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

**September 16, 2020** (virtual via Zoom)

**Present:** Joe Rasmussen (President), Alan Swanson (Vice-President), Amy Fretz (Past-President), Mike Pavelich (Treasurer), Carol Adamson (Secretary), John Raley (Financial Trustee), Colleen Higgins (Trustee), Paul Pomrehn (Trustee), Julia Audlehelm (Trustee), and Rev. Diana Smith (Minister, Ex-Officio)

**Absent**: None

**Guests**: None

Board President Joe Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. Swanson provided opening words, with chalice lighting by Rev. Smith. After a brief time of check-in, the Board commenced with the agenda as follows:

**Interim Board Appointments**:

Having been recommended by the Leadership Development Committee, Carol Adamson has agreed to complete the term of Allison Bettine (Secretary) who resigned on August 27, 2020. Bettine’s term ends in 2022.

*Swanson moved to appoint Carol Adamson as Board Secretary. Seconded by Higgins. The motion carried.*

Having been recommended by the Leadership Development Committee, Julia Audlehelm has agreed to complete the term of Kim McWane Friese (Trustee) who resigned on August 26, 2020. Friese’s term ends in 2023.

*Pomrehn moved to appoint Julia Audlehelm as Trustee-at-Large to replace Kim McWane Friese who resigned on August 26, 2020. Seconded by Raley. The motion carried.*

Appointees serve until the next congregational meeting (December 20, 2020), at which time they shall be elected to complete the remainder of the term of the person they replaced.

**Consent Agenda**: August Board Minutes, September Executive Committee minutes, Staff Report, Treasurer Report and Financial Summary

Discussion: Pomrehn, in reference to the Faithify disaster relief campaign approved by the Executive Board on Aug. 20th, asked that any fundraising event approved by the Executive Committee be reported to the full Board as soon as possible, per Board Policy. *Fretz will see that this is incorporated into the current process the Executive Committee uses*. Pomrehn also suggested that fundraising event requests be done according to a process that allows for spontaneity but still be subject to Board approval. *Raley said the Finance Committee will be working on this, perhaps by incorporating it into all-purpose form for anything that deals with money.*

Staff Report Question: Rasmussen asked Board members if the video format of Rev. Smith’s report would work for them. After discussion, Rev. Smith said she will do future reports in writing.

*Pavelich moved to receive the consent agenda and approve the August Board Minutes, September Executive Committee minutes, Staff Report, Treasurer Report and Financial Summary; Seconded by Higgins. The motion carried.*

**Staff hiring**: Rev. Smith provided a summary of the work she has done so far to find a replacement for Aura Strohschein (Accompanist/Music Facilitator) whose last day at UUS will be Sept. 20th. Rev. Smith will be hiring a new (permanent) Accompanist and a (temporary) Music Facilitator. She asked the Board if hiring the temporary position as an independent contractor would be permissible, as she believes this would be more suitable for a temporary position. The hours would be 10-15 hours per week and the duration of employment would be at will or until two weeks after we hire a permanent Music Director. After discussion, Rasmussen recommended hiring as an independent contractor within the current budget for that position.

**Committee Updates**:

* Governance – Fretz asked her report be addressed later in the meeting under Unfinished Business (Board Policy Book). Pomrehn explained that he has resigned from the Governance Committee since the role he had agreed to had ended. And, in keeping with Shared Ministry, this will also open a spot for a congregation member to be part of a Board committee without serving on the Board.
* Right Relations – No report.
* Personnel – No report.
* Finance – Pavelich reported that the Stewardship Committee has set dates for all pledge benchmarks.
* Right Relations – No report
* Mission & Vision Review – No report

Rasmussen would like to update the list of Board Committee assignments and congregational membership of each committee. *Please send your Committee’s membership list to him. Audlehelm will decide which committee she would like to serve on.*

**Unfinished Business**

**Final Review of Board Policy Book**:

The Governance Committee met on September 8th and made a few additions to the Policy Book. Rasmussen listed the changes due to reviews conducted in June, July, and August:

1.1-2 Policy on Conflict Management (approved earlier but inadvertently missed in last version)

1.1-3 Policy on UUS Events (also on Board agenda re: Unfinished Business)

1.1-4 Policy on Board Motions by Email (revision of old policy)

1.1-5 Policy on Responding to Emergency Situations (old policy)

1.4 Board Committees (add minister as ex officio)

1.4-5 Personnel Committee (Revised to clarify roles between board, committee, and minister)

2.2 Senior Staff (correct misspelling of Music Director)

3.3-2 Safe Congregations Policy for Children and Youth (previous policy)

Pomrehn pointed out the diagram on page 8 as significant in helping us all understand the goal of Shared Ministry as a new way to run congregational affairs. Fretz said the Governance Committee will work on the Procedures Book next. Raley suggested renaming the Policy Book to “Shared Ministry Policy Book” as a way to encourage people to become involved. *Board Members should email Rasmussen with any other title ideas they have by Saturday, Sept. 19th*.

