

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees
June 11, 2020

Accepted July 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 Jeannette Faber, Craig Machado, Bernice Marie-Daly, Emily McCave, Pat Trotta

Absent: Rev. John Marsh, Interim Minister

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

1. Gather

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board met online via Zoom.

Al called the meeting to order at 6:36 pm.

The Board read the Board Covenant.

Craig lit the chalice and read "[Riddle](#)" from *The Tradition* by Jericho Brown, 2020 Pulitzer winner for poetry. We followed with a life events check in.

2. Changes to the agenda: There were no changes to the agenda.

3. Assess the Past

Monitoring of Policies

1.3 Treatment of Paid and Volunteer Staff

1.4 Compensation and Benefits

David walked through the two policies and the MT reports of compliance, which were accepted by the Board.

Stewardship Update

Becky provided detailed data on the Stewardship campaign, including the very successful Challenge Fund. In addition to the \$6,400 offered as a challenge, more than \$30,000 in new and increased pledges and one-time gifts were promised for FY21. Pledges of \$472,700 and one-time gifts of \$17,122 yield a total of almost \$490,000 for FY21.

4. Create the Future & Learning

Receiving a new minister, Creating backup for critical personnel

Receiving a new minister was tabled until July, so that new Board members can be involved in the discussion.

Please review the document on contingency plans and send any suggested additions to Becky and, if you wish, the entire Board.

Management Team Membership

David asked the Board to approve the appointment of Jean Rosenthal to the MT. Jean is willing.

MOTION: Becky moved to approve the addition of Jean Rosenthal to the Management Team and Linda seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee to Study Re-Opening the Building

Gwen reported that the MT created a committee on Building Reopening Assessment Group (BRAG) has been established to identify the steps needed before re-opening the building for worship and meetings. The group has met twice and reviewed information from the State of CT, the CDC, and the UUA. They have decided that it is neither feasible nor wise to reopen our building for any activities beyond the work of the Daycare, the sexton, and occasional single-person visits to conduct the work of the congregation. Gwen noted that Mishkan Israel has already decided not to open at all until at least fall 2021; they are committed to not opening until they can open safely for all of their members.

The e-blast to the congregation about this decision, sent on June 12, is attached.

BRAG comprises the Management Team, Nancy Apfel and Rich Stockton from the Board, Jesse Greist and Jamie Ross from the staff, and Dr. Manya Lisse as an advisor.

Committee to Study our use of Electronic Media

David reported that there is a small group which has agreed to look at the safety, privacy, and security issues involved in online services. Rich Genzano will chair. Other members are Robb Camm, PJ Deak, Leigh Powers, and Jesse Greist. The working assumption is that online services will continue for most or all of the FY21 congregational year. One suggestion has been to get a waiver from everyone who appears in the online services, acknowledging that the recordings will be widely available. A second recommendation is that the YouTube recordings be unlisted so that they don't appear in web searches.

The Board went into Executive Session, with the Management Team, to discuss Rev. Marsh's extended medical leave.

6/17 Meeting – Social/Welcoming of New Board Members

Nancy reported that the FY20 and incoming Board members will meet via Zoom on Wednesday, June 17 at 6:30. She and Emily worked on the plans. We will share dinner together via Zoom. Nancy sent out an email invitation – please RSVP to Emily, also sharing one activity you have done consistently while staying at home.

5. Consent agenda

There were no changes to the minutes of the April 9 and May 14 Board meetings, and a minor change to the minutes of the May 31 Congregational Meeting. They are accepted as amended.

6. Adjournment

Pat moved and Craig seconded to adjourn the meeting; the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 pm

Respectfully submitted, Becky Friedkin, Clerk

Attachments:

Monitoring report for 1.3
Monitoring report for 1.4
Stewardship Campaign Update as of 6/10/20
Contingency Back-up Plans, preliminary, March 2020
E-blast about BRAG, sent on June 12

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.

Approved by the Board: October 9, 2014; revised February 12, 2015

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.

MT Interpretation submitted for approval May 9th 2019

MT Interpretation Approved by the Board: May 9, 2019

MT Report

All staff were asked to report any issues covered by 1.3 that have not been properly addressed by the Management Team. There were no complaints.

We report compliance with sections 1.3a and 1.3b.

With the arrival of the pandemic in March 2020, the MT approved the closing of the building for meetings and the working from home of staff and volunteers. Although initially closed, the Cuddle Time daycare was permitted to re-open with limited enrollment. This was in line with State recommendations.

Our Congregational Administrator, Jamie continued to maintain the spreadsheet detailing regular inspections of fire extinguishers, sprinkler system, elevator maintenance, emergency lighting etc

The sprinkler system inspection and testing in March reported that a “hydraulic calculation placard” normally affixed to the system riser is missing. Although technically this is a code violation it does not

MT Interpretation and Monitoring of Policy Governance Section 1.3

affect the working of the system in any way and does not get reported. The inspection company advised that we fix this issue when conditions return to “normal”.

The following Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) contain sections dealing with safety that have been revised or completed this year:

SOP-0007 Policies Concerning Behavior and Safety (Clarification)

SOP-0008 Policy Concerning Child and Youth Protection (Revisions)

SOP-0016 Personnel Handbook (updated to SOP format)

The installation of a PA system that can be used especially in case of emergencies is still a priority but is on hold at this time awaiting the resumption of access to the building and improvements in the technology that is suitable and affordable for our premises.

