

First Unitarian Church of Des Moines

Board of Trustees Minutes
Thursday, September 17, 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: Heidi Mannetter

Process Observer: Scott Clair

(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 August Board Meeting Minutes, seconded by Sue Huber and adopted via voice mail vote. Scott Clair moved the adoption of the consent agenda, seconded by Heidi Mannetter and adopted via voice mail vote.

Executive and Administrative Items

Rev. Shaw asked if there were any questions, concerns or thoughts. She reviewed the summer activities adding that numbers were down as they would be as it is summer and folks are busy with other things. She stated the fall programming would kick off September 30th. She reviewed the change in the Programming Dashboard noting instead of listing actual number of people, it now reflected streaming numbers. Responding to questions from the Board, Rev. Amy stated the Caring Ministry's lack of activity did not preclude Pastoral Care which had been provided.

Financials and Dashboard

Charles Lewis submitted a written financial report. It is posted on the church website. Charlie indicated the financials were as expected and on target. The Board of Trustees asked about the timeline for the ADA upgrades for the auditorium equipment and it was explained the vendor was experiencing equipment delays; however, the funds are in place for the ADA improvements. The ADA upgrade for the east and west entrances were being handled by Charlie and Al Powers. Charlie also addressed the PPP Forgiveness explaining he was awaiting the forms and that the funds had been key to not using our reserves. It was anticipated all but \$17,000 of the \$80,000 loan would need repayment with a ten year loan at one percent. The replacement of the two heat exchangers in furnaces on the south end of the basement is being examined. The units are 33 years old and repairs are not feasible.

Charlie was thanked for the thorough Executive Limitations reports that were provided. He explained the reporting was set on an annual basis, however the Board could request it more frequently.

Discussion/Decision Items

1. Board Committee Reports

Governance – Scott Clair stated the committee had reviewed the process and history of the committee for new member Fern Stewart. He explained now the committee would be working on the “the How” it should work, consensus building and how to work with the Board. He stated he would request when the Governance Committee should be placed on the Board agenda.

Financial Oversight – Barb Royal stated there were no big questions and that everything looked good on the report this month. She requested they maintain a standing slot on the Board agenda, but would confirm with her team.

Lens of the Future – Al Powers reviewed the draft opening plan and criteria developed by the Lens of the Future Committee. It described four levels for resuming activities and reopening the building. It also included the specific criteria for moving between Level 0 (all in-person activities suspended) and Level 1 (groups of 10 or fewer meeting outdoors). Specific criteria for moving between higher levels has not been developed, but will most likely use the same or slightly modified metrics with more stringent criteria. Five metrics are being tracked, four from the covid19tracker website and the fifth from NY Times website. Additionally, consideration of known cases among persons that have participated in recent church activities will be a criteria. The Board stated this was exactly the type of document we had envisioned recognizing it was a guideline and open for changes as additional information becomes available. They also recognized the efforts of the committee in producing the draft plan and related criteria.

Debra Rogers responded to questions regarding the transmission rate explaining the NY Times covered it with a rolling average of new cases per 100,000. She also reported the survey was in the edit stage for the board and the results of the survey would be mailed to the Board members next week. Review of the report would be at the October 1 Board of Trustees meeting. She explained there was a lot of depth and material to review.

It was moved by Sara Jensen, seconded by Fern Stewart to accept the framework of the draft opening plan and criteria while understanding the specific metrics are fluid as outlined by the Lens of the Future Committee.

Discussion included noting it was a living document, with Al Powers stating the committee would be monitoring on a weekly basis and taking action if necessary. He also stated a monthly update would be provided to the Board. Motion was adopted via voice vote.

2. Miscellaneous Updates

Leadership Committee – Rev. Amy reviewed the members who had accepted Katie Allen, Sally Boeckholt, Bill Brauch, Liz Bredeson, Darin Jensen and Shelly Kaldenberg and stated it was a good start. She indicated she would be providing an initial report and timeline at the October Board meeting.

In response to questions, Rev. Amy Shaw reviewed the reasons for the dissolution of the councilors and subsequent formation of the leadership committee. She explained their role would be to identify current leaders, increase mentorship, help train leaders and increase institutional memory. As well as assess how ministries are doing, how they can be supported and what they need for support.

Leadership School – Patty Notch reported no one had signed up for the leadership school from our congregation. She hoped if it was offered in the Spring, we would find members interested in attending.

Zoom Meetings – Rev. Amy Shaw stated the links to all meetings would be changing per a change in Zoom requirements. She explained she would be changing all the zoom links and notifying the

congregation. Board members suggested various means to get the word out to members as this will effect participation for the upcoming Special Meeting.

Widening the Circle of Concern – Rev. Amy Shaw encouraged members to participate in the book study that will begin on October 6 at 7:00 p.m. for twelve weeks. She stated the final report from the UUA instituting changes in our denomination was a recommendation. She explained members need to look at what the UUA is saying, what, why and what we are moving towards. We need to understand the pieces that do apply to our congregation as well as the challenging pieces. Rev. Amy explained we as a congregation are reasonable and can most likely manage the pieces. She stated a link was available on the UUA website in the Governance section as books were becoming less available.

3. Wake Now Our Vision/Fund Allocation/Budget

In 2018, the Wake Now our Vision Fund was made available for members to make future bequests, with matching funds from UUA back to our congregation with a top of \$10,000. The funds were received unencumbered and Charlie acted according to procedure. The total fund was \$2,657,002 with a match of \$37,700,, the first three payments were used for ADA compliance and the last was put in the general fund. It became apparent that there was a lack of clarity in the plan, as members' requests for a portion or all of the donation to be placed in the endowment fund were not met, instead all donations went into general fund.

Board members discussed the need to address the discrepancy and provide an amenable portion of the funds over time to the endowment fund. It is the Board's desire to do what givers intended which will require some additional research but intentions will be met. Board members and Rev. Amy Shaw thanked the donors for their generosity.

4. Budget

The three roundtable meetings were lightly attended. There was a strong desire to notify the congregation via Intercom with a hyperlink to documents, FaceBook and emails to attend the upcoming meeting to assure a quorum. Charlie indicated he would renotify members of the draft budget and notes before the special meeting. He also stated he would include the Financial Oversight Committee recommendation. The documents presented included and addressed most of the questions congregates would have about the budget. Questions from the Board regarding the budget included the extra money for cleaning the building which had been cut back to every other week, but renewed tithes allowed for return to every week.

It was moved by Scott Clair, seconded by Mike Lauer to send the Budget to the congregation at the September 27, 2020 special meeting. Motion was adopted via voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m. (Submitted by Fern Stewart, Secretary)