

First Unitarian Church of Des Moines
Board of Trustees Minutes
Thursday, March 26, 2020
6:00 p.m.

In attendance (all via Zoom):

Board Members: Bill Brauch, Gene McCracken, Sue Huber, Scott Clair, Mike Lauer, Patty Notch, Heidi Mannetter, Sarah Jensen, Rev. Amy Shaw

Staff: Charles Lewis, Director of Finance and Administration

Timekeeper: Heidi Mannetter

Process Observer: Mike Lauer

(Several church members also participated.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Board President Sue Huber. Patty Notch moved adoption of the agenda, including the consent agenda approving the February Board Meeting Minutes as published on the church website. The motion was seconded and adopted via voice vote. Board members did a check-in.

Executive Report and Administrative Items

Rev. Shaw discussed their previously submitted written Executive Report. It is posted on the church website. They responded to questions from other Board members.

Financials and Dashboard

Charles Lewis submitted a written financial report. It is posted on the church website. He responded to member inquiries.

He also discussed the draft budget he'd shared with Board and Financial Oversight Committee members prior to the meeting. He responded to questions.

Discussion Items

1. Member Communications. The Board received an update on what's being done to maintain communications with all members of our church. Rev. Amy reported on actions that Lyra Halsten is taking, including recruiting members who are willing to call other members – touching base calls, the idea being to make at least one call to each member to see if they are interested in receiving regular check-in calls from a church member. Caring Ministry is also touching base with a regular group of folks. Lyra and Becky Evans are coordinating. Rev. Amy also discussed how callers should deal with church members who seem to be in trouble, e.g., health issues, etc. Patty Notch raised the question of how to help single parents who usually receive respite from child care responsibilities and for whom it is not currently available.

Franco Berardi gave the Board a quick “crash course” on using Zoom. The Board was grateful and followed with a discussion of the importance of continuing to use Zoom to stay in touch with church members and about how our current experience using services such as Zoom may be used to serve the church after the Covid-19 social distancing measures come to an end. It was also

noted that our church secretary Jane White, is ready and willing to include Zoom meetings on the church calendar.

Stewardship was also discussed with Liz Brennan offering comments.

2. Committee Reports

- a) Nominating – Gene McCracken reported that the Nominating Committee met just prior to church building closure. He also reported the Committee has been contacted by four church members who are interested in Board of Trustee membership. He expects that Committee members will meet (electronically) with the four folks soon. Gene also noted that the Committee will contact Amy sometime in the near future to see if they have time to visit with the Committee about church leadership development.
- b) Governance – Scott Clair reported that the Committee hasn't met recently and that he will contact Committee members to determine member interest in meeting.
- c) Ministerial Review – Heidi Mannetter reported that we had agreed that March was the time at which the Committee was to begin looking at initiating the review process and that the Committee will soon meet electronically to do that. A discussion of the proper form for the review followed.

3. Annual meeting

- a) Budget – By consensus, Board members agreed to hold off scheduling budget forums and sharing a draft budget with the congregation until the April meeting. Rev. Amy suggested a letter from the Board be drafted to update the congregation. The discussion moved to a broader discussion of how the church can communicate with church members during this time of crisis regarding the virus. Board members discussed whether it may be wise to delay the annual church meeting and agreed that making any decision about that should be delayed until the April Board meeting, given the gravity of the current situation regarding Covid-19 and that we expect by then we'll have a better sense of what we might be able to expect to do in June.
- b) Unsung UU award – Any work on this was delayed until the April Board meeting.
- c) Faith in Action – Similarly, delayed until the April Board meeting.

4. Board Goals:

- a) Board members decided, by consensus, to hold off conducting a second survey to church members until a later time.
- b) Update on accessibility. Charles Lewis reported that the efforts to improve church accessibility are on hold. He also reported that he's given the go-ahead to the entity chosen to work on improving the sound in the auditorium but that he's still waiting to connect with them about what is to happen next. Rev. Amy reported that they met with the accessibility team and picked out product for putting the reflective edges on certain

stairway steps and that as soon we're back in the building that will be done. They also reported that they and Charlie are still working on the issue of mechanical doors. Charlie reported that the next step on that effort is getting electricity to the two entrances and that he will check with Al Powers on the status of that.

5. Miscellaneous: Rev. Amy further reported that they had discussed with Sue Huber and Patty Notch an inquiry the church received as to whether our building could host families with Covid-19. Rev. Amy said that they responded that this would not currently be possible as we currently have some staff working in the building and would have to cease all such activities were we to host infectious persons. They also noted that the church is already committed to making the building available at any hour for asylum seekers doing reunifications, making hosting Covid-19 families impossible.

Rev. Amy asked that the Board continue to meet each Thursday at 6 p.m., for at least 15 minutes, to keep abreast of things.

5. UUA Certification Discussion of the church membership numbers reported in January was deferred.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. (Submitted by Bill Brauch, Secretary)