

Unitarian Society of New Haven  
Approved Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
March 10, 2022, Via Zoom

**Board Members Present:**

President - Emily McCave

Becky Reeve (arrived at 7:01 pm)

Vice President - David Jones

Rich Stockton

Clerk - Aimee Cotton Bogush

Susan Trotta-Smith

Treasurer - Larry Copes (left at 7:25 pm)

Bernice Marie-Daly

**Others Present:**

Rev. Lindasusan, Bobbi Pace, and David Stagg from Management Team (MT)

**1. Gather & Chalice Lighting**

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. and the chalice was lit. The covenant was read and check in took place.

**2. Future Planning**

**Monitoring Policies Report – 1.5 and 1.6 – Review Interpretations for Treasurer Report – David S. and Larry (attached)**

It has been four years since the last report on these sections and David S. and Larry believe compliance with the exception of future planning. Historically, planning beyond the next fiscal year is not taking place and the regulations say it should. Discussion followed.

**Bylaws Changes for Spring Congregational Meeting – Emily**

Discussion took place regarding board composition and size with consideration of the size, past president, and treasurer. Past board sizes and compositions and the size recommended for effectiveness were considered. It was suggested to keep to the five at-large and reevaluate in a couple of years, especially given that most of the experiment with a smaller board took place during COVID with remote meetings.

All agree to remove the past president from board membership and keep the composition to five at-large members, plus president, vice president, clerk, treasurer, and a youth member. The treasurer is only required to attend officers' meetings when requested to address financial matters.

All agree that a majority vote of those present is needed to pass items at annual or special meetings of the congregation and that no absentee voting will be permitted. Language as such will be added to the bylaws.

Discussion took place regarding eligibility to serve on committees. All agree that society members and friends are allowed to serve on certain committees per the bylaws and to add this language.

Discussion took place regarding voting for a settled minister. All agree to keep the vote for a settled minister by secret ballot and to accept a vote as positive if it is at least 90% in favor.

Regarding reporting and oversight for the endowment committee, all agree to include the wording, “during the annual budget planning process the committee shall present a financial report to the board of trustees outlining plans for all endowment and investment funds.” This allows the board to review and comment without binding recommendations or approval. All committees are beholden to the mission of the congregation and structurally they should be thinking about how their work carries out and supports the mission, including the 8th principle.

The word “spring” was added in the minister’s section as follows, “the minister shall present an annual report at the Annual Spring Meeting and periodic reports to the Board.”

David moved to approve all the changes and Bernice seconded.

**The motion was approved unanimously.**

Emily will make the changes to be presented to the congregation at the spring congregational meeting.

#### **Debrief from Retreat – David**

David reported it was an excellent retreat. The retreat began with a presentation and activity from MELD. A discussion about how the board will incorporate the 8th principle in its work followed. The session finished with work on the Ends, changing passive language to more active and in line with the 8th principle. A wordsmithing group will meet before the next meeting and the board will have a revision to present to the Management Team in early April and then to the congregation.

#### **Nominating Committee Update - Sue**

Sue reported that the Nominating Committee met and is considering questions about how to implement leadership development and defining the committee’s role. A need for training in policy governance and leadership development was identified.

Discussion took place about recruitment needed this spring. Sue will communicate that the board is keeping to five at-large members (with Rich and Bernice rotating off). Clarification about the treasurer is needed. The Nominating Committee will present a

charge at the May board meeting. Sue asked to extend the board's gratitude for the committee's efforts.

### **Stewardship Campaign - Emily**

Reminder stewardship campaign is kicking off this weekend - ask that board members pledge early and provide some momentum and make pledge before the 13th if able to and an increase in pledge amounts is appreciated. If you need a waiver, all you do is select the waiver box. The intent is to make active participation at USNH as accessible as possible.

(A short break was taken)

### **3. Reports –**

#### **Minister's Report –Rev. Lindasusan (attached)**

Rev. Lindasusan reviewed their report to the board. The stewardship campaign is starting, thank you in advance, a link to pledge is in the report. Activity in the building is picking up, so is pastoral care. There is overall more activity in general. The first BIPOC group meeting occurred with three people in attendance. It is exciting to be offering this group and especially for new members to know it exists. Five new visitors came to service on Sunday. It looks promising that the music director position will be filled. Several strands of conversation are happening around group spiritual direction - gears are turning for the fall. Pastoral care is gearing up and just about ready to go with the new coordinators. After two years of live streaming services, Robb and Mary are looking to step back. Discussion took place about possibilities for continuing to live stream. Management team will follow up.

#### **4. Executive Session as requested by MT - with all board members and MT present Salary for Rev. Lindasusan for FY 2023 – Emily**

The board moved into executive session to consider a salary recommendation for Rev. Lindasusan for FY2023, with all board members and management team members at the meeting included (except Rev. Lindasusan). Executive session began at 8:11 pm.

The board returned to regular session at 8:17 pm.