There was no further discussion. The 09-09-2020 version is the final version of the Policy Book that will be voted upon by the Board at its October 21st meeting. It will be available for the Congregation to read over during the coming weeks*. Rasmussen will include a notice in the October newsletter*.

**Building Re-opening: Benchmarks and Phases:**

*Higgins moved to approve the UUS Phased Opening Phases and Benchmarks as presented by the COVID Taskforce; Seconded by Pomrehn.*

Discussion:

Higgins expressed concern about no access to bathroom listed in Phase II.

Pomrehn suggested the Board use our Shared Ministry model to entrust the COVID Taskforce, a ministry function, with the implementation of the Phases and Benchmarks using the guidelines they have recommended. And he asked the taskforce to be open to receiving concerns and questions from congregants about re-opening phases. To that end, it was decided that a joint communication announcing the Phases and Benchmarks be made by the Board, Taskforce, and Minister. This communication will clarify the authority given to the Taskforce to implement guidelines recommended by the taskforce and will indicate the person(s) who will receive concerns and comments from congregants.

It was decided that any changes to the Benchmarks would need Board approval as it is ultimately responsible for the safety of the congregation.

The suggested Board Policy for UUS Group meetings off-site is in 1.1-3: Policy on UUS Events:

“All UUS functions and meeting groups are to follow UUS policy, procedures, and guidelines whether meeting on the building grounds or off site. In addition, events that are for or include persons under age 18 shall follow UUS Child and Youth Safety Guidelines.”

After discussion, Fretz removed “No restrooms available” from the list of Guidelines under Phase II; renamed “Guidelines” to “Recommendations”.

*Pavelich moved to amend the wording of Benchmarks III and IV to read” Volunteers are trained in COVID Protocols”; Seconded by Higgins. The motion carried.*

*Rasmussen called for a vote on the original motion as amended. The motion carried.*

**New Business**

**Midwest Leadership School tuition reimbursements**

The annual Leadership School has gone to a virtual format this year. Two members: Alan Swanson and Marsha Cheyney have volunteered to attend. Marsha has requested that the Board reimburse her for the tuition cost of $150.00. There is a budget line item under Board Expenses for scholarships.

*Raley moved to reimburse Marsha Cheney $150.00 for tuition to attend the Midwest Leadership School this year; Seconded by Fretz. The motion carried.*

**Mortgage Refinance**

Pavelich reported that Finance Committee has begun working on refinancing our building mortgage. The Board was previously advised that the current mortgage is not sustainable in our current operating budget. Pavelich reported that a new mortgage contract with Central State Bank (CSB) is being worked on. A comparable contract from Green State Credit Union was also sought, however the interest rate from CSB is lower. Pavelich hopes to have a contract to present to the Board in October. A decision must be reached by December 1.

**Detiger Fund Request to Endowment re: livestreaming equipment**

It has been suggested that the Board make a proposal to the Endowment Committee for funds to be used for equipping livestreaming of UUS services and events. After discussion, *Pavelich moved, seconded by Higgins, to request $5000.00 to $7000.00 from Detiger Fund to pay for live streaming equipment. Rasmussen will make to formal request to the Endowment Committee.*

**Ministerial Formation Team**

As part of the UUA Minister Association fellowship process, Rev. Smith will need a Ministerial Formation Team (MFT) in place by November. Rev. Smith has just completed her second year of this three-year process with her last congregation. After discussion, Rev. Smith said she will be creating her MFT by the November deadline. By design, the team does not include a Board member since the Board fills a different role in the fellowship process.

**Group Read**

As we can anticipate that this pandemic situation is not going away anytime soon, it has been suggested the Board engage in a group read and discussion of Phil Steinke’s book *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What.*

*“To remain effective, congregational leaders must control their own uneasiness. This takes self-awareness and confidence to manage relationships and influence behaviors. Knowing how to deal with anxiety and how to work though complex challenges can lead a congregation to new insights, growth, and vitality*

**Guest Comments** – none present

**Closing**

Fretz gave process observer comments, Pomrehn provided closing words, and the chalice was extinguished. *Raley moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by Audlehelm. Rasmussen adjourned the meeting at 9:11 pm.*

The next meeting is Wednesday, October 21, 2020 at 7:00 pm.

Carol Adamson, Secretary