fall.

Personal and Professional Growth

- GA and Ministry Days 2018 provided interesting opportunities for personal and professional growth

Teaching

- Nothing to report at this time

Worship

- Summer Sundays are offered by guest ministers and lay leaders
- I will preach the last two Sundays in August

Attendance

- 6/17 (multigenerational Flower Communion)147
- 6/24 (summer service) 94
- 7/1 (summer service) 101
- 7/8 (summer service) 125

Denominational Activities

- I attended Ministry Days and General Assembly June 18-24

Prophetic Outreach

- I continue to follow the Sanctuary Movement in CT as well as the Poor People's Campaign.

Respectfully Submitted by Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner

Monitoring of Policy 1.4 Compensation and Benefits

Submitted by the Management Team

Rev Megan Lloyd Joiner, David Stagg, Gwen Heuss-Severance and Jeremy Hill

1.4 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:

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

The management team includes changes to the minister's compensation, benefits, or allocated professional expenses only when staff-wide COLA or structural changes are recommended by the Personnel Committee as part of the new annual operating budget. When these changes are accepted by the Board we assume they replace the "previously established" numbers. With that assumption, we report compliance.

- b. *Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.*

The Management Team does not promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment. We report compliance

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

The Management Team is responsible for including compensation and benefit payments in the annual operating budget which projects sufficient income to make those payments. One of the reasons we haven't hired additional staff is that we will only do so when our predicted revenues can cover those costs. We report compliance.

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

The Management Team relies on the Personnel Committee for compensation and benefits advice. The committee has direct experience, is highly qualified and takes note of both UUA recommendations and general market conditions. We report compliance.

1.1 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 that fail to provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy.

The Management Team with the assistance of the Permanent Committee on Right Relations is in the final stages of preparing a "Disruptive Behavior Policy". This will be presented to the Board shortly. Given the complexity of this policy and the need to seek legal advice, this inevitably takes a considerable amount of time. We therefore think it appropriate to report non-compliance at this time.

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.*

We have 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 and are 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 have been no occasions 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.*

There have been no instances of the failures described in paragraphs f. through j. below.

- f. *Fail to recommend changes in Board policies, when the need becomes known to them.*
- g. *Fail to gather and consider as many staff and external points of view, issues, and options as needed, for fully informed Board choices.*
- h. *Fail to provide a mechanism for official Board, officer, or committee communications.*
- 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.*
- 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.*

For sections a. through j. above we report compliance.

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.*

We now keep the front door locked except when there is a service or a function that requires access to the building by multiple people who do not have a key. We are continuing to oversee revision of the lockdown procedures for the facility in the event of internal or external threats. We have a new Safety Task Force in the process of (a) reviewing physical enhancements to the building to increase safety (e.g. additional locks for internal doors and a PA system to announce security related announcements) and (b) developing a response plan and training for the congregation in the fall. This task force will make recommendations for MT to bring to the Board for approval.

We report compliance with this section.