

**Unitarian Universalist Society
Board of Trustees
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

February 16, 2022 (virtual via Zoom)

Present: Alan Swanson (President), Joe Rasmussen (Past-President), Rochelle Honey-Arcement (Vice-President), Mike Pavelich (Treasurer), Diana Henry (Trustee), Hazel Seaba (Trustee), Rev. Diana Smith (Minister, Ex Officio), Paula Miller (Secretary), John Raley (Financial Trustee)

Absent: Julia Audlehelm (Trustee)

Guests: Paul Pomrehn, Dave Martin, Peg Boushka, Kirk Witzberger

Call to Order and Chalice Lighting: President Alan Swanson called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. lit the chalice, and provided opening words.

Board Read: Members discussed the Preface and Chapter 1 of the new Board read “How to Lead When You Don’t Know Where You’re Going: Leading in a Liminal Season” by Susan Beaumont. For next month’s meeting we will reach chapters 2 & 3.

Consent Agenda: The Board received the consent agenda which included the Jan 2022 Board meeting minutes, Feb 9th Executive Committee minutes, Treasurer/Finance reports, Endowment Committee minutes, and Minister/staff reports including including highlights from DCCE Peggy Garrigues, CA Emma Barnum, REC (Religious Education Coordinator) Anna Rode, and DM Alex Heetland. Henry made a motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Pavelich. The Board voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda.

Board Committee Reports:

Governance – Their next meeting is scheduled for 3/1. Rasmussen is working on developing an online meeting protocol.

Personnel - Their next quarterly meeting had to be rescheduled for March. Rev Diana will start reviewing DRLE applications next Wed 2/23 and hopes to start Zoom and in-person interviews in March. A motion that the Finance Committee’s recommendation for the DLRE search committee’s request for \$1,500 be approved for candidate interview expenses using existing budgeted funds in the former DLRE’s salary line was moved by Honey-Arcement, seconded by Rasmussen. The motion passed unanimously.

Finance – Raley advised that they couldn’t meet on Zoom last month, but they did communicate via email, and the accounting and Treasurer’s reports were completed. Pavelich advised that the Finance Committee and the Board need to discuss what to do with Ruth Muir’s donation. Policy directs this to go to the General Endowment Corpus. This will be discussed at the 3/1 Finance Committee meetings and then will go back to the Board.

Right Relations – No updates.

Mission & Vision Review – Seaba advised they will meet again on 2/21 and will investigate mapping BHI items to some of the points which have come up in the assessment reports from various subcommittees.

OTHER BUSINESS:

COVID and UUS Reopening Progress: Miller summarized the discussion from the 2/10 meeting of the Safe Gathering Task Force which included Amy Fretz, Marsha Cheney, Peggy Garrigues, and Paul Pomrehn. The task force concluded that a new protocol needs to be developed which moves away from the COVID phases developed at the beginning of the pandemic. The Iowa Dept of Public Health will stop reporting many COVID metrics on 2/15, which will make it difficult to apply the metrics from the current COVID phases to new trends. Additionally, CDC guidelines advise that the risk of contracting COVID is between masked, fully-vaccinated individuals is low in indoor settings and even lower outdoors. Miller advised that developing a new COVID protocol will also allow UUS groups to start planning indoor in-person events for this year without the uncertainty of another shut-down of group activities. The task force recommended that decisions on safe reopening protocols should be made by a health and safety team which would work with the staff and Minister to make sure that activities such as the Hospitality teams and choir can restart safely. Board members discussed a timeline for removing the phases altogether considering that services and meetings will still continue to allow for online and in-person gathering. Seaba emphasized that even with very strict COVID protocols people can still be exposed, so we need to be very cautious about moving forward without a safety plan in place. Rasmussen agreed that the staff and ministerial teams should develop the new health and safety protocols. Pavelich suggested that we keep the old phase protocols in place until 3/31 when we can replace them with a timeline for developing a Health and Safety Plan prior to the next Board meeting. Pavelich made a motion to reopen the UUS starting on Mon 2/21 using Phase 3 COVID guidelines until the March Board meeting when a new timeline for developing a Health and Safety Plan can be developed by staff and members of the COVID safety team. The motion was moved by Henry and 2nd by Pavelich. The motion passed.

