

Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing Board of Trustees

268 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road
Titusville, NJ 08560

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, Sept. 14, 2016



**Join the Journey.
Open to You.**

Pam Shadzik, acting president, called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:03 pm. Also in attendance: Trustees Andrew Conrad (tonight's timekeeper), Ed Dobrowolski (tonight's process observer), Heather Edwards, Frank Holstein, and Pete Rafle; Treasurer Lynne Quinto; Secretary Mike Dalzell; Office Administrator Susan Irgang; DLRE Robin Pugh; and Rev. Kim Wildszewski.

Consent agenda

The minister, DLRE, and office administrator prepare reports of activities for the board on a monthly basis. These reports form what is called the "consent agenda." These reports are distributed with these minutes as Exhibits A, B, and C. Andrew moved that the board accept the August reports. Lynne seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Consent agenda time was also used to revise and then approve a draft of minutes of the 2016 Annual Meeting. Individuals who presented at the 2016 Annual Meeting had previously reviewed and approved their portions of the draft. The draft will be presented to the congregation at the 2017 Annual Meeting.

Restroom renovations

Susan Irgang provided an update on the restroom renovation project. Pressure assist toilets for all the restrooms in the church excluding a urinal for the men's room have been purchased. Andrew Kidd and Farzad Shadzik are working on sourcing of partitions and other products. This will take time, as Andrew is doing this on his own time while also working on the fire door replacement project. Thus, a great deal of visible movement should not be expected in the short term.

The office is following the Procuring Services Policy, which requires obtaining 3 bids for services or capital improvements paid from the operating budget in excess of \$1,000. Current practice is to require 3 bids for anything in excess of \$5,000 that is to be paid from the building reserve, and although this custom is not present in any policy, Susan said this custom is being followed for restroom renovations. Frank asked that Andrew Kidd share his purchasing methods with Susan so that she can include them in her board reports.

Ed suggested that the Procuring Services Policy, which was last updated in 2010, be updated again, as the \$1,000 level might be unrealistically low. Frank will ask the Finance Committee to revisit the policy.

Financial calendar

Finance Committee Chair Joe Schenk and Stewardship Committee Chair Lou Csabay presented recommendations for revising the timing of financial-related events at UUCWC, including the stewardship campaign, the annual auction, and the start and finish of the budget year. The two also provided a recommendation for the use of end-of-year gifts, shared impressions of a congregation-wide capital campaign educational program, and proposed a timeline for a capital campaign.

The board appreciates the energy that went into these recommendations. A capital campaign consultant will attend the board's October meeting, after which the board will follow up on the recommendations.

CFA Update

Sallie Dunner walked the board through the Council for Faith in Action's proposed process for congregational discussions about Black Lives Matter. Developed by Sallie and Nathalie Edmond, the process involves a series of informational sessions and listening circles.

Sallie stressed that CFA is not going to “advocate anything,” but rather will provide information so the congregation can decide what it will support, as during the Welcoming Congregation discussions of the 1990s. At the end of the process, a straw poll will be taken about support of Black Lives Matter. If the outcome is not decisive, the congregation will not be asked to vote on whether to place a Black Lives Matter banner on the church lawn.

Treasurer’s report

- Two months into the 2016–17 budget cycle, we have a \$15,436 surplus, owing largely to prepaid pledges, summer staffing hours, and quiet program activity during the summer.
- \$5,600 was paid out the building reserve for exterior painting. This cost was considerably lower than what should be expected, thanks to a generous donation of materials by Farzad Shadzik.

Appointment of vice president

The board unanimously elected Pam Shadzik to serve as vice president for the remainder of the 2016–2017 church cycle. Pam will continue to fulfill the role as acting president as long as necessary.

With Pam fulfilling the duties of president, the board recognized the need for an interim vice president to handle the duties of the vice president (primarily, to chair Church Council). The board unanimously selected Ed Dobrowolski to serve as interim vice president for as long as Pam serves as acting president.

Fellowship hour

The board deferred discussion of Fellowship Hour. Recommendations for contributions of food at Fellowship Hour will be included in the October office administrator’s report.

Stipends

The board discussed UUMA recommendations for providing stipends to ministers emeritus for preaching engagements. “Emeritus” status requires creation of a formalized process for compensating a minister emeritus for an appearance, rather than providing payment on an *ad hoc* basis as with guest speakers. Heather will follow up with Rev. Charles about the outcome of our discussion prior to his Oct. 9 sermon.

Liaisons

Mike will distribute a list of 2015–16 board liaisons in preparation for liaison assignments at our next regular board meeting.

Housekeeping

- The next board contribution to *CrossCurrents* (October issue) will review discussion at the October board meeting about a capital campaign.
- A future issue of *CrossCurrents* will cover revisions to the Procurement Services Policy.

Process check

Process check is our “gut check” on how we work or interact. Two items were discussed this evening:

- Unless otherwise discussed, the board secretary is responsible for inviting guests to our meetings.
- The board will show respect to guests by not making assumptions when we address them.

