

Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Unitarian Society of New Haven
May 9, 2024
Approved by the Board June 13, 2024

USNH Board Members Present:

Bobbi Pace, President	Joan Ciano
Sue Trotta-Smith, Vice-President	Kathy Haskins
Tom Ward, Treasurer	Becky Reeve
Terry Bohnhorst Blackhawk, Clerk	Kyle Manning
Alissa Chapin	

Also present:

David Stagg, Management Team
Rev. Stephen Kendrick, Ex officio

1. Call to order: President Bobbi Pace called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Chalice Lighting and Reading: Kathy Haskins read “The Low Road,” a poem by Marge Piercy
3. In response to President Bobbi Pace’s question *If you could dedicate a year of your life to serving a cause, what would it be?* Board members mentioned the following: promoting universal health care; defunding the police; working with literacy and/or theater programs for kids; returning to work with the Back Bay Mission of Mississippi that provides structural and electrical assistance for the housing of low income people; building community through wellness healing and meditation; educating the public about plant-based diets; protecting migratory birds; working with small organizations dedicated to solving the problem of land mines; continuing to work with the UU Foundation; working with retired police officers on the issue of gun control; volunteering with an organization that does horse rescue.
4. Board members took turns reading the items of the USNH Covenant.
5. President Bobbi Pace led a discussion of Covenant item: *Allow for moments of contemplation and opportunities to seek clarification.* Board members agreed that as a group, members usually ask for clarification when needed. Others mentioned the need to pause and take time to think about matters. Discussion resumed after an appropriate pause.
6. Board members took time reading the soon-to-be-renamed Ends Statements.
7. President Bobbi Pace called for the approval of the agenda, which passed unanimously.
8. Minutes from the April 11, 2024 Board meeting. Sue Trotta-Smith moved and Alissa Chapin seconded approval of the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Minister's Report: Rev. Stephen reported that staff evaluations have almost concluded and Jamie leading evaluations with Oscar, Libby, and Antonia. The Worship Committee's plans for the summer are almost complete, with lay-led services coordinated by Rich Stockton through July and Gwen Heuss-Severance in August. Rev. Stephen will preach two summer services as well as one on Memorial Day. Kathleen McTigue as Minister Emerita is on tap for one service per year.
10. Management Team Report: David Stagg reported on the MT review of Policy Governance Section 1.3 – "Treatment of Paid and Volunteer Staff." See attached. There were no complaints after staff members were asked to respond to the policy. Thank-you letters went out to Gwen Heuss-Severance and her team upon the disbanding of the pandemic-inspired BRAG (Building Reopening Advisory Group). Other items included the newly installed asphalt path, security updates, and equipment maintenance. Board members asked if the MT could investigate installing motion-sensor lights and a railing on the asphalt path. Regarding ongoing maintenance of the building's roof, this year the MT recommends replacing the section over the kitchen and part of the lobby. The MT has received a proposal from Seal-Tite, which has worked on the roof before. Per David Stagg's request, Bobbi Pace moved and Alissa Chapin seconded that the Board accept Seal-Tite as a single-bid supplier for this roof improvement. The motion passed unanimously.
11. The Board received and discussed the treasurer's report submitted by Tom Ward.
12. USNH Budget discussion & Approval: Board members reviewed and discussed the proposed FY25 budget. Bobbi Pace announced that Becky Friedkin will lead budget discussions with congregants after the service on 5/19 and at the Congregational Meeting on June 2. Shirley Dion will share the proposed Capital Budget.

Kathy Haskins moved that the Board accept the proposed budget. Joan Ciano seconded. The motion was unanimously approved and President Bobbi Pace expressed thanks to the Management Team for their hard work.
13. The Spring Congregational Meeting will be held after the service on Sunday, June 2, 2024. Bobbi Pace outlined the Agenda. Board members will help out at the meeting, and child care will be provided.
14. In response to draft survey on the Article II Update that had been sent out via email, Board members reported that they found it straightforward and comprehensive. Those who have not yet taken the survey are encouraged to do so.