Proposal to adopt the Eighth Principle: *"We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."*

Dave Martin, Peg Bouska, and Kirk Witzberger from the UUS Racial Justice Team (RJT) provided a historical background for the new 8th Principle currently under review by the UUA. Witzberger advised that 3 UU churches in Iowa have already endorsed it and would welcome solidarity with other UU churches in Iowa. RJT members would like to present this for a vote at the May Congregational meeting. Rev Diana added that the 8th Principle was created when UUA leaders recognized the need to intentionally dismantle systems of oppression, an action not directly addressed in the other 7 principles. She added that if we are not intentional about how we do this work then it might not happen correctly or as quickly. Also, the UUA is charged with

reviewing all principles and purposes every 15 years as part of being a non-creedal faith that is constantly developing. Bouska added that this will also support the intention of the existing principles. Henry added that our congregation's vision statement makes it known that we will confront racial and social injustice, but this is not explicitly stated in the 7 UU principles, and adopting the 8th principle will demonstrate that all UUs support this action. Rasmussen added that we need to specify if we are going to "endorse" or "adopt" this as a principle. Honey-Arcement moved to adopt the 8th Principle and to help the congregation move forward toward a vote, seconded by Henry. The motion passed.

BGI Discussion: Their 2/15 meeting had to be rescheduled for next Wed 2/23. They will work with DCCE Peggy Garrigues on getting the 6 new members who will join on Sunday 2/20 matched to existing groups and teams so they can start becoming active in congregational life. At the last BGI meeting they discussed what BGI will be moving forward, including liaisons with different parts of the congregation to make sure work is not being duplicated.

Three Open Questions: Rev Diana provided feedback from the recent Listening Campaign to supplement the discussion of the 3 open questions, which will help formulate the vision of ministry for the next year. Swanson added some additional questions about racial and social justice work which will address the 8th principle. Honey-Arcement agreed that we need to address racial and social justice to get more UU members involved. Rasmussen volunteered to run an email thread to the Board to help get the questions sorted out and to request additional feedback. Pavelich requested that we move this discussion to the beginning of the next Board meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Memorial Garden: Rasmussen provided them with a form they will need to take to an attorney.

Stewardship: The campaign's goal of \$420,000 has been slightly surpassed with a few pledge payments remaining to be fulfilled.

NEW BUSINESS

Multiplatform Meeting Protocol: If the Board decides to continue with multiplatform congregational meetings and elections this may require a change to how amendments are worded. Rasmussen advised that he doesn't think this will require a bylaw change. He has drafted a new policy for Governance to review.

UUA General Assembly: The Board will need to approve 6 delegates each for both the GA and the MidAmerican Regional Assembly. GA will be both online and in-person in Portland Oregon from Wed 6/22 – Sun 6/26, while the MidAmerican meeting will be only virtual on 4/30.

Weddings at UUS: Rev Diana advised that questions have been raised about whether fees are commensurate with practices at other churches, and if we should revisit our rental policies as we start to plan more indoor events. Planning these events does take a lot of time, and we want to make sure that UUS charges take this into account.

Request from UUS Immigration Action Team Sponsorship Program: They have an opportunity to sponsor an Afghan refugee family of 6 people for 3 months through the Sponsor Circle program which assists with new refugee resettlement, and they have already found a partnership with a local business who would help raise some of the money. They would be requesting donations in February and March for \$3000, and they need the Board's approval for the fundraising. Sally Hartman will be the project contact Pavelich moved to support the fundraiser, seconded by Rasmussen. The motion passed unanimously.

Green Sanctuary Team Request: They will be fundraising in April and May to support a program which provides free energy-saving lightbulbs and low-flow showerheads to low and middle-income UUS members and to also sell them to others who wish to purchase them. The contact person is Deb Schoelman. Rasmussen moved to support the fundraiser, seconded by Honey-Arcement. The motion passed unanimously.

Guest Comments: None

Closed Executive Session: None

Process Observer Comments: Provided by Joe Rasmussen

Closing Words: Mike Pavelich

Motion to Adjourn, and Extinguishing of the Chalice: 9:14 pm

Next board meeting 7:00 pm March 16, 2022 via Zoom

Paula Miller, Board Secretary