

First Unitarian Church of Des Moines

Board of Trustees Minutes - Draft

Thursday, April 15, 2021

6:03 p.m.

In attendance (all via Zoom):

Board Members: Sue Huber, Mike Lauer, Patty Notch, Heidi Mannerter, Sara Jensen, Andrea LeMeuse, Greg Nichols, Fern Stewart

Staff: Rev. Amy Petri Shaw, Charles Lewis, Director of Finance and Administration

(Several church members also participated.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 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 March Board Meeting Minutes, seconded by Mike Lauer and adopted via voice mail vote.

Executive and Administrative Items

Rev. Amy Shaw reported it was a smooth month, staff was getting things done.

Financials and Dashboard

Charlie Lewis responded to questions regarding the PushPay fees, indicating the possibility of a refund for the first year due to lower than anticipated income. He reported attendance had been light at the budget forums with a total of twenty five in attendance for all sessions. He stated 180 pledges had been received. He confirmed contact was being made with members regarding the need to pledge as Push Pay did not allow rollovers. He stated this was a good thing as it requires an intentional pledge each year, a recommitment. Discussion included the difficulties contacting members without church being open, attempts via phone and emails have gone ignored. Board members would be contacted to help. The Stewardship Committee was commended for their efforts. Discussion also included PushPay annual fee in March, annual rates, guarantees regarding refund of fees if under performed.

Discussion/Decision Items

1. Board Committee Reports

Financial Oversight Committee – Barb Royal reported they had completed the third quarter financial review, as well as an audit of the payroll processing procedures, everything looked great. She thanked Charlie for documenting everything he does. In regards to the seven member committee, she reported after discussion with the three serving board members, two board members were sufficient. Thus, she was recruiting three additional members of which she has two, with a third in the wings. She also reported they were returning to the quarterly meeting schedule meeting beginning in July. She stated she had posted the minutes of the meeting to the website. She requested the Governance Committee to consider a repository for Board committee minutes on the website potentially including rolling 13 months of minutes.

Governance Committee – Scott Clair stated by-laws changes to be approved at the annual meeting were the first priority. He stated the posting of minutes and rolling 13 months made sense and that the committee would review. He responded to questions regarding the Ends expiring, stating it was a Carver Policy Governance relic. He summarized that we were not using Carver Policy, but had embraced the UUA recommended Hotchkiss Governance policy due to its companion/cooperative approach versus the corporate Carver approach. Also discussed was review of the bylaws from a Widening the Circle perspective to eliminate any exclusive language. The intent for this to be done with a bylaw review committee in the upcoming year.

Rev. Amy supported the use of Hotchkiss Governance as an easier and warmer method. They stated the development of a Covenant with the whole church was in the planning stages for the upcoming year. They commented that bylaws are what we say we are going to do, covenant is how we promise to be together when we do it. The UUA is being buffeted by followers of the Gadfly and Critical Race Theory position. We as a congregation have members in both camps, however we are not being torn apart we are staying mission driven. We need to be really sure that our bylaws and our ways we are together are kind and inclusive allowing members to read what they want, think what they want, and do this good work not leaving anyone out.

Scott volunteered to respond to questions regarding Ends expiring at the annual meeting.

Nominating Committee – Sue Huber reported three applications had been received for the board positions, Chelsea Hayes, Reba Eagles and LeeAnn Back. She thanked Barb Royal and Deidre Fudge for their assistance in finding candidates for the Endowment Committee and Financial Oversight Committees.

It was moved by Scott Clair to approve, seconded by Mike Lauer, the following candidates for the Board of Trustees: Chelsea Hays, Reba Eagles and LeeAnn Back; for the Endowment Committee: Darren Jensen three year term, Marilyn Lantz three year term and Dawn Connet one year term; and for the Financial Oversight Committee: Megan Klee and Eileen Jackson. Adopted via voice mail vote.

Lens of the Future – Al Powers requested consideration for the choir exception request to gather. It was moved by Scott Clair, seconded by Mike Lauer to support the request by choir stipulating that they follow the guidelines established by the Lens of the Future Committee. Adopted via voice mail vote.

It was moved by Scott Clair, seconded by Sue Huber to approve of changes to the procedures, which included the definition of a pod and if accepted, actual changes in the procedures. Adopted via voice mail vote.

It was noted that the Committee charter would be ending within a few days. The recommendation to be considered would be to extend it until the calendar year end, while allowing committee members the option to continue their participation, the addition of two board members to serve unless existing continue to serve or they could transition to be congregational members. If it requires additional appointees, they would like to expand and keep those who desire to continue.

