

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees
December 8, 2011

Board Members Present: Sarah Berke; Thea Bourke-Martin; Gregg Burton; Patricia Duff; Sandra Frawley; Sue Linsley, Larry Rizzolo; Jessie Whitehead

Board Members Absent: Lisa Anderson; Alan Price; Gil Belaval;

Also Present: Kathleen McTigue; Tansey Birenbaum; Joan Javier; Jeremy Hill

T. Bourke called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and G. Burton recorded the minutes. A quorum of Board Members was present, and the meeting proceeded with T. Bourke presiding.

Resolution in Support of Joan Javier

K. McTigue introduced Joan Javier to the board and explained the ordination process and the process by which a candidate seeks the support of the board of a congregation. J. Javier spoke on her behalf in requesting the board's support and responded to questions from the board.

MOTION by L. Rizzolo to adopt a resolution supporting Joan Javier in the ordination process; **Seconded and passed without dissent.**

Treasurer's Report

S. Frawley presented the status of revenues and expenses to date in comparison to the budget.

J. Hill presented a plan from the Finance Committee to be involved in the early stages of the canvass campaign to provide information for determining financial goals in order to improve the success of canvass. The Finance Committee's role in the process is not to determine the goals, but to determine the cost of various priorities being considered by the board.

S. Frawley presented cost estimates for a number of budget priorities that had been previously discussed and considered by the board. It was noted that even if there is no

change in budget line items, an increase in pledge revenue of 4% is needed to meet anticipated expense increases.

Several potential priorities were discussed by the board. Modifications of various goals were discussed by the board.

Following discussion, by rounds of voting for the highest priority among the proposed goals (with subsequent rounds similarly voting for the highest priority goal among the remaining goals), the board identified the following budget goals for 2012-2013 canvass, in order of priority from highest to lowest: (1) restoration of the payment of UUA and Clara Barton District dues to 65% of "Fair Share"; (2) to provide cost of living adjustments to staff compensation, planned staff compensation increases toward UUA standards and to restore Director of Religious Education supplies/materials expense budget; (3) add a half time staff position to assist with congregation communications and new member coordination; and (4) to restore \$15,000 to a reserve to meet budget expense overruns and mitigate revenue shortfalls.

Proposal Regarding UUA/CBD Dues

K. McTigue presented a proposal for a campaign to pay UUA/CBD dues that were cut from the budget by making an appeal for individuals to contribute their portion of dues. The board discussed the proposal. Concerns were noted about aspects of individual, as opposed to collective, nature of the proposal. It was clarified that this proposal relates to dues for the current year (2011-2012) as opposed to the canvass budget priorities which relate to next fiscal year.

MOTION by P. Duff to conduct a 2 week campaign at the end of the current year to restore UUA/CBD dues, on the condition that fundraising efforts are unsuccessful in raising sufficient funds to restore the dues. **Seconded and passed with no dissent and one (1) abstention.**

Proposal for Membership Case Study

L. Rizzolo presented a proposal for a case study to identify new and existing member needs and to formulate ideas for improving member connections. L. Rizzolo reviewed and summarized data from an informal survey conducted during a recent new member outreach effort. Findings indicated that people wished to become more connected and involved, but had a sense that committees and groups were fully staffed and did not need/desire additional volunteers. Proposal suggests an online survey be conducted as a first step to obtain a larger sample of opinions.

ACTION ITEM: Follow up conversations to be had between T. Bourke, S. Berke, L. Rizzolo and K. McTigue to discuss steps for moving forward productively.

Update on Director of Religious Education Search

K. McTigue provided an update on the efforts of the DRE Search Committee. The pool of interested candidates is smaller than had been hoped. Currently the committee believes that there are two potential candidates. No request has been made at this time, but the Search Committee is considering requesting the addition of travel expenses to the DRE compensation.

Follow Up From Listening Board

The board discussed comments and concerns raised at the listening board session, noting the following comments in particular:

- Request that board minutes be posted online.
- **ACTION ITEM:** G. Burton to pursue posting of minutes for board meetings and draft and adopted minutes of congregational meetings online.
- Suggestion that natural gas installation be considered for social hall heating.
- **ACTION ITEM:** the board directs Buildings & Grounds Committee to obtain bids for installation of a natural gas line for heating for the social hall; board direction is to be communicated to Buildings & Grounds Committee by T. Birenbaum.
- Concerns raised about the recurring budget shortfalls and stop gap measures versus long term reconciliation of revenue and expenses. The board discussed this being a central concern to be addressed in each of its budget/canvass discussions.
- Suggestion that pictures of board members be posted in the social hall.
- **ACTION ITEM:** T. Birenbaum to coordinate pictures of board members for posting.

Miscellaneous

The board discussed the ongoing efforts to support the welcome committee on the first day of the month. Concerns were raised about the coordination of board volunteers with regular volunteers.

ACTION ITEM: S. Linsley volunteered to act as coordinator for the board participation in Welcome Committee activities on the first of each month.

Minutes

MOTION by S. Frawley to approve the minutes for the meeting on November 10, 2011.
Seconded and passed without dissent

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m. by **MOTION** of J. Whitehead; **seconded and passed without dissent**