Emily moved and Bernice seconded that the board recommends the ministers' salary be increased by the same COLA percentage as all other USNH staff.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

### **5. Closing**

**Consent Agenda: Minutes from Feb, 10, 2022 Board Meeting - Aimee**

The minutes from the February 10, 2022, meeting were unanimously approved.

**Process Observations – Becky**

Becky R. observed that the meeting ran on time. Even with a big discussion on the bylaws, we made it to everything on the agenda.

**Adjournment**

Board meetings will continue via Zoom for the time being - will discuss moving to in-person meetings at some point, The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Aimee Cotton Bogush, Clerk



# Minister's Report to the Board of Trustees

April 14, 2022

## What do you notice?

- The Stewardship Team is diligently plugging away on the campaign. We still have a ways to go yet to reach our monetary and participation goals. If you know someone who hasn't pledged yet, please encourage them do so as soon as possible either [on the USNH website](#) or by filling out a pledge form at the Stewardship table on Sunday.
- The restructured pastoral care program has launched! I'm already noticing ways in which the coordinators will be assets to the community and to the people who may need some support.
- After May, I'm planning to let go of the BIPOC gatherings — at least for now. After the initial meeting, no one has attended. I may try again next year using other formats, but at the moment, we simply lack critical mass. Three cheers for worthy experiments, even when they don't pan out!
- The Music Director Search Team held an audition for one of our candidates on March 31; the audition for a second candidate is this evening (April 14). Each candidate will have had the opportunity to lead a choir rehearsal, practicing and conducting one piece of their choosing and one piece of USNH's choosing. The team hopes to have the search finalized by the end of April.
- Both the PINNE gathering (March 21) and the Finding Our Way Home retreat (April 4-7) left me feeling energized about what's possible in our ministry together here at USNH. Whatever our challenges, the congregation also has a lot of health.

## Do you have questions?

- None that come to mind.

## What do you need?

- As a reminder, the congregation is heading into another season of memorial services. While the schedule isn't as intense as last fall (thankfully), holding the emotion in the room at these services takes a lot of energy.

## Anything else?

- Upcoming conferences/trainings:
  - \* May 10-15 (virtual) — SDI Engage conference, for spiritual directors

- \* May 16-20 (virtual) — Festival of Homiletics, for preachers
- \* May 23 (in person) — PINNE (Pastoral Innovation Network of New England)
- \* July 20-24 (in person) — Association for UU Music Ministries (AUUMM)

## **WITHIN**

Respecting different spiritual journeys, the people of USNH find inspiration and encouragement to:

- Worship and explore opportunities for spiritual growth
- Experience a profound connection to that which is larger than ourselves
- Cultivate meaning and purpose in our lives
- Live with more joy, kindness, love, and open-heartedness
- Demonstrate a willingness to learn and change
- Engage in ongoing personal education, including the internal work critical to dismantling white supremacy culture
- Articulate our Unitarian Universalist identity

## **BEYOND**

The people of USNH, together and in solidarity with our partners, seek to build the Beloved Community in our congregation and beyond. We:

- Accountably dismantle oppressions in ourselves and our institutions
- Deepen our understanding of how justice issues are interrelated and take action to address them in the wider world
- Engage in spiritual and applied practices that promote ecological sustainability and environmental justice
- Devote resources to support these goals and strengthen Unitarian Universalism

## **Management Team monitoring of Policy Governance Section 1.1**

Last reported 4/8/2021

Current Governance Policy sections are in black; MT interpretations in blue; MT report is in red

### **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.

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

#### MT Interpretation

The Management Team will work to maintain our Principles, Mission and Values using our Covenant of Right Relations within all the activities of the Society. To that end, the MT will develop Policies and Procedures to provide guidance to the various committees, task forces and society members. The MT will receive and act upon any reports of activities that are inconsistent with our values or compromise the safety, confidentiality or privacy of members and friends. The MT will also ensure that access to confidential information is strictly on a “need to know” basis

***MT Interpretation Approved by the Board: March 14<sup>th</sup> 2019***

#### MT Report

The COVID pandemic has continued to be the area of greatest concern for the safety of members, friends and visitors. We continue to rely on the Building Reopening Advisory Group (BRAG) for the regular updating of rules we have adopted for the use of the building, especially masking and vaccination requirements. We are particularly grateful to Gwen Heuss-Severance who has so ably chaired the group since its formation soon after the start of the pandemic in 2020.

The issue of respect within our community has come to the forefront with the introduction of the 8<sup>th</sup> principle of Unitarian Universalism. Presentations and discussion on the 8<sup>th</sup> principle began in summer of 2020 and the Congregation voted to adopt the 8<sup>th</sup> principle at the December 12, 2021 meeting. The Management Team has asked Committee Chairs to discuss the implementation of the 8<sup>th</sup> principle within their committees and to report on progress as part of their annual reports in the spring.

Confidential data are stored in the Quickbooks and ChurchDB databases. MT continues to monitor access to both databases to ensure access is on a “need to know” basis.

The MT is not aware of any incidents or activities compromise the safety, confidentiality or privacy of members and friends.

We report compliance with section 1.1

***Submitted by the Management Team 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022***