Ministerial Review Committee – Heidi Mannerter confirmed Scott Clair and Sue Huber commitment to serve. She requested a list of names and contact information for those to be part of the review. She explained she would send a survey link to committee chairs and board members. It is expected to be sent out around May 1. It was requested to add coping with the pandemic.

2. Miscellaneous Updates

Endowment Committee – Deidre Fudge, acting chair, reported the Endowment Committee had approved the \$60,000 to be spent on the lift project. The \$40,000 requested for the kitchen has not been discussed due to a lack of a quorum at last night's meeting. She announced Robert Vance was leaving the committee, so no formal leader has been elected at this point. She stated she had sent out an email to members, and while it doesn't appear to be a problem, she will need formal approval by members. It was suggested that the Kitchen Committee prepare some preliminary proposals that could be presented at the annual meeting allowing a yes or no vote from the members, provided it was approved by the Endowment Committee.

Kitchen Committee - Sue Huber reported Ann Mowrey, Eric Hayes and Misti Craig formed the committee meeting weekly on Wednesdays. They had met with various groups including Al Powers and Gene McCracken; Theresa Miller and Susan Jellinger; and Pat Peterson and planned to continue meeting with various groups. She explained it would not be possible to provide a plan for the annual meeting. Currently, the committee was attempting to create a needs assessment. There will be an update to provide to the congregation, however we will not be able to bring it to the Endowment Committee and then the congregation by June 6th.

Stewardship Committee – Liz Bredeson stated art and music event was very effective in raising funds, however now is the time to introduce year round stewardship. The plan would divide the members into ten groups, each assigned a specific month, and each sharing a specific theme/interest. Also part of each group would be a member from the Stewardship Committee, Board of Trustees as well as a church leader that was specific to their theme/interest. Each team would work together to develop a cohesive team, through events scheduled during their pledge month. The goal would be to get 80-100% pledges annually from the teams. A plus to the year round stewardship would be they would be hearing about the budget every month with the knowledge of where we were. It is proposed that this would begin in July 2021.

Discussion included that a large church in San Diego was currently doing the year round stewardship drive successfully. This would help build community within the church as well as for a new member becoming immediately part of a group. Rev. Amy stated it would not be just about money, but questions regarding what do you need, where are we going as a church thus creating dialogue. You would build micro-cohorts getting to know each other, reaching out to each other. We could feed each team to get people around the tables to talk, what are you doing, what do you wish we had, how do we get you there. Anyone can attend any month, but you must come to your month. It provides members a way to stay aware of the living cycle of budgeting in real time. The congregation would be aware of each team's percentage of pledge activity. Concern regarding over-taxing the ministry was

also voiced, however it is easier to manage 40 people a month versus 450 all at one time. Budget round tables would still take place but would be more flexible. Questions also addressed the timing and related COVID issues. First months would be individuals with a heavy involvement in the church such as board, committee members, and member staff would be August, September, October most likely by Zoom. This should allow people to get engaged and back into the church or go to events and build a community. Captain of each month to continue the conversations monthly, and not just for money, asking what's going on, how you're doing, welcoming people in.

3. New Business

Approval of Final Budget – Changes to the budget included bringing in the bookkeeper and administrative assistant this summer which adds to the budget. It was moved by Sara Jensen, seconded by Greg Nichols, to approve the final budget. Adopted via voice mail vote.

Formation of Tech Team – Rev. Amy reviewed the need for a tech team stating we need to be aware AV team already in place. Tech Team will have to go with the sound team to work together and develop what that looks like. They explained this is a congregational responsibility to form the team. Tech celebrants to advance slides, manages the screens. The AV team will be contacted by Amy once her vaccination process is completed. This will need to be discussed at the next board meeting. They stated we were in the top 100 downloaded podcasts out of 17,000 in religion for Apple.

Whole Church Covenant – Rev. Amy stated incoming Board Member Reba Eagles will help lead that work next year involving people to give opinions, thoughts and word smithing. A four part class on what covenant is and what it is as an underlayment to UU's. They have met and looked at various covenants, it is in the planning stage.

Call for the Unsung UU Award - The announcement as of the board meeting tonight, the nominations form is up and will be featured on the Intercom and website.

4. From the Congregation – No items.

5. On the HorizonGA Delegates – We need to start thinking hard and intentional on selecting delegates. Delegates vote, it is important to vote your conscience and understand the issues. We are allowed 9 delegates and costs \$200. Expectation is to attend the business meetings and vote. It will be virtual again this year. Suggestions included having former delegates address the congregation. This will be on the May agenda. Barb Royal volunteered to put something in the Intercom.

It was moved by Scott Clair, seconded by Heidi Manner to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m. (Submitted by Fern Stewart, Secretary)