

Unitarian Universalist Society
Board of Trustees
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

October 21, 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: Deb Schoelerman

Board President Joe Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. Audlehelm provided opening words, with chalice lighting by Rev. Smith. After a brief time of check-in, the Board commenced with the agenda as follows:

CONSENT AGENDA:

September Board Minutes, October Executive Committee minutes, Staff report, Treasurer report and financial summary, affiliation agreement for Rev. Lois Cole

Rasmussen made a motion to receive the consent agenda and approve the September Board Minutes, October Executive Committee minutes, Staff report, Treasurer report and financial summary, affiliation agreement for Rev. Lois Cole. Higgins seconded. The motion carried.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Rasmussen reviewed the current membership of the Board Committees:

- Governance - Amy Fretz, Joe Rasmussen, Mary McMurray, Tom Larkin, Kelly O’Berry
- Right Relations – Colleen Higgins, Julia Audlehelm, Jane DeWitt, Sharon Booker, Jim Olson
- Personnel – Alan Swanson, Mary McMurray, Carmen Griggs, Sheri Zastrow, Emma Barnum
- Finance – John Raley, Mike Pavelich, Endowment Member(s), Stewardship Member(s)
- Right Relations – Colleen Higgins, Julia Audlehelm, Jane DeWitt, Sharon Booker, Jim Olson
- Mission & Vision Review – Paul Pomrehn, Diana Henry

Next month we will have a formal appointment of the Board Committee members.

Rasmussen led discussion on questions concerning non-elected Board Committee members:

Should Lay members of the committees be appointed for a specific term, and if so, should they be staggered? Currently, there were no term limits, however Board members automatically rotate on and off as their term expires. Rev. Smith said a current trend in UUA congregations is to have a 2 or 3-year term with one or two renewals. This would allow someone to serve for six years, gives members a choice to renew, reduces committee member burnout, and allows for fresh views.

Raley said, since the Finance Committee is more job specific, he and Pavelich will review the by-laws to determine the best way to establish a rotation on that committee.

Pomrehn pointed out that other committees also have their own needs and cycles with respect to committee member terms. Programs and projects may take several years to work on so a 2 or 3-year term minimum might be preferred. Pavelich put forth an option to ask the lay members whether or not they want to stay on the committee. Raley said consideration should also be given to allowing time for committee members to shadow certain jobs. Rev. Smith suggested that staggered terms would be well suited for the Right Relations Committee.

Should staff members be committee members or ex officio? Rev. Smith is ex officio on all committees. She suggests that staff be ex-officio, non-voting and excused from discussions in which they have a conflict of interest.

In the interest of time, Rasmussen said this discussion will continue at the next Board meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

UUS Shared Ministry – Board Policies and Procedures:

- Substitution of Endowment Policy

Rasmussen explained that sections 3.4-1, 3.4-1.1, 3.4-1.2, and 3.4-1.3 were not consistent with the language in the Endowment Fund procedures document. He proposed to include a new 3.4-1.1 subsection to describe Endowment Administration; and to update 3.4-1.2 to describe the spending authorization timelines for determining how much can be spent from the General Endowment Fund and the procedure for Annual Spending Allocation (ASA).

Fretz made a motion to edit sections 3.4-1, 3.4-1.1, 3.4-1.2, and 3.4-1.3 as proposed by Rasmussen. Pavelich seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion carried.

- Final Adoption and Implementation of UUS Shared Ministry – Board Policies

Fretz made a motion, seconded by Pomrehn, to officially adopt with immediate effectiveness the UUS Shared Ministry – Board Policies and Procedures as presented in the October 21, 2020 Board file. There was no further discussion. The motion carried.

Building Re-opening: Benchmarks and Phases:

Rev. Smith provided an update on the status of the building reopening benchmarks and phases implementation. The COVID team has determined safe practices for Halloween, Remembrance Service, and Treats and Talents. The team has also determined that for those working on the grounds, and do not have a building key and need to use the bathroom, they will be given the door code to be able to use the bathroom. The team has also developed safe practices for in-person pastoral care at the building. We have moved into phase 2 of re-opening. Recently we have been at the cusp of the benchmarks for phases 1 and 2. The COVID team would like approval from the Board to use the following guidance: Moving to use a 14 day rolling average instead of 8 out of 14 days for criteria; and if the 14 day rolling average is 1% above the current phase for more than 7 days or if there is a bad outbreak, the UUS may go back to the previous phase.

