

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

November 17, 2021 (virtual via Zoom)

Present: Alan Swanson (President), Joe Rasmussen (Past-President), Rochelle Honey-Arcement (Vice-President), Mike Pavelich (Treasurer), Diana Henry (Trustee), Julia Audlehelm (Trustee), Hazel Seaba (Trustee), Rev. Diana Smith (Minister, Ex Officio), Paula Miller (Interim Secretary)

Absent: John Raley (Financial Trustee)

Guests: None

Call to Order and Chalice Lighting: President Alan Swanson called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and lit the chalice. Seaba provided **Opening Words** from Langston Hughes.

Check-In: Members present provided personal updates.

Board Read: Members discussed chapters 4-6 from Trauma Stewardship by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky. Next month we will discuss chapters 7-9.

Consent Agenda: The Board received the consent agenda which included the Oct 20th Board minutes, Nov 3rd Interim Email Board Minutes, Nov 10 Exec Committee minutes, Treasurer/Finance reports, and Minister/staff reports. *Pavelich advised that the sentence on Page 3 of the Oct 20th Board minutes should read, "...confirmed that they want to keep a floor of \$200,000 in cash in the bank to cover any extraordinary crises..."*, not \$20,000. The Board voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda with changes to the Oct 20th Board meeting minutes.

Board Committee Reports:

Governance – 4 motions were considered for approval. 1. Amendments to the Personnel Manual only require Governance oversight if they impact the budget, and Governance should review all new policies and the entire Policies and Procedures manual to avoid conflicting provisions and remove outdated policies: Rasmussen moved to approve, second by Henry, the motion passed unanimously; 2. Bylaw amendment on the Dec Congregational meeting agenda to add "or team" to clarify who may qualify to serve on the Board, LDC, or Endowment: Rasmussen moved to approve, second by Swanson, the motion passed unanimously; 3. Changes to the sabbatical policy recommended by Personnel: Rasmussen moved to approve, second by Swanson. Pavelich asked if sabbatical time would also accrue during the 7th year when the employee is eligible to take sabbatical for the first time – Rasmussen confirmed that it would. 4. Endowment will provide a quarterly report to the Board and congregation that identifies amounts in the General Fund and Restricted Donor Named and Special-Purpose Funds. Rasmussen advised that the Endowment chair requested that "all" be inserted prior to "Restricted...". Rasmussen moved to approve with the amendment, second by Pavelich, the motion passed unanimously.

Personnel – At the next quarterly meeting when they will discuss a replacement for UUS Publicity and AV Coordinator Jeff Walberg, and they also need to determine what the specific job description will be. Rev Diana will review a draft of the job description with Emma and it will be posted tomorrow. She advised that once a new coordinator is hired we can hopefully also draw on volunteers for additional help, which may include Senior High School students.

Finance – Pavelich advised that Stewardship reported on pledges, and that Endowment approves the new changes to Policies & Procedures.

Right Relations – Per Audlehelm there is no news to report as their focus has been on planning the minister's installation ceremony. Swanson acknowledged that the installation was very successful.

Mission & Vision Review – Seaba reported that at the 11/15 meeting they reviewed a draft addressing the triennial evaluation of the minister in the wider pastoral role. The group has gone through 4 out of 5 tasks, and in Dec they hope to finish the 5th. Seaba expected to have strong drafts completed by early Spring.

OTHER BUSINESS:

COVID and UUS Reopening Progress: Johnson County is currently at 39.3 cases/100,000 which is an increase from last month but not to Phase 4 yet. Rev Diana advised that she is looking several months into the future and considering what kind of changes will need to be made as COVID infections become endemic rather than pandemic. Also, now that children as young as 5 can be vaccinated our previous phases may not be as appropriate. Swanson suggested organizing a small group with medically qualified people to review our COVID phases and policies. Pavelich confirmed that the CDC will also be offering updated guidelines for indoor gatherings. Rasmussen asked if this should be included in the Board's January planning session.

December Congregational Meeting: Will be held in person and on Zoom at 11:15 am on Sunday 12/19. Swanson reviewed the meeting agenda and confirmed that a 3rd budget motion has been added to approve the BGI 2-year budget plan after the 2 votes to approve the expenditure from Endowment earnings and to approve the 2022 budget. Pavelich confirmed that the final tally of all votes won't be ready until 4 pm, but we should have a general idea of how the votes are going from those present in the sanctuary as well as the online and mail-in votes already received. Swanson requested a motion to approve the agenda: Rasmussen moved to approve the agenda, second by Pavelich, the motion passed unanimously.