A camera and associated equipment to allow Jamie to see personnel at our front door and to have a conversation with them has been ordered for evaluation and testing.

We report compliance with section 1.3 c.

Submitted by the Management Team June 11th 2020

MT Interpretation and Monitoring of Policy Governance Section 1.4

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.

MT Interpretation:

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 and the Congregation we assume they replace the "previously established" numbers.

MT Interpretation Approved by the Board: July 12, 2018
Revised MT Interpretation Approved by the Board: June 13, 2019

- b. Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.

MT Interpretation:

No interpretation required

MT Interpretation Approved by the Board: July 12, 2018
Revised MT Interpretation Approved by the Board: June 13, 2019

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

MT Interpretation:

The Management Team is responsible for including compensation and benefit payments in the annual operating budget which projects sufficient income to make those payments. MT recommendations on compensation and benefits are limited to a single fiscal year.

MT Interpretation Approved by the Board: July 12, 2018
Revised MT Interpretation Approved by the Board: June 13, 2019

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

MT Interpretation:

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.

MT Interpretation and Monitoring of Policy Governance Section 1.4

*Approved by the Board: October 9, 2014; revised February 12, 2015
Revised MT Interpretation submitted June 13th 2019*

MT Report

There have been no variations to any of the salary provisions of the 2019-2020 operating budget. Some variations to the health benefit provisions have occurred at the request of staff related to changes in family circumstances. At this point we are on track to finish this fiscal year within budget. The recommendations from the Finance Committee and the Personnel Committee for the next fiscal year were included in the budget and approved by the congregation in May 2020.

We report compliance with all the paragraphs of this section.

Report submitted by the Management Team June 11th 2020

**Preliminary Contingency Plans
March 2020**

President, Al Bosch

Nancy Apfel, Vice President

Minister, John Marsh

Sunday Services

Possible guest speakers:

Worship Committee

Claudia Elferdink

Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull

344 Ridge Road

Middletown, CT 06457-4435

h: 860-788-7994

mobile: 781-733-0355

Pastoral Care

Claudia Elferdink

Jan Carlsson-Bull

Director of Religious Education, Jesse Greist

Children's Program

Adult RE

Small Group Ministry

CYRE Chair Patricia McChesney

ARE chair P.J. Deak

Gwen Heuss-Severance

Web Casting:

Robb Camm

Jessie Greist

Robyn Genzano

Richard Genzano

Pablo DeVos-Deak

Office Administrator, Jamie Ross

Banking:

Bookkeeper, Antonia

Terry Durham

Greg Seaman

Payroll and Pension management:

Antonia

Terry Durham

Greg Seaman

(Terry Durham and Greg Seaman can act as each other's back-up).

Newsletter:

Becky Friedkin,

Fran LaFrance-Proscino

Pam Niles

Georgia Jennings

Order of Service content:

Jesse Greist

Becky Friedkin

Order of Service printing/folding:

Pam Niles

Fran LaFrance-Proscino

Theresa Childs

Becky Friedkin

Preliminary Contingency Plans
March 2020

Church DB database:	David Stagg Becky Friedkin
Stewardship tasks:	Becky Friedkin and Stewardship Committee
Event Scheduling:	Jesse Greist
Calendar creation:	Fran LaFrance-Proscino
Rentals:	Finance Committee
Supervising Oscar:	Buildings and Grounds Committee
Keys to the finance file cabinets:	Antonia Greg Seaman
Keys to the safe:	Members of the Finance Committee
Passwords:	David Stagg

The majority of my job is communications on emails and phone. I receive between 50 and 100 emails a day which vary in content from questions about calendar and meeting set, how much did they pledge, rental inquiries, phone numbers, and requests from different committees to do various tasks.

Congregational E-Blast About BRAG
sent June 12, 2020

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Announcement about COVID-related planning

To the USNH Community,

The Management Team recently created the **Building Reopening Advisory Group (BRAG)**, tasked with identifying the steps we need to take before opening the building for worship, meetings, or rentals. In addition to the Management Team, we have representatives from our Staff and from the Board.* The group has met twice via Zoom and begun work on the rather complex task of reviewing all the measures we need to take to reopen our building.

At this time we think it is neither feasible nor wise to open the building for any activities beyond the operations of the daycare, the work of the Sexton, and the occasional single-person visits necessary for the operation of USNH itself.

The decision to close the building is shaped by several considerations. We are committed to keeping our staff safe. We are committed to safely supporting our tenant, Cuddle Time Day Care, which is caring for the children of First Responders. We are attentive to state guidelines, liability issues, and the complexities of disinfecting and monitoring frequently used areas such as bathrooms, door handles, stair railings.

If small groups of USNH folk wish to gather outside the building, that would be fine with appropriate social distancing and use of masks. Access to the interior of the building, e.g. for bathroom use or to reach the back patio, etc., cannot safely be made available now or in the near future. We are working on developing appropriate protocols for the safe use of the building and will coordinate with our new settled minister.

We have been in touch with our neighbor Congregation Mishkan Israel and learned that they have made the same decision.

Thank you for your cooperation and for honoring our covenantal commitment.

Please stay safe,

*BRAG: Gwen Heuss-Severance, David Stagg, Jeremy Hill, Jean Wallace Rosenthal, Nancy Apfel, Emily McCave, Rich Stockton, Manya Lisse, MD, Jesse Greist, Jamie Ross.