

First Unitarian Church of Des Moines

Board of Trustees Minutes
Thursday, December 19, 2020
6:00 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: Sarah Jensen

Process Observer: Mike Lauer

(Several church members also participated.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 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 November Board Meeting Minutes, seconded by Andrea LeMeuse and adopted via voice mail vote.

Executive and Administrative Items

Rev. Shaw responded to questions regarding the six individuals who had left the church. She responded the Hendersons (2) moved, the Robertson (2) moved and M. Willis (1) had not responded to any contacts in the last 18 months. She will attempt to locate the other one.

Financials and Dashboard

Charles Lewis reported the application for forgiveness was transmitted to the SPA by the bank, assuming full forgiveness this should be resolved next month. The Board thanked Charlie for his efforts in facilitating the loan process.

Charlie responded to questions on the Programming Dashboard explaining the RE history the average weekly attendance is across all classes, the monthly RE is the total of all classes from every week, every class. He will tweak for next months report.

Communications Team search for someone for the Instagram account, it was suggested hiring an intern to handle the account. Sarah Jensen stated she would contact Barb Royal or Liz Bredeson to continue the discussion.

Discussion/Decision Items

1. Board Committee Reports

Financial Oversight Committee – Barb Royal reported they had not met in the month, and would provide a quarterly report for October and November and December at the January meeting.

Governance – Scott Clair reported they had met and were drafting a one page what current Governance looks like for the website. He thanked Bill Brauch for his work on the document.

Nominating Committee - Sue Huber reported they had met and after the holidays will start pushing for information out for the three board positions and the one or two Financial Oversight Committee after the holidays. It was requested that she add an additional search position to serve on the

Endowment Committee.

Ministerial Review – No report.

Lens of the Future – Al Powers stated he was available to respond to questions from the Board. Greg Nichols reported at a briefing with the heads of Unity Point and Mercy, it was estimated the vaccine would be available for distribution to the general public in central Iowa sometime in April.

Al requested page 12 of the document as well as the one page color summary be included in the publication of the document.

It was moved by Mike Lauer, seconded by Greg Nichols to adopt and post the final draft of the Lens of the Future Committee metrics recognizing it was a fluid document, publish to the congregation including the one page color summary. Adopted via voice mail vote.

A request was presented from the choir director to allow caroling to a limited number of church members with safety measures included. After much discussion, the board determined the activity was not a sponsored church activity nor was it required, recommended or encouraged. It was moved by Mike Lauer, seconded by Sue Huber to approved the request for caroling however choir members and employees participating would do so voluntarily and at their own risk neither the Board of Trustees nor the First Unitarian Church of Des Moines would be responsible if someone contracted Covid-19. Adopted via voice mail vote.

Mike Lauer reviewed a letter he had received from Knock and Drop organization, expressing their thanks for the use of the building for food distribution. They announced they had a permanent location which will be used to grow the efforts to the Latinx community.

Communications Team – Liz Bredeson presented the proposed Social Media policy. She stated it was intended as a guide, to guide and inform those who manage our communication and social media tools. She explained future steps would be the addition of individuals to develop the actual process and steps regarding the management tools. This would include the processes regarding selection and training of moderators of the various platforms. She stated the website was about to be up and running and now their attention was focused on the social media management. She stated this was designed as a broad policy statement that would be further defined for each platform. Board members expressed appreciation to have this in place as a policy to refer back to as the team explores the various channels involved in social media management.

Discussion included the potential misuse of the social media by members wittingly or unwittingly as well as the potential to create a Healthy/Right Relations Team and restorative process. It was suggested referring to other UU churches policies regarding communication policies. A covenant of right relations to be agreed to prior to using the social media. This would be in addition to the membership covenant.

It was moved by Greg Nichols, seconded by Andrea LeMeuse to addition of a covenant of right relations to be added.

Discussion included the need to ensure policy aligns with other policies referenced as long as due diligence and review. It was also suggested to include the use of restorative process.

The motion was tabled to January meeting to refer back to committee to allow discussion and clarification prior to approval of the policy.

Endowment Committee – Deidre Fudge stated she was available to answer questions. Discussion included the Tomorrow Team's recommendations for upcoming projects which included the renovation of the kitchen. The timing of renovating the current kitchen includes availability of equipment due to pandemic as well as the closure of the church. The process and available funds were discussed. The funds could be a loan at market rate, draw down on the fund, matching funds as well as individual donations. It was suggested to refer to the FOC for guidance regarding dollar amount and process. Rev. Amy suggested in a process driven way, the Endowment Committee formally notify the Board of the amount of money available to be spent. The Board would then refer to Finance Oversight Committee the dollar amount and ask whether now is the time to spend.

The Endowment Fund is meant to build funds, the funding of a high impact project has a direct impact on raising additional funds. Discussion included the various projects, funding and what it is needed. Charlie clarified this process most likely won't be completed until this summer. The item will be placed on the January agenda.

2. Miscellaneous Updates

Leadership Committee – Rev. Amy stated three meetings had been held and it was going wonderfully. They were working out effective leadership and the impacts. Looking at all aspects of leaders and building future leaders as well as Retooling for New Realities and leadership in action. Another interesting discussion was working with leaders and developing trust within leadership.

Widening the Circle of Concern – Rev. Amy stated they were reaching the end will finish by end of December. It was an affirming experience, working through the report with church members. Team will be formed to look for barriers in our church that would leave out groups of people.

Ministry Team – Formation of Tech Team to hit the ground, for film, live stream, new sound equipment, etc. Training will be available on the new sound board in the future.

Retooling for New Realities – Patty Notch had first big meeting with Ames and Pennsylvania teams. It is getting started and preparing for the second meeting.

Budget Forums – Membership requirements regarding old school approach, through the new suggestions of time and talent. Also GA delegates will be upcoming.

At 7:43 p.m., it was moved by Andrea LeMeuse seconded by Scott Clair to go into Executive Session for the purpose of personnel discussion. Adopted via voice mail vote.

At 8:38 p.m., it was moved by Scott Clair, seconded by Heidi Mannerter to come out of Executive Session. Adopted via voice mail vote.

It was moved by Scott Clair, seconded by Sara Jensen to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 p.m. (Submitted by Fern Stewart, Secretary)