Adjournment and next meeting

There being no further business, the board adjourned at 9:00 pm. Next meeting is Oct. 12 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Mike Dalzell, Secretary, Board of Trustees

EXHIBIT A

Rev. Kim Wildszewski
Board Report September 2016

UUCWC Mission

To Create Community, Celebrate Life, and Change the World
What does it mean to be a People of Covenant?

Create Community

We begin this month in full with our annual multi-generational Water Communion on the 11th and a revitalized church-wide picnic directly after, hosted by our new Community Building team. The Water service has gone through many evolutions in recent years and, in an effort to always better our services to be truly multi-generational, this year will be no different as we once again introduce “Spirit Worship” (first introduced by Rev. Jennifer) – an embodied story threaded through the entire service, rather than just one portion.

Two services as well as Children’s RE begin on the 18th. This Sunday will be co-led between musician David Roth and me. A great way to build energy for another year to come.

We had three new members sign the book in early August. Our next Roots class is in October. Visitors and friends are already signing up for this season’s Path to Membership.

The staff retreat was successful, allowing us to connect as well as plan more fully for our individual portfolios as well as our communal work. For example: With Caryl and Erin at the helm of music, we will be introducing monthly teaching hymns so that the congregation learns more songs from our hymnal and thus feel more confident in seeing a larger variety of music. Erin is also considering starting a family choir for all ages and all singing levels; a version of a goal named in our Strategic Plan that was attempted years ago but didn’t have much life. More modern music and introduction of songs that are accessible to more voices is also an articulated goal.

A recurring conversation I am having with congregants in different environments is a sense that “there are so many committees and ministries – I have no great sense of all that’s being done here.” The sentiment in this is often a feeling of disconnection and feeling out of the loop. Revisiting the old Committee Fair practice has been brought up for discussion; others have celebrated the new Annual Report process and result. I am seeking new ways of bringing all that we do to the attention of the larger congregation.

Additional Community creating opportunities that I am looking forward to seeing roll out this fall include the launch of our new website that is sure to impress and connect; Kinship Circles continuation and expansion; and the Community Building Team’s hope to (re)introduce Karaoke nights, dance classes, the purchase of a new grill to live on our grounds for BBQs, and other multi-generational activities.

Lastly, I believe our experimental Animal Blessing last month was a success. With over 100 in attendance (of all ages) and many animals (from guinea pigs, dogs and a horse!), many expressed feeling connected to folks in new and unique ways. That said, others went to other congregation that morning because they wanted “a real church experience.” If we are to do it again, which I believe we should, I suggest it be done every other year.

Celebrate Life

As always the Pastoral Care continues. In the last three weeks I have officiated two memorial services for non-members (the deceased were related to Members or Friends); met with three members to discuss end-of-life care; I will officiate one couple’s wedding this weekend; and am in the midst of planning child dedications. In addition, a continued theme among our members is the new relationships with their adult children and elderly parents.

This year we will continue the Being Mortal discussions, hosted by three members. In addition the Pastoral Care Team (Caring and Associates combined) will look to offer at least two programs on the same theme. We are currently exploring introducing a “Death Café” – a national initiative whose objective is *'to increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives'*. [www. DeathCafe .com](http://www.DeathCafe.com).

The Pastoral Associate also look to continue the work with the Widow’s Group though this is currently in a lull.

We continue to be challenged in thinking of a concrete system to support our current membership – new, long term and those incoming – with our current staffing structure and volunteer power. Many of my colleagues struggle to bring new folks in. We are struggling with what to do with folks once they are here to get them and keep them connected. I will likely be working more closely with Membership this year, or trying to think of a new ministry team that would be better able to address this need.

Change the World

This past month Sallie Dunner, the Rev. Rob Gregson, and I met with the local Chief of Police, a lieutenant and Committeewoman to discuss the possibility of UUCWC hanging a Black Lives Matter banner. As you will read in the upcoming Cross Currents, the meeting was highly encouraging and the local officials extremely supportive of our right to this work.

The Council for Faith in Action has planned an extremely well thought out action plan to discuss the work of the Movement for Black Lives (previously known as #Black Lives Matter). This will include a Frequently Asked Questions presentation offered twice to the community to simply give as much fact to the conversation as possible and to allow us to each begin from the same place. These will be followed by four listening circles hosted by the Right Relations Committee. From these circles there will be a loose poll taken. A paper handout at the end of the Listening Circle will ask, If a vote was taken today to hang a banner would you vote in

affirmation or against? If it does not appear to receive 75-80% guaranteed affirmation, we will not call for a vote for a banner.

Thank you all. I am looking forward to being with you next week.

