

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

**June 16, 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, Diana Henry, Hazel Seaba, Rev. Sharon Dittmar

Board President Joe Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm. Paul Pomrehn provided the opening words, with chalice lighting by Rev. Smith. After check-in, the Board commenced with the agenda as follows:

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

May Board Minutes, June Executive Committee minutes, staff report, Treasurer report and financial summary, Executive Committee confirmed GA delegates.

*The consent agenda was approved by unanimous consent.*

**COMMITTEE UPDATES:**

- **Governance:** Amy Fretz reported the committee has the policies and procedures finalized. The committee will not be meeting over the summer and will resume in September. There was discussion about the precedent set last December when the Board approved the slate of committee members. Fretz will update the policies to reflect the precedent set. Pomrehn pointed out that it would be wise to write into the Past-President job description that they are to chair the Governance Committee. There was discussion about Board members chairing a Board committee and whether this will make the committees less open to people who are not on the Board. Board members who chair a committee are responsible for providing minutes of the committee meeting for the full Board to review for improved communication about the work being done by each.
- **Personnel:** Alan Swanson reported the committee will meet in August. They will be looking for someone to replace Mary McMurry who provided HR expertise to the committee. The committee will be looking for someone who has a similar level of HR experience/knowledge.
- **Finance:** John Raley reported that the committee discussed the Stewardship goal for this year and will ask for Board approval of the goal later in the meeting.
- **Right Relations:** With Colleen Higgins departure from the Board, Julia Audlehelm is the incoming chair of the committee. The committee met on June 15<sup>th</sup>. and reflected on the history and overlap of its mission within past and current UUS committees. They also discussed the need to increase congregants' knowledge of the role of this Board committee.

- Mission & Vision Review: Pomrehn reported that the committee did not meet since the last Board meeting. It will have three regular meeting per year. With his departure from the Board, Pomerene asked if he should officially resign from the committee or would the Board like him to stay on as a regular (non-Board) member. Rasmussen said this could be discussed at the June 19th retreat.

There was discussion about the notes and minutes of the Board Committees serving as official Board documents. And, if inaccuracies are found in these documents, could Board members ask for changes to be made to them. There was no consensus.

## **UUA CONSULTATION:**

### **Rev. Sharon Ditmar, MidAmerican Region – Congregational Life Staff**

Rev. Ditmar joined the meeting at 7:30 pm. She was invited to assist in the discussion of how the new taskforce could approach its task of addressing the chronic financial shortfall that UUS has seen in its annual budgets. Rev. Ditmar asserted that the taskforce should hold the UUS Mission and Vision statement as its primary working document. She also referred to Hotchkiss's book on governance as a starting point: Annual cycle of planning and evaluation (p. 118); and Good Committees vs. Great Committees (p.91-92). In general, the 'great committee' will prepare a 'menu' of options for the full Board's consideration as it faces the pressing question of "how we cover the systemic financial shortfall." There was discussion about methods for taskforce's to use as it completes its mission.

Rev. Ditmar continued: These conversations are important. They can be daunting but also exciting as the you look at the long-term choices to be made. She will try to connect us with another congregation as a learning partner which is at the same stage/size and dealing with similar financial issues.

There was discussion about the Board's 2021 three open questions and how feedback from conversations can be used. Rev. Ditmar advised that as the Board works on it Vision of Ministry at this weekend's retreat it should remember that this is really about of what the staff is going to do.

Rev. Ditmar shared questions the new taskforce might have for the Board as it commences its work: What is the charge of the taskforce? What is your timeline? What goals must this plan support? Under what conditions would the Board reject a plan? What is the limit at which point the plan would be rejected? What updates/feedback does the Board want while the taskforce does its work? What are the limits of this work?

When asked for a strategy or dashboard for the taskforce to use, Rev. Ditmar advised that there is no 'playbook'. Board members should see their work as a work of grace and faith and to 'skill up to hold the problem.' The taskforce will do the research and wrestle with the systemic financial shortfalls. It is the Board's job to help the congregation 'hold the problem', join in and solve it, and be strengthened. It may be that there is probably something about the culture of money that will need to change/adapt.

