

Unitarian Universalist Society
Board of Trustees
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

December 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: Vicki Siefers, Deb Schoelerman

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

CONSENT AGENDA:

November Board Minutes, December Executive Committee minutes, staff report, Treasurer report and financial summary, Executive Committee approval of fund-raising requests (Project Holiday – Circle of Friends Gift Giving – Griselda’s Weavings Publication)

The consent agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- Governance: Amy Fretz
The committee met on 12/15. Leadership Development Committee asked the committee to consider allowing the Vice President Board position be ‘co-chairs’ where the tasks of the position be divided. The committee also discussed and organization of documents and shared ministry book. The committee will be meeting monthly.
- Personnel: Alan Swanson
No report
- Finance: John Raley
No report. See Treasurer’s report.
- Right Relations: Colleen Higgins and Julia Audlehelm
No report
- Mission & Vision Review: Paul Pomrehn
Sharon Booker said she will serve on Right Relations and not on Mission & Vision. The committee has not met yet this year.
- Committee Procedures and Appointments effective January 1, 2021
 - Rasmussen made a motion, seconded by Pavelich to appoint lay members Tom Larkin and Mary McMurray to the Governance committee. The motion carried.

- Rasmussen made a motion, seconded by Pavelich, to appoint lay members Mary McMurray, Carmen Griggs, and Sheri Zastrow to the Personnel committee. The motion carried.
- Rasmussen made a motion, seconded by Pavelich, to appoint lay members Jane DeWitt, Sharon Booker, and Jim Olson to the Right Relations committee. The motion carried.
- Rasmussen made a motion, seconded by Raley, to appoint lay members Winnie Ganshaw and Kelly O’Berry to the Mission and Vision committee. The motion carried.

Pomerhn questioned why we voted on lay member participation. Rasmussen felt that it was necessary since the Board made decision about the terms of lay members.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

Board members discussed section three.

Building Re-opening: Benchmarks and Phases:

Due to the surge in COVID 19 community transmission in Johnson County, UUS continues to be in Phase One with the building closed. Rev. Smith said the COVID team continues to discuss metrics related to vaccination rates and will look at building HVAC system meeting air circulation needs. Rasmussen said the Johnson County Board of Supervisors and Emergency Management Commission extended their public health disaster emergency rules to January 15, 2021. These rules require face masks and social distancing.

Mortgage Refinance

Pavelich reported that he and Rasmussen met with bank officers on December 4, but there is an error in the documents, so the bank is re-drafting for signatures. Pavelich will make sure the error is corrected.

Internet Connection and audio-visual equipment purchase

Mediacom sub-contractors have installed new coax cable from the street to the building and the cable has had an end terminal installed and the signal checked. An installer inspected the site on December 10, and we are now waiting on the work order to install the modem/router and hookup the 100/10 internet connection. An email response from a Mediacom sales rep stated that UUS would incur no additional construction cost other than the \$100 installation fee.

The current agreement with CenturyLink was for a two-year period that has since expired, so cancelling that once Mediacom is active should not be a problem.

The camera, tripod, and connecting equipment have been ordered by DB Acoustics of Marion, Iowa. A down payment of \$707 has been sent by UUS. There is a 4 – 6-week scheduling timeline to have DB Acoustics do the installation.

DB Acoustics has highly recommended that we check on the computer necessary to run the livestreaming equipment and software.

Platform: We will have to choose a platform to livestream on such as YouTube, Facebook Live, Twitch, or Zoom. There are also subscription platforms specifically designed congregations.

Rev. Smith and Emma continue to work on the position description. The position would be for an in-house expert who also coordinate volunteers. Rev. Smith's goal is to have the description ready for the January Board meeting for review and approval. Higgins suggested that training include any potential volunteers. Swanson suggested the position description include a requirement to create a Procedural Manual.

Rev. Smith said that, if UUS continues to offer streaming Sunday Services (in addition to in-person), copyright issues will need to be explored further since the streaming is considered a broadcast. She will be looking for this sort of expertise in the AV and/or the Music Director.

NEW BUSINESS

Spending Guidance for 2021

The Executive Committee reviewed the spending position at its meeting in October as team leaders were asking for guidance on using unspent budget funds for actions before the end of the year. It was agreed for Reverend Diana and Treasurer Pavelich to send a joint email that it was acceptable to use funds for expenses required to maintain the health of a team's mission. Otherwise, they should hold off on spending through the end of the fiscal year.

Pavelich made a motion, to continue the current spending guidance into 2021 until further notice. The motion was seconded by Pomrehn. No further discussion. The motion carried.

Pomrehn asked if there is an amount of money (whether in the budget or not) that we would want the Board to discuss? After discussion, the procedure for a ministry team to bring an extra expense to the Board will be reviewed by the Finance Committee.

Rasmussen asked that an Annual Reconciliation Statement be prepared to show Budget vs. Actual amounts. Pavelich will bring this request to Emma.

Music Director and/or Accompanist position(s) authorization

Rev. Smith would like to begin the process for hiring a new Music Director. This will involve reviewing the position description and forming a search committee. She would like to have a new hire in place by May, with a start date to be determined by when we are back to in-person services, or sooner if the new hire has the skills to do the online services.

Rasmussen made a motion, seconded by Swanson, to authorize Rev. Smith to create a search committee and hire the new Music Director. There was no further discussion. The motion carried.

Compensation related to home office expenses

Four full-time staff have found it necessary to upgrade their personal phone and internet services to work from home. At the same time, utilities at the UUS building have decreased. Rev. Smith asked if the Board needs to approve this, or just be notified of this. Raley feels this should be in the form of a reimbursement or flat amount, and therefore does not need to be a Board policy.

After discussion, the Board decided that this is a decision that can be made by Rev. Smith as chief of staff.

Date for January Planning Meeting (possible dates 16, 23, 30)

Rasmussen suggested the meeting be held on Jan. 30, 2021. While we are 'planning to plan', Rasmussen suggested we discuss the 'health' of each area of the UUS ministry. Pomrehn said that Kirk Witzberger has offered to facilitate this meeting. Rasmussen said Kirk's help could be useful in the first half of the meeting when the staff. Pomrehn suggested, and Adamson agreed, that all elected leaders be invited to the morning portion of the meeting.

Holiday Season recognition by UUS Board

Rasmussen made a motion, seconded by Swanson, to recognize staff with an end-of the year monetary holiday gift, funded through the discretionary and the scholarship line items of the Board budget, of \$100 to fulltime and \$50.00 to part-time staff. The motion carried.

GUEST COMMENTS – none

CLOSING

Audlehelm gave process observer comments, Fretz provided closing words, and the chalice was extinguished. *Pavelich moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Fretz. Rasmussen adjourned the meeting at 9:14 pm.*

The next meeting is Wednesday, January 20, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

Carol Adamson, Secretary