Best,
Kim

EXHIBIT B

To: UUCWC Board, Barbara Jensen, and Kim Wildszewski

From: Robin Pugh

Date: Sept. 10, 2016

Re: Monthly DRE Report

Create Community:

- Between recruiting and scheduling RE teachers and assistants and ARE facilitators and participants, I have been in touch with at least 65 people in the congregation in the past month. My emails are not just asks, it is also a way to touch base with people. I find out about pastoral issues, remind people of what UUCWC can uniquely call them to be, and reconnect them to UUCWC.
- I've redesigned my teacher training to make it 1/3 education, 1/3 connection, 1/3 inspiration. (Learned from my class at Star Island this summer) It will be held on Sat 9/17. Forty- Five teachers have been invited.
- The nursery is in transition. After looking at attendance data, I noticed that most kids in the nursery are 2nd children (our attendance in the nursery is down). The first born or only kids often stay with their parents and we have less of that demographic than in previous years. New parents, who are often our visitors, must feel good about leaving their child in the nursery or they won't return until their child is older. I am working to make the nursery more professional and therefore more welcoming to new parents. I am working with Aubrey to bring her up to speed with our new expectations and I am hiring an additional childcare worker for the nursery. This person will do childcare during the 2nd service and most of the childcare needed after services and for special events. .

Celebrate Life

- Katie Bergin has made a huge difference for me in RE start up (that's why she's under "Celebrate Life". She makes me celebrate my life! ☺). She is prepping the classrooms, creating bulletin boards, reminding parents to register children for RE, creating class folders, nametags, and distributing curriculum to teachers. These tasks previously took up all my time in Aug/Sept. This has allowed me to redesign my teacher training, focus on the nursery and devote more time to ARE among other things.

Change the World

- I am facilitating a chalice circle this year. To prepare for that, I delve deeply in to the monthly theme. I didn't realize how important my facilitating would be to UUCWC and to me until I did it this month. Since I do not attend worship except for the story, I have not "lived" with our monthly themes. By facilitating a chalice circle, I am in touch with what UUCWC is encouraging people to explore and most importantly what we uniquely offer to people (depth and meaning in their lives). It is great for me to be reminded of that. As DLRE, I spend a lot of time encouraging people to join or be more involved in UUCWC in different ways. Facilitating chalice circles makes me a UU proselytizer.

EXHIBIT C

Susan Irgang September 2016 BOT Report

UUCWC Mission: *To Create Community, Celebrate Life, and Change the World*

Creating Community

We had a wedding rental on 9/9-10 at which Kim will officiate. The renter will give me feedback in a few weeks about the experience as they are our “trial run” of having a rehearsal dinner here as well as using the classrooms all day before the afternoon wedding as “makeup and hair prep” for the bridal party. If the feedback is positive, it is something we can start advertising for future wedding rentals.

I have been working with Nick Mellis, who is orchestrating our new fundraising concert series “Cosmic Concerts”, to schedule, publicize and make additional arrangements. This new venture may bring in people previously not familiar with UUCWC.

Celebrate Life

With the August signing of the membership book by Denny and Penny Rodgers and Mary Acciani, our membership numbers are 272 Church Members, 33 Friends and 26 Attendees.

Change the (UUCWC) World

FMT News: In meeting the January Board retreat goal for “visible improvements in the facilities by the beginning of the church year”, and as previously reported, we have replaced the carpet in the lobby and hallway and installed new outdoor pathway lighting to the Crossings Room. Work on the bathroom renovations will not be visible for some time, though sourcing of products has begun (see below). Another goal was communication with the congregation on the parking project and resolution by then: my August report included the success of approval by the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission, and we can publicize this in the next CrossCurrents, Crossings II and weekly email once I have identified the next steps in the process.

The fall FMT meeting was held on August 11th, and below is a synopsis of what team members reported:

Building:

1. We continue to receive extensions from the Hopewell Fire Department to install a new fire door in the downstairs stairwell by the restrooms to meet code. Andrew Kidd is sourcing a door and it will be installed as soon as possible. There are related storage changes that will need to accompany the new fire door installation; we are sourcing someone to build a closet in Room 103 to accommodate this need.
2. The purchase of the stove continues to be delayed until we can coordinate the schedules of key church people who would receive the new stove and oversee its installation.
3. Bathroom fixtures (toilets and urinal) have been purchased; measurements for partitions have been taken and Andrew Kidd continues to source the other elements needed for this major renovation project.

Grounds teamed with Building on the exterior lighting improvements. The Konopkas continue to maintain our grounds with mowing, meadow management, etc.

Safety Team has created updated emergency contact lists and has created signs for use throughout the church that give better detail on making 911 calls (what info is required, address, etc.); these will be installed in September. Playground safety issues have been addressed and the team is working on playground safety guidelines.

Memorial Garden Team has been gathering bids for a fencing redesign and expansion. There are currently 21 spots within the garden that have been taken and 28 have been reserved. Investigation into engraved brick pavers has begun and samples will be shared with Memorial Garden Team members. An accessibility walk has been discussed to help those with mobility issues access the Memorial Garden.

Tech: Olaino Hardaway completed a complete upgrade to the wifi system. Our new copier will be installed in early September.

Earth Ministry will be researching the effectiveness/return from the solar panels, as well as follow up on suggested improvements from the energy audit that have not as yet been done.

Conclusion:

This month I returned to my 30 hours per week schedule and Katie Seeley (nee Bergin) has begun new expanded hours (from 10 to 14). We look forward to starting up a new church year.