Balance and Growth Initiative (BGI): Honey-Arcement reported that BGI is preparing a PowerPoint presentation as part of their communication plan, and she requested feedback on how to discuss the historical details of the current financial situation. Rasmussen confirmed that the cost of the new building and grounds couldn't be predicted in full when the decision was made to move. Searching for an interim minister and new staff members in the middle of a pandemic also contributed to financial uncertainty. Swanson stressed that we don't want to put any blame on previous decisions, but we want to look to the future and the exciting new programs which will benefit the overall health and growth of the congregation if we can implement the BGI recommendations. Pavelich added that if we don't need to use the entire

amount asked from Endowment that we can always refund some funds. Honey-Arcement added that one piece of BGI is to start a capital campaign to get the mortgage paid off without taking anything away from Stewardship. Pavelich added that the \$125,000 two-year ask from Endowment is less than the stock earnings this year. Seaba asked about the opportunity cost for the withdrawal: Pavelich added that it is approximately 15% of our request or \$20,000. He confirmed that the congregation will be voting on the line item budget at the Dec meeting. Rasmussen confirmed that the line item budget shows expense areas which all show decreases except for facilities and staff benefits due to the increase in health insurance. Honey-Arcement added that the presentation will show how much staff time goes to the programmatic budget, and if we lose a staff person then it is clearer how much we lose from the overall income as well as implementing the UUS mission and vision. Rev Diana advised that Stewardship has asked her to make a final appeal for pledges to be returned by 12/01 so the Board can finalize the budget.

2022 Budget: Pavelich discussed the proposed 2022 budget of \$593,300 and moved to approve it, seconded by Henry. The vote was unanimous.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Rasmussen reported that per Sue Otto another finance trustee is needed after John Raley's term ends.

NEW BUSINESS

Fundraisers: Before 10/31 the Board approved via email a fund-raising event for the Iowa Women's Music Collective Concert. Miller reported that the concert was excellent and well-attended. The Immigrant Action Team requested that a member of the UUS Circle of Friends be allowed to sell her weavings and jewelry after services on 12/05 and 12/12. The UUS Senior High Group requested that they be able to use the UUS kitchen for a fundraiser commencing ASAP and culminating on 11/24. There was unanimous email approval from Board members for the three fundraisers.

Board Planning Meeting: Is currently set for 01/08/2022 which will focus on brainstorming 2022's three open questions relating to UUS's mission and vision.

Rev Diana's Fellowship Status: This was due on 11/01 and was completed on time. The process went well, and thanks are due to Seaba and Henry for assisting.

Treats and Talents Auction: This annual fundraiser for the operating budget will be held virtually via Zoom on Friday evening 12/03. Audlehelm reported that planning is in progress: they are pairing down the entertainment portion compared to last year's event, but they will have some "white elephant" items which will be amusing.

New Members: 4 new members will join the UUS on 11/21/21. This is 28 days before the Dec Congregational meeting, and therefore 2 days short of the bylaws' requirement that voting

members join at least 30 days before the meeting. It was agreed that they be allowed to participate as voting members in the Dec meeting if they meet other requirements.

Holiday Staffing: Swanson requested allowing all UUS staff have time-off between Christmas and New Year's Day to show appreciation for all the hard work they have dedicated to the UUS this year. Rev Diana advised that they have discussed physically closing the church and holding the 12/26 and 01/02/21 services online only. This would help the AV team and is also a good time for a vacation since there aren't many meetings. Emma will need to do some end-of-the-year duties that week, but she, Peggy Garrigues, and Rev Diana will try to take a vacation that week, and Marsha Thrall can work at home for a few days. Rev Diana added that 3 days would be counted as a vacation or holiday, and it would be great to also extend this courtesy to part-time staff since they don't get vacation time. Henry generously offered to make a gift for each staff member.

DLRE Covenant: Rev Diana shared a draft of the RE Transition Team's covenant with new DLRE Marsha Thrall which will be shared during a future ceremony to be held during a Sunday service. The Board provided some suggestions on wording since the covenant should be between the DLRE and the congregation, not the RE Transition Team.

Closed Executive Session

Process Observer: Miller

Closing Words: Alan

Adjournment, and Extinguish the Chalice: Swanson

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 pm.

Next board meeting 7:00, December 15th, 2021 via Zoom

Paula Miller, Acting Secretary

Draft #2.