Due to time constraints, the discussion ended but will be continued at the Board retreat on June 19<sup>th</sup>.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

## Building Re-opening: Benchmarks and Phases:

Rev. Smith reported the team met on June 7<sup>th</sup>. There was consensus about proposed masking guidelines and the written version of these was finished on June 14<sup>th</sup>. She said the four concerns of *Inclusion, Consent, Covenant, and Care for Each Other* were the backdrop for formulating the guidelines. Rev. Smith presented the proposed guidelines for Board approval as follows:

### June 14, 2021, COVID Guidelines – Phases 3 and 4 Updates

- **Unvaccinated individuals** are advised to wear a mask when with others.
- **Immunocompromised individuals** are advised to follow their doctor's guidance for gathering with others.
- **The COVID Task Force advises all who are able, be vaccinated for COVID 19** as an expression of our values by caring for others. We recognize this is not possible for some.
  1. When outside working in the garden or on the grounds at UUS you are not required to wear a mask.
  2. At large community gatherings outside like worship events or when we have events open to the community at large, masks are required.
  3. When small groups are gathering **outdoors** at UUS or offsite, if **everyone** in the small group agrees, then masks are not required. The group should model a practice of inclusion, covenant, consent, and care for each other. If groups are having challenges with their conversations, we encourage them to reach out to the Right Relations Committee for support with navigating UUS's covenant of right relations. This webpage has resources <https://www.uua.org/leadership/library/covenantal-consent>
  4. Indoor small groups that are meeting away from UUS may agree to be mask-less if all are in agreement. If all are not in agreement, the group could pick 2 of 3:
    - i. Masks
    - ii. Social Distance
    - iii. Meet outsideIf groups are having challenges with their conversations, we encourage them to reach out to the Right Relations Committee for support with navigating UUS's covenant of right relations. This webpage has resources [Covenantal Consent | LeaderLab | UUA.org](#)
  5. To provide accessibility and inclusion for the different people and groups who are using the UUS building simultaneously, masks are required for groups meeting indoors at UUS. Exceptions may be made for vaccinated individuals who need to remove their mask so that words can transmit clearly over Zoom.
- Indoor gathering time limits will be removed from phases 3 and 4.
- Other requirements and guidelines for food, etc., remain as written in the most recent COVID Reopening Plan found on UUS's website: <https://www.uusic.org/about-us/covid-19-info-updates/>
- Exceptions to gathering size limits may be made for rites of passage.

Rev. Smith added that the COVID team will continue to evaluate and adjust as new Federal and State guidelines are published. The next team meeting is July 5<sup>th</sup> when they will evaluate how things are going, consider current research that is available and revise the guidelines for outdoor and larger group gatherings.

There was discussion about the revised guidelines and acknowledgement of the difficulty of creating the guidelines: how to help people transition back in a safe manner as well as in a way to address concerns of those who are not vaccinated or cannot be vaccinated.

*Swanson made a motion, seconded by Higgins to approve the proposed guidelines as presented. There was no further discussion. 7 for, 1 against, 1 abstention. The motion carried.*

#### **June Board Retreat:**

The agenda for the June 19<sup>th</sup> Board retreat was reviewed. It will be held in person with masks and social distancing. It will start at 10:00 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m. Attendees should bring their own lunch.

#### **Minister Installation**

The tentative date for Rev. Smith's Installation Service is September 25<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers will be needed. Due to the pandemic, there are unspent funds in the minister's professional expense budget (line item 5780 \$6,000). Reverend Diana has offered to use \$3000 of this for the cost of the installation service, such as travel and housing expenses, decorations, and the reception.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **MidAmerican Region Delegate Appointments**

The MidAmerican Region meeting will be held virtually during the General Assemble, June 26<sup>th</sup> 10:00 am. *Pomrehn made a motion, seconded by Higgins to designate the approved GA delegates for the RA delegate slots. The motion passed.*

#### **Task Force Appointments**

The following persons were proposed as members of the new taskforce:

1. Rochelle Honey-Arcement – Chairperson
2. Mike Pavelich – Treasurer
3. John Raley – Finance Trustee
4. Reverend Diane Smith – Ministry
5. Diana Miller – Stewardship Committee
6. Gary Lawrenson – Endowment Committee
7. Chris Rode – Past Treasurer

*After discussion, Swanson made a motion, seconded by Pavelich, to approve the seven members as listed, with the option of inviting other individuals to attend in an ad hoc capacity for their expertise and/or input. There was no further discussion. The motion carried.*

#### **Stewardship Committee Proposals**

The Stewardship Committee is asking the Board to set a goal for the 2022 Campaign, and to formulate its vision/mission statement and themes for the 2022 Campaign by the first week of July.

*Raley made a motion, seconded by Fretz, to set the goal at \$420,000 as recommended by the Stewardship Committee. The motion carried.*

**GUEST COMMENTS** – none

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

The Board entered Executive Session at 9:39 pm for Rev. Smith to present the final candidate for the Music Director position.

The Executive Session ended at 9:50 pm.

**CLOSING WORDS**

Colleen Higgins provided observer comments, Fretz provided closing words, and the chalice was extinguished. *Audlehelm moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Raley. Rasmussen adjourned the meeting at 9:55 pm.*

The next full Board meeting is Wednesday, July 21, 2021, at 7:00 pm.

*Carol Adamson, Secretary*