

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

May 19, 2021 (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), Julia Audlehelm (Trustee), Colleen Higgins (Trustee), Paul Pomrehn (Trustee), Rev. Diana Smith (Minister, Ex-Officio)

ABSENT: None

GUESTS: Rochelle Honey-Arcement, Sally Hartman, Deb Schoelerman

Board President Joe Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. John Raley provided the opening words, with chalice lighting by Rev. Smith. After check-in, the Board discussed its Board Read – *UUA's Widening the Circle of Concern*.

The Board commenced with the agenda as follows:

CONSENT AGENDA:

April Board Minutes, May Executive Committee minutes, Staff Report, Treasurer report and financial summary, and bio cell neighborhood agreement.

The consent agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- Governance: Amy Fretz reported the committee completed its review of a new Section 3 to be added to previously adopted Section 1, Bylaws, and Section 2. These will be discussed under New Business.
- Personnel: Alan Swanson reported the committee met on April 23rd. They decided on a rotation for its members and will seek to have at least one member on the committee who has some expertise in HR/Personnel.
- Finance: John Raley reported that the committee met on May 10th and discussed how designated funds might be created. They also discussed fiscal policies which will be discussed under Unfinished Business.
- Right Relations: Higgins asked if the Board will be reviewing its covenant at its June Retreat. It was decided to add this question to the Board Retreat section of Unfinished Business.
- Mission & Vision Review: No report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Building Re-opening: Benchmarks and Phases:

Rev. Smith and Amy Fretz reported that the COVID Team continues to monitor Johnson County transmission rates and to evaluate the UUS Benchmarks and Phases in light of recent CDC guidance and state guidelines. The team is in the process of updating phases 3 and 4 because of new information about vaccination rates and effectiveness.

In recognition of urgent and emerging social justice and social action needs that the UUS mission calls us to respond to outside our normal activities, the COVID Team would like Board approval for a *policy of exemption from current COVID Phases and Guidelines*. An exemption may be requested by contacting Emma Barnum or Mary McMurray to pass on to the COVID Team for review and approval. Those attending would do so at their own risk and are asked to follow all CDC and state guidelines.

Pavelich made a motion, seconded by Fretz, to approve the policy of exemption as stated above. The motion carried with one abstention.

Hiring Process & Board Consultation:

The Bylaws state “After receiving the Search Committee's recommendation, the minister will consult with the Board and present their final candidate.” Rev. Smith asked that the Board decide on how it would like to be consulted and presented with the final candidate, and if the presentation does not occur at a regular Board meeting, by what means it can take place. After discussion there was consensus that:

- ‘Consult’ and ‘present’ will mean that the Minister will inform the Board of their choice of final candidate to fill a senior staff position prior to hiring the individual.
- The presentation of a final candidate will take place at a Regular Board Meeting. A special Board meeting may be called if the timing of a hire requires it.
- The presentation of a final candidate will take place during an Executive Session of the meeting.

Announcement of ASA for 2021:

The Board of Trustees have been informed by the Endowment Committee that the proposed Annual Spending Allocation for 2021 is five percent (5%) of the General Endowment Fund to be paid on a monthly basis during 2021. The Board approves of this allocation to the operating budget of the Society.

Fiscal Policy:

Rasmussen reviewed the Board and Committee discussions that have been taking place regarding fiscal policy meant to address UUS systemic imbalance between revenue and expenses. Additionally, the Finance Committee met with Mark Ewert, a Stewardship Consultant through UU MidAmerica, to get further advice on creating and communicating fiscal policy. The Executive Board recommends that the Board appoint a Fiscal Policy taskforce charged with studying the problem and make a recommendation to the Board (in the same way the Board appointed a taskforce to address COVID last year). There was lengthy discussion about how to form such a taskforce and how to appoint its members. Several questions and ideas were put forward including:

- The taskforce should not be entirely leadership driven and should include voices from within many of the programs affected by the fiscal policy.
- A taskforce consisting of up to nine people would be optimal.
- Consider a core group of members of the Finance Committee, adding people as needed.

- Establish a charge for the taskforce.
- Consider the work of the taskforce to be like writing a grant proposal which defines the scope and function of the program to be funded. The Board would then review and decide if the program justifies the raising/use of the funds. This would connect fundraising and stewardship with specific goals, not just asking to fill a funding gap.
- Weave the stories of what has been done with funding in the past and show how it will be used in the future. Follow-up by describing what was accomplished.
- Raising money for things that inspire people, not just to give to keep the lights on or fill a hole in the budget.
- The Board has a fiduciary responsibility and also sets the vision for the direction to take. If the Board is delegating that to a task force, the Board will need to set the scope of work for that group.
- The Board needs to communicate at the May 23rd Congregational meeting what work has been done thus far including if a taskforce is to be formed.
- A means to consult with individuals with concerns and other input should be incorporated into the work of the taskforce.
- The fiscal policy should address the 'why' not just the 'how'.
- The taskforce should be timebound so that its work ends in time for the December Congregational meeting.
- The listening sessions for the 3 Open Questions have been giving us good feedback and will inform work done at the Board retreat as well as the those working on the fiscal policy.

