

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees
August 12, 2021, Via Zoom
Accepted Sep 13, 2021

Board Members Present:

President - Emily McCave
Vice President - Joanie Messner
Clerk - Aimee Cotton Bogush
Bernice Marie-Daly
Becky Reeve

Tina Santoni
Rich Stockton
Susan Trotta-Smith
Rev. Lindasusan Ulrich, ex officio

Others Present:

David Stagg (Management Team), Jean Rosenthal (Management Team), Bobbi Pace (Management Team, arrived at 6:59 pm), Dan Gelprin (Governance Consultant, arrived at 6:59 pm).

Board Members Absent:

1. Gather & Chalice Lighting

Emily called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm and the chalice was lit. The covenant proposed changes were reviewed and accepted. New covenant was read and check-in took place. (The order of the agenda items was adjusted as time allowed more to be covered before the Policy Governance Discussion.)

2. Reports

BRAG report, Jean Rosenthal (attached)

If safety indicators and scientific criteria allow, USNH will return to services in the sanctuary for the Water Communion September 12. Masks are required inside and socially distanced seating will be available. We will provide live "streaming" of the service on Zoom. After the service, coffee and tea - but no snacks - will be available outside. Masks are always welcome. We cannot predict changes in community guidelines. The BRAG has authorized the Worship Team (minister, staff members, members of Worship Committee) to determine each week whether the congregation can gather in person or will watch the broadcast from home.

3. Future Planning

Fall Retreat Topic and Date Selection

Discussion took place on potential topics and a doodle poll will be sent to facilitate choosing a date.

Policy Governance Discussion, guest speakers Dan Gelprin and Bobbi Pace

Dan and Bobbi graciously shared with the Board practical guidance for policy governance and discussion took place.

LCD Monitor Proposal Discussion

Emily gave an overview of the question and the steps taken so far. Discussion followed. Reverend Lindasusan stated that the process of making this decision is more important than the outcome of the decision. Becky Reeve asked for it to be on the record that she feels similarly. After thoughtful discussion and consideration, the consensus is that the process is what is important and that feedback should be solicited from the congregation. The Board trusts the Management Team to follow the process by soliciting input from the congregation and providing opportunities for informed decision making (such as a temporary set up since a hypothetical is different from an experience). The Board has a responsibility to educate the congregation on policy governance and can support the Management Team by explaining how the monitors are in alignment with the Ends. Dan noted that trust and flexibility are key to successful implementation of policy governance as is a spirit of trying things and fixing things if needed.

David, Bobbi, Jean, and Reverend Lindasusan are present from the Management Team and therefore apprised of this decision.

4. Closing

Consent Agenda

The Board accepted the minutes from the July 8, 2021, Board meeting.

Process Observation

Bernice: Appreciated starting with some light humor and that humor has been incorporated into the covenant. A long, respectful, open-minded and open-hearted discussion took place regarding the LCD monitors and this speaks so well for everyone - this is a “really cool bunch of folks.” Bernice’s personal internet connection provided a bit of trouble for her. Good suggestions were made for retreat topics and communication with the congregation is on the top of the list, especially as we implement the 8th principle. A takeaway from the meeting is that the work of the board is to be in conversation with the congregation and supportive of the Management Team to engage in work that is part of our mission. Communication with the congregation is a top priority - done in many layers and in creative ways - especially to promote understanding of policy governance.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Aimee Cotton Bogush, Clerk

Next Meeting:

MONDAY: 9/13/21, 6:30pm via Zoom

BRAG Report

Looking Ahead to Building Reopening

If safety indicators and scientific criteria allow, USNH will return to services in the sanctuary for the Water Communion September 12. Masks are required inside and socially distanced seating will be available. We will provide live "streaming" of the service on Zoom. After the service, coffee and tea - but no snacks - will be available outside. Masks are always welcome.

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Starting in September, indoor as well as outdoor spaces are available. Within the building, masks are required and no food or drink service. Masks are welcome outdoors as well. Please contact Jamie Ross at office@usnh.org to schedule any gathering and to get more information on protocols for capacity limits.

From the Building Reopening Advisory Group (BRAG), August 4, 2021. BRAG members include the Minister, the Management Team, representatives of the Board of Trustees, USNH staff, and a medical professional.