

First Unitarian Church of Des Moines
Board of Trustees Minutes - DRAFT
Thursday, January 21, 2021
6:01 p.m.

In attendance (all via Zoom):

Board Members: Sue Huber, Mike Lauer, Patty Notch, Heidi Mannetter, Sarah Jensen, Scott Clair, Andrea LeMeuse, Greg Nichols, Fern Stewart, Rev. Amy Shaw

Staff: Charles Lewis, Director of Finance and Administration

Timekeeper: Heidi Mannetter

Process Observer: Sue Huber

(Several church members also participated.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Board President Patty Notch. The chalice was presented and a reflection was provided. Check ins were made. Scott Clair, moved adoption of the agenda, and approval of the December Board Meeting Minutes, seconded by Mike Lauer and adopted via voice mail vote.

Executive and Administrative Items

Rev. Shaw responded to questions regarding the Faith and Action Team status. They explained the team was losing some new core members whom initially joined to jumpstart the team and found it may have run its course. They stated active engagement was limited due to COVID and perhaps taking a break for a year might provide the needed hiatus. They further explained finding partnerships could be shifted to the Social Justice Leadership Team for that year. Also, as RE shifts to more community outreach, we will be partnering in a different way.

Questions also arose regarding the Executive Report and the report of how we are advancing our ends, especially regarding end of year reports. Rev. Amy stated they would be more than willing to adjust within the time perimeters and would be willing to adjust next month.

Financials and Dashboard

Charles Lewis added an addendum regarding the audio equipment upgrades stating the lead installer had tested positive for COVID and installation would be delayed. Charlie also reported between Christmas and New Year the PPE was forgiven and we will not be eligible for the next loan.

He responded to questions under Revenue/Expense stating the deposit for Youth Leadership School had been returned. Charlie also noted prepaid pledges at this time are generally \$60,000, however this year they are at \$39,000. He stated it was not a concern at this time, just noteworthy. In response to the \$80,000 mid-year surplus and potential increase in UUA funding, he noted we had increased our UUA contribution this year and the surplus would most likely be consumed by expenses. He noted this could be revisited at the end of the year.

Discussion/Decision Items

1. Board Committee Reports

Financial Oversight Committee – Barb Royal reported they had met in January part of which was with the Endowment Committee. She stated they were awaiting the Board's decision on their role for the budget process. She noted they would be reviewing the quarterly financial review for October,

November, December as well as payroll processing procedures at the February 11 meeting. At the February 25 they will talk about the budget.

It was moved by Sarah Jensen, seconded by Sue Huber for the Financial Oversight Committee to review the budget prior to presentation to the Board. Adopted via voice mail vote.

Endowment Committee – Robert Vance stated, provided the Board and the congregation supported, the committee had recognized that \$100,000 in endowment funds could be made available. It would be in the form of cash out of the account.

Ann Powers, requested when the discussion would begin on the spending of the endowment funds. Discussion ensued regarding whether the item qualified for Executive Session, resulting in the discussion at this time and not in Executive Session.

It was agreed to discuss the potential spending of endowment funds at this time and to invite public comment at the conclusion of the Board discussion. Rev. Amy clarified tonight's discussion needs to center on whether the Board supports the spending of the potential allocated endowment funds and if so, where would you lean.

Margaret Schultz reviewed the process explaining the Endowment Committee has to approve the project as well as the Board, and then it has to be approved by two-thirds vote of the congregation.

Sarah Jensen stated her vote was we should absolutely invest the funds in the church building that supports our goals and mission of the church. Sue Huber stated she supported the expenditure focus on the elevator/lift and dishwasher/sanitizer. Charlie stated the replacement of the elevator/lift would cost approximately \$60,000 of which \$15,000 is available. Greg Nichols cautioned to step gently without a high degree of certainty that 70% of the congregation supports. Rev. Amy stated if the Board votes for spending the money then discussion with the congregation regarding the list to be considered and questions regarding what have we missed would follow. The Board rejected the use of the operating budget forums to discuss the Endowment funds due to the total separation.

Liz Bredeson, Stewardship Committee, stated the Stewardship Committee was not in favor of mixing Endowment and Stewardship. They were protective of Endowment funds not used for everyday things. The Board could say we have a couple of things, perfect time, these are the things we need to do and we have the money. She stated it was a separate track from the Stewardship drive.