15. President Bobbi Pace announced that the dates for the USNH Climate Justice Revival are September 28 and 29, 2024. Co-chairs Maggie Goodwin and Melinda Tuhus are excited about it, and Board members are encouraged to get involved. Rev. Stephen suggested that the UUA work Climate Justice in with UU the Vote, since the election is upon us.
16. After considering possible substitutes for “Ends” in USNH Ends Statements (passions, aspirations, visions, outcomes, objectives, purposes, intrepid intentions), Board members decided that “Statements of Visions and Aspirations” would be a good replacement for “Ends Statements.”
17. Process Observation reflection for the meeting: Board members concurred that the meeting had proceeded effectively, with all present participating.
18. Bobbi Pace will send thank-you notes to Carol Cheney and Holly Hawkins for the gold and silver sale.
19. Adjournment: President Bobbi Pace motioned and Kathy Haskins seconded a move to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously with adjournment at 8:11 p.m

The next meeting of the USNH Board will be held in person on June 13, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Terry Bohnhorst Blackhawk (she/hers), Clerk

Attachment:
Monitoring Report on Section 1.3 of Policy Governance

MT Interpretation and Monitoring of Policy Governance Section 1.3

Last reported to the Board 5.8.2023

1.3 Treatment of Paid and Volunteer Staff

With respect to treatment of staff/volunteers, the Management Team may not act in a manner inconsistent with UU Principles or cause or allow conditions that are inhumane, unfair, or unprofessional.

Furthermore, the Management Team shall not:

- a. Discriminate against existing or potential paid or volunteer staff based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, physical disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender characteristics, identity, or expression.
- b. Operate without or fail to comply with written personnel policies that clarify personnel rules for staff, provide for effective handling of grievances, and protect against wrongful conditions.
- c. Subject paid or volunteer staff to unsafe or unhealthy conditions.

Approved by the Board: October 9, 2014; revised February 12, 2015

MT Interpretation.

Section 1.3 a. and b. are explicit and require no interpretation. However, we note that the USNH Employee Handbook elaborates the requirements of 1.3 a. and describes in detail the rules and procedures called for by 1.3b.

Section 1.3 c indicates two areas to be addressed. USNH must comply with longstanding regulations from the fire marshal and the building inspector. Examples include inspection of fire extinguishers, the sprinkler system and testing of the fire alarm. More recent safety concerns require that we develop new procedures e.g. lockdown procedures and new ways of alerting building occupants to emergency situations.

MT Interpretation submitted for approval May 9th 2019

MT Report

All staff members were asked by the Management Team to report any issues covered by 1.3 that have not been properly addressed by the Management Team. There were no complaints.

As the Covid19 pandemic subsided and vaccinations and treatments became widely available, the Building Advisory Reopening Group (BRAG) made masking optional throughout the building, except for several pews in front of the piano, where masking is

MT Interpretation and Monitoring of Policy Governance Section 1.3

required for the comfort of those most vulnerable. The BRAG group disbanded in April, leaving any further policy changes to the Worship Planning Teams and the Management Team. Many thanks to Gwen Heuss-Severance for her capable leadership.

In August 2023, we started a detailed study of safety and security procedures with a new task force led by MT member, Mark Bauer. In November a revised version of SOP-0010 “Emergency Procedures” was released, complete with an evacuation floor plan, for distribution to staff, members and friends who were attending regularly. In December it was decided to install an asphalt pathway from the back of the Sanctuary to the Mishkan Israel parking lot that would be “wheelchair friendly”. Winter delayed the installation, but the pathway was completed in March 2024. There was a congregation-wide meeting on safety and security provided by the Executive Director of Congregation Mishkan Israel as well as de-escalation training for 30 paid staff and front-line volunteers. There was also a police walk-through of the building, and we are expecting a police report with recommendations in the near future. In the spring, there was much discussion among the Staff, the Board and MT regarding the declaration that USNH is a “firearms free facility”. Although a declaration to that effect went out as an email, it was eventually decided that no signs would be posted either external to the building or internally due to the staff’s feeling that posting this would increase our vulnerability.

In January we started to investigate security film for some of our doors and windows designed to slow entry of an intruder. We applied for and received a grant from the FY 2024 Connecticut Nonprofit Security Grant Program (CT-NSGP). The next step will be to choose which doors and windows require this protection. MT reviewed the security of our computers and databases and made several improvements to passwords, anti-malware protection and database access policies.

Our Congregational Administrator, Jamie Ross, continues to maintain the spreadsheet detailing regular inspections of fire extinguishers, sprinkler system, elevator maintenance, emergency lighting, etc. The inspection in September 2023 of our boiler and water heaters, required by our insurance carrier, found leaks in both electric water heaters requiring their replacement. Jamie also reports on any snow/ice conditions, downed trees, wildlife/insect problems etc. that need MT attention. We also have a camera at our front door, which records people entering and exiting.

We report compliance with section 1.3.

Submitted by the Management Team May 9th, 2024