Swanson made a Motion, seconded by Higgins, to create a Fiscal Policy taskforce; consisting of four Finance Committee members, Rev. Smith, and up to four additional members; that is timebound; and, with a charge to be created at the June 19th Board retreat. The motion carried.

June Board Retreat:

The Board retreat is scheduled for Saturday, June 19, beginning at 10:30 a.m. This will be an in-person meeting at the UUS building. Since we will not be sharing food, it was decided that each attendee will bring their own lunch. There was discussion about how to divide the day up into sessions. Agenda items will include:

- Write an Annual Vision of Ministry
- Discuss fiscal policies and create charge for the new taskforce
- Investment & engagement in the wider community
- Board meeting schedule & in-person meetings
- Community building of the Board membership

Rev. Smith has contacted Rev. Sharon Dittmar to assist with the creation of the Annual Vision of Ministry and is waiting to hear back if she can attend the Board Retreat (virtually) on June 19th.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Policy - Section 3 Procedures for review and approval

The Board's Governance Committee has completed its review of a new Section 3 to be added to previously adopted Section 1, Bylaws, and Section 2, Policies. This will complete the initial revision and adoption of our shared ministry governance structure. Full text of this proposed Section 3 is in Dropbox/Policies 2021-05-19.

*Pavelich Motion, seconded by Higgins, to accept the Section 3 procedures as presented in the online document, and with the acknowledgement that these are able to be updated as needed.
The motion carried.*

UUA General Assembly Delegates

UUS is allowed 7 delegates to the UUA General Assembly. The UUS Leadership Committee currently has the following members recommended as delegates:

- Diana Henry
- Colleen Higgins
- Rochelle Honey-Arcement
- Miriam Kasha
- Dave Martin
- Susan Salterberg
- Hazel Seaba

There is a contested election for a UUA Board Position. Rev. Sam Trumbore's candidacy came from the Nominating Committee. He currently serves the Albany UU congregation. Jay Kiskel's candidacy came via petition and is involved in the Fifth Principle Project. He advanced his candidacy as an alternative selection for the national leadership team. Per UUA bylaws, an individual congregation can instruct its delegates on whom to vote.

After discussion about the two candidates, Swanson made a motion, seconded by Pavelich to recommend that UUS delegates support Rev. Sam Trumbore for the UUA Board position. Board members voted 4 in favor, 3 opposed, and 1 abstention. The motion passed.

Immigration Action Team Request

The UUS Immigration Action Team is requesting Board endorsement for UUS to become an official sponsor of a person (or persons) seeking asylum. Sponsorship involves enrolling in the Congregational Accompaniment Project for Asylum Seekers (CAPAS) which is a program facilitated by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). The Team has gathered information about the project, investigated possible hosts, and gained support from UU Society teams and staff. They have met with other sponsors and the UUSC Clergy Representative to become informed of the scope, challenges, and rewards of sponsorship. Sponsorship will involve supporting an asylum seeker for a year by helping them find work, navigate the legal and medical system, and seeking funds and fund raising.

Higgins made a motion, seconded by Audlehelm, for Board endorsement of the Immigration Action Team's enrollment in the CAPAS program and sponsorship of an asylum seeker(s). The motion carried.

Minister Installation

Normally a new minister has an installation ceremony within the first months of beginning a settled ministry. 2020 was not normal, and we have still not conducted Rev. Smith's installation. These usually involve inviting other ministers and officials and family to attend a formal installation ceremony and reception. Rasmussen proposed that the Right Relations committee be the planning committee for this event. Rev. Smith is hoping to schedule this for late September. Audlehelm, Higgins, and Adamson will help coordinate Rev. Smith's Installation Ceremony.

GUEST COMMENTS – none

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Board entered Executive Session at 9:40 pm for Rev. Smith to present the final candidate for the DLRE position.

The Executive Session ended at 10:01 pm.

CLOSING WORDS

Mike Pavelich provided observer comments, Rasmussen provided closing words, and the chalice was extinguished. *Pavelich moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Swanson. Rasmussen adjourned the meeting at 10:03 pm.*

The next full Board meeting is Wednesday, June 16, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

Carol Adamson, Secretary