Pavelich made a motion, seconded by Fretz, to use a 14 day rolling average instead of 8 out of 14 days for criteria; and if the 14 day rolling average is 1% above the current phase for more than 7 days or if there is a bad outbreak, the UUS may go back to the previous phase.

Discussion, Pomrehn asked if these changes would alter the risk to the congregation. Rev. Smith these changes would primarily be for clarity in decision making.

The motion carried.

Pomrehn asked Rev. Smith how knowledge of COVID cases are shared with her and if there is a process for contact tracing. Rev. Smith said she only knows of cases within the congregation if the individual shares that information directly with her. When she is made aware she said there is a process for contact tracing.

Mortgage Refinance

Pavelich provided an update on the status of the mortgage refinance. He and Raley have been in contact with Central State Bank (CSB) over the last month and have come to an agreement on a contract for the mortgage renewal. The Finance and Executive Committee have already unanimously approved the agreement and the Finance Committee is awaiting the final contract and a closing date.

Raley moved and Pavelich seconded for the full UUS Board to approve the CSB agreement for a \$840,000 loan refinance with 3.55% interest on a 5-year term, with \$500 in Bank fees, and amortize payments (\$5000.00/month) over 20 years. There was no further discussion. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Memorial Garden Proposal

Audlehelm described the Land Ministry's plans for the UUS Memorial Garden. Since the original site plan had the garden placed in an inaccessible location, the site has been changed to an accessible spot closer to the back of the building and visible from the sanctuary. Using a pea-gravel walkway, limestone rocks, and seasonal and perennial plantings, the design allows for a meditative space and is conducive to memorials. Rules set forth by the State of Iowa and Johnson County will be followed so that cremations can be buried within the Garden and names periodically added to a sign. The next step is to get a price estimate. The project would be phased in. There would be a fee charged to have a memorial service, bury cremains, and have a name attached to the sign. These fees would help support the Memorial Garden development and be used for the support of UUS. Schoelerman added that Land Ministry will get it started and would like a second team to take care of it and the Labyrinth.

Purchase of audio-visual equipment for livestreaming

Rasmussen reported that AV equipment is now more readily available but there is a 4-6 week lead time for the installation. Raley said the Endowment Committee will need to approve the funding source and will need to ensure that the purchase will involve outreach to the greater community.

Raley made a motion, and Fretz seconded, to approve the purchase of the AV equipment regardless of the funding source. There was no further discussion. The motion carried.

Budget line items for Board of Trustees

Pavelich made a motion, and Swanson seconded, to approve the following Board budget line item amounts for 2021:

5600	Board Expenses	
5610	Scholarships	\$2000.00
5620	Regional & National Dues	\$27,000.00
5630	Discretionary	\$500.00
5640	Social Justice Action Fund Expenses	\$1000.00
5660	Staff Search Expenses	\$2000.00
5680	Memorial Fund Expenses	\$0.00
5690	Farewell Staff Fundraising Expenses	\$0.00
5699	Ministerial Search Committee	\$0.00

After brief discussion, the motion carried.

Follow-up meeting with UUA Consultant & Board – Minister Covenant

Rasmussen reported that Rev. Sharon Dittmar is UUS’s new contact person for Congregational Life in the UUA MidAmerica Region. There was consensus that an initial meeting with Rev. Dittmar would be held on the morning of Saturday, November 21, 2020. The purpose of the meeting is to acquaint Rev. Dittmar with UUS and develop the Minister Covenant. Rasmussen will take contact Rev. Dittmar and get back to us with a specific time.

January Planning Meeting

Rasmussen suggested we have a Planning meeting in January 2021 and a Board Retreat in June 2021. The Retreat would include both old and new Board members. After discussion, there was consensus to schedule these events as Rasmussen suggested. The content for these meetings will be determined at future Board meetings.

Group Read: *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times* by Peter Steinke

Rev. Smith recommended this book for a group read as we are in anxious times. The book gives us a common language and tools to explore and understand how to best lead through these difficult times. The group discussed part one: The Leader’s Presence. At the November meeting we will discuss part two: The Leader’s Functioning.

GUEST COMMENTS – none

CLOSING

Pavelich gave process observer comments, Higgins provided closing words, and the chalice was extinguished. *Pavelich moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by Raley. Rasmussen adjourned the meeting at 9:42 pm.*

The next meeting is Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 7:00 pm.

Carol Adamson, Secretary