

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees
December 12, 2013

Accepted January 30, 2014

Board Members Present: Suzanne Miller, David Jones, Bobbi Pace, Greg Seaman, Alison Cunningham, Rod Groff, Holly Hawkins, Mary Donohue, Peggy Rae

Board Members Absent: Nancy Lesh

Also Present: Emily Melcher, Jean Rosenthal

A. Cunningham called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm and P. Rae recorded the minutes. A quorum of Board Members was present, and the meeting proceeded with A. Cunningham presiding.

Personnel Committee Report and 2014-2015 Budget Priorities

Personnel Committee Chair Jean Rosenthal reported on the Committee's analysis of possible changes to the Personnel budget for next year and the financial impact of each were they to be adopted. She also presented the Committee's first thoughts on priorities.

Board members commented on the thoroughness and clarity of the report and thanked her for providing the information at this early stage of budget development.

H. Hawkins noted that in July, 2014, there will be a period between the departure of Interim Minister E. Melcher and the arrival of our new minister when USNH will have no minister. She inquired if funds for ministerial coverage for this time should be included in the Personnel budget, or if not there, then in another area of the budget.

E. Melcher pointed out changes to the UUA's recommendations for pension contributions taking effect in 2014. At present, the UUA recommends an employer (congregation) contribute an amount equal to 10% of the employee's salary to the pension fund; in 2014, the recommendation allows an employee contribution match program, coupled with a lower fixed contribution, potentially costing a congregation less. The board will need to decide how to structure contributions. J. Rosenthal will provide further information as needed.

J. Rosenthal departed at 7:35 pm, and a discussion of her report ensued. It was decided to take up a fuller discussion of budget priorities at the Board's December 17 meeting, to which Finance Chair Sandy Frawley will be invited. The governance meeting planned for that date will be held in January. [Note: Dec. 17 meeting was snowed out. Board members, S. Frawley, and E. Melcher held an informal discussion on the budget via teleconference. -P. Rae, 1/30/14].

Board Meeting Schedule in January

To accommodate the need for additional governance meetings before the January 26 congregational meeting when the Board introduces its policy governance work on mission and ends, the January meeting schedule is changed to the following:

Thursday, Jan. 9 Governance Meeting
Tuesday, Jan. 14 Regular Board Meeting
Tuesday, Jan. 21 Governance Meeting

All meetings are at 7 pm.

[Note: The Board subsequently decided to devote its Jan. 14 meeting to governance and preparation for the congregational meeting. The regular Board meeting was re-scheduled to Jan. 30, at 7 pm. –P. Rae, 1/30/14].

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes of the 11/14/13 Board of Trustees Meeting.

MOTION D. Jones to approve; **SECONDED** B. Pace; **PASSED** without dissent or abstention.

Financial Report

G. Seaman reported on the November 30, 2013 Balance Sheet. R. Groff expressed concern that the budget is running a deficit. G. Seaman noted that it is difficult to make projections at this point because income and expense streams are not constant; pledges don't come in at a steady rate, and some expense items are paid in full early in the year.

H. Hawkins asked if members of the congregation will get pledge statements indicating what portion of their 2013-2014 pledge remains to be paid. E. Melcher said the intent is to send out such statements within the next two weeks, but there will probably be some errors. Although the new database has all the data from the old database, not all the pledges had been recorded correctly in the old database (some payments were recorded as contributions rather than as pledge payments, for example). Tisha Ferguson has been addressing this problem, but will enclose a note with the statements to alert people to contact her if they believe there's a mistake in their information.

G. Seaman reported that Assistant Treasurer Janet Lyons is handling Sunday plate collections and works in the office on Mondays to help prepare deposits.

Building and Grounds Committee

A. Cunningham reported that additional members are needed for the Building and Grounds Committee due to the departure of several members. A few people have been approached and are considering joining the committee, but she urged board members to think of other likely candidates who would know what to do if something needed to be done with the building.

G. Seaman noted that holes had been found in the Dryvit stucco facing on the building, allowing water to get in; proposals are being received for repairs.

New “Church DB” Database

E. Melcher described some features of the new USNH database, which will be accessible to all members through their own passwords and logins. Among other benefits, the database will broaden and expedite connections among members and committees and allow individuals to keep track of their donations and pledges.

Rob Camm is working with Tisha Ferguson and G. Seaman on data migration. The “go live” date is not yet known, as there is still much to do. When the database is in place, Rob will meet with the Board to help familiarize Board members with the program.

A. Cunningham pointed out the need to develop policies around the database. Of particular concern are questions of who will have what level of access. General use policies are also needed to address such questions as can a person use the member directory to print out labels for advertising?

ACTION: M. Donohue and R. Groff will work with Tisha Ferguson to develop a draft policy for Board review and approval.

Other

M. Donohue noted the stove in the kitchen is not working. Building and Grounds Committee member Martin Gent has been informed and will attempt to have it repaired; if this fails, it will be necessary to get another stove.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.