Scott Clair reviewed the \$100,000 funding possibilities with the elevator/lift of \$45,000 stating we would begin there and then consider with remaining funds the commercial dishwasher/sanitizer. Also discussed was the potential replacement of other kitchen appliances due of the timing of restaurant closures. Figure out what we are comfortable with and go from there.

Ann Powell recommended the lift and kitchen appliances in broader terms, if short there may be individuals willing to provide additional funds. The other thing is this should be celebrated that the Endowment can do this and address things that need attention and we can pay for it.

It was moved by Scott Clair, seconded by Sarah Jensen that the Board is open to the possibility of spending Endowment funds up to the \$100,000 allocated by the Endowment Committee and willing to construct a proposal on acceptable items. Adopted via voice mail vote.

Scott acknowledged Ann's comments stating there will be more joy and jubilation when the actual piece comes together. This is one when the timing provides a unique opportunity and silver lining to make some of these unique enhancements to our church home while we are out.

Gene McCracken thanked the Board for holding this discussion in open session.

Discussion included the kitchen appliances including the stove and its current condition. Charlie stated he would contact the chair lift company for pricing and touchbase with Al to find a vendor to evaluate the stove. Charlie pointed out the need to have a plan for the kitchen with Al providing much of the mechanical knowledge. Discussion included contacting Wendy Williams and Brandy from Grateful Chef, could be contacted. Sue Huber and Gene McCracken were volunteered by Patty to serve on the committee, they agreed.

Governance – Scott Clair reported they had not, no report.

Nominating Committee - Sue Huber reported they had met and things are getting organized. An application will be made available.

Ministerial Review – No report.

Lens of the Future – No report.

Communications Team – Liz Bredeson presented the fourth proposed Social Media policy before the Board for approval. Updates included replacement of right relations with restorative process and within participation section individual rights "may" be terminated.

It was moved by Greg Nichols, seconded by Scott Clair to approve the Social Media policy. Adopted via voice mail vote.

Discussion included the need to ensure review of the policy. It was also suggested the Governance Committee review whether there were currently a blanket statement for review of policies.

Website Update: No report. They are awaiting Big Impact to return first run for the team to review. At an informal meeting of the Board they will provide a demonstration for feedback and tweaking.

Leadership Committee: Rev. Amy stated next meeting scheduled in February, rolling along, no concerns at this moment.

Widening Circle of Concern – Rev. Amy stated it will resume when back from vacation.

Budget Forums – January 24 and January 28 scheduled.

FFFF – Elaine Imlau reviewed possible format for food fair events starting in June. She has presented to Lens of the Future for small groups and zoom events asking for our blessing. Also discussed were silent auction items that could be put together.

2. Miscellaneous Updates

Communications Team – Liz Bredeson presented the fourth proposed Social Media policy before the

Board for approval. The most concern was under participation guidelines, instead of individual rights "may" be terminated. Added violations will be reported to a team will conduct a restorative process versus right relations.

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FFFF – Elaine Imlau reviewed possible format for food fair events starting in June. She has presented to Lens of the Future for small groups and zoom events asking for our blessing. Also discussed were silent auction items that could be put together. The guidelines provided by the Lens of the Future allow the full level of what can be offered. In regards to vaccines, there is still concern of what the health issues will be, so changes will be made by the Lens committee at that time. Thumbs up to Elaine.

Retooling for New Realities – Patty Notch had second big meeting with Ames and Pennsylvania teams. Interesting discussions were held. Rev. Amy reported GA will be on line again, second chance for people to try GA, exciting news. Musicians will be participating this year.

Gene McCracken operating policy outlines roundtables in January, budget forums in April, Board budget forums in May. Making a case of talking about potential expenditures for new and expanded mission.

At 7:46 p.m., it was moved by Heidi Mannerter seconded by Andrea LeMeuse to go into Executive Session for the purpose of personnel discussion. Adopted via voice mail vote.

At 8:35 p.m., it was moved by Mike Lauer, seconded by Heidi Mannerter to come out of Executive Session. Adopted via voice mail vote.

It was moved by Mike Lauer, seconded by Sara Jensen to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m. (Submitted by Fern Stewart, Secretary)