

Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing Board of Trustees

268 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road
Titusville, NJ 08560

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2017



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

Pam Shadzik, acting president, called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:02 pm. Also in attendance: Acting Vice President Ed Dobrowolski (tonight's process observer); Secretary Mike Dalzell (tonight's timekeeper); Treasurer Lynne Quinto; Trustees Andrew Conrad, Heather Edwards, and Pete Rafle; DLRE Robin Pugh; and Rev. Kim Wildszewski. Heather offered opening words.

Consent agenda

Andrew moved that the board accept the monthly reports of the minister, office administrator, and DLRE (Appendices A, B, and C, respectively, attached to these minutes). Mike seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Process check

The board discussed the resignation of Trustee Frank Holstein and its potential implications for recruiting and governance.

Board leadership

Kathy Frey has shared that she will not retain the presidency of the board in the 2017–18 budget year. In response to Pam's request, several board members have identified a longtime member of the congregation as a possible successor to Kathy beginning with the next term that begins on July 1, 2017. This member will attend board meetings and shadow Pam in a leadership-development role. At present, however, she is not joining the board, and her future role is not yet clear. As with any member of the congregation, she must be interviewed by Nominating and placed on the slate at this year's annual meeting.

Any member of the congregation who is interested in a role on the board or another leadership position in the church is encouraged to contact the Nominating Committee.

Treasurer's Report

Lynne Quinto reported that the church ran a \$3,735 deficit in December but remains \$7,033 ahead of projections at the 6-month point of the 2016–17 budget year. The year-end gift collection totaled \$16,000, an amount that was short of the \$20,000 goal but still considered respectable.

Fellowship Hour

Issues regarding congregational responsibility for Fellowship Hour remain unresolved. Committee and team members are frustrated with the added responsibility when they are already giving of their time. Susan Irgang, meanwhile, continues in her temporary role of assigning and monitoring committee/team participation. Pam asked for an accounting of how much time Susan spends on this task.

A potential solution is for the church to purchase food for Fellowship Hour; this is done at BuxMont at a cost of ~\$100 per month. The questions of who should provide and purchase food and whether the church is prepared to support a budget line for Fellowship Hour all have implications for culture change. The issue will be discussed in more detail at our board retreat in February.

Gaming license

Wishing to sell 50/50 tickets at the annual auction, the Auction Committee has asked the board for permission to apply for a Small Games of Chance license from the NJ Gaming Commission. The board discussed the request from the viewpoint of our values as Unitarian Universalists. While no board

members had strong opinions about licensure, there was some discomfort with the church offering cash prizes. If the Auction Committee would like to make a strong case for applying for a license, the board is willing to listen.

Capital campaign

On Jan. 17, the Strategic Visioning Task Force begins its work. The team, a group of 10 people who would help Capital Campaign consultant Andrew Hamlin with cottage meetings, development of a vision, and preparation of a case study, is being led by Jayme Trott.

Ministerial intern

Rev. Kim has convened a 4-person “search committee” to screen ministerial intern applicants. The committee interviews applicants who “pass” an initial interview with Rev. Kim. The number of applicants to date is relatively small. Rev. Kim has interviewed two applicants and soon will interview a third. The deadline for selecting an intern to be able to claim the UUA salary grant is March 1.

WMONJ sponsorship

The Council for Faith in Action has asked the board whether UUCWC would be willing to sponsor the Women’s March on New Jersey, a Trenton-based sister event of the Women’s March on Washington. The board agreed that if CFA wanted to exercise its authority to support charitable causes and sponsor the march under the auspices of “the Council for Faith in Action of UUCWC,” it is welcome to do so.

Full sponsorship under the name of the church alone would require congregational approval, a vote on which is not feasible given the short window of time available prior to the event.

Annual meeting

The board wishes to hold this year’s annual meeting on the first Sunday in June. Our bylaws, however, explicitly state that the annual meeting is held in May. To avoid a conflict with the bylaws so that the meeting can be held in June, the bylaws will need to be changed.

Mike and Heather volunteered to draft a narrowly focused revision of the bylaws that will allow the board to hold the annual meeting in months other than May. The two will also draft the rationale for doing so that will be presented to the congregation. These tasks will be completed in time for the board’s winter 2017 retreat. The goal is to put the bylaws changes to a congregational vote on April 2.

Board retreat planning

The winter 2017 board retreat will take place on Feb. 18 at Pam and Farzad’s home. Breakfast is at 8:30 am; business begins at 9:00 am and will run until 3:00 pm. Board members will be asked to volunteer to bring food and beverages.

Housekeeping

- The February board contribution to *CrossCurrents* will introduce the Strategic Visioning Team and its work to the congregation.
- Mike distributed a sign-up sheet for opening words at the board’s 2017 meetings.

Adjournment and next meeting

The board adjourned at 9:00 pm. Next meeting is Feb. 8 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Mike Dalzell, Secretary, Board of Trustees

Appendix A

Rev. Kim Wildszewski
Board Report January 2017

UUCWC Mission

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

Create Community

December's **Worship** life brought a lovely break to the post-election anxiety and rush. Since we've last met our Sundays were filled by Caryl Tipton, drawing on the Hanukkah story; Christmas Eve in which we welcomed a string quartet and our choir in huge numbers doing traditional music; Christmas Day's intimacy of a service for 30 people; New Year's Day reflections from the decades; and this past Sunday a celebration of Caryl's 25th anniversary with UUCWC.

Attendance was up by 14% for Robin's 6pm Christmas Eve service (124 attendees to 142); attendance was down 24% at my 8pm service (189 to 161) and overall down by 3% (313 to 303). Average attendance on Sundays remains up from 193 (last year) to 201.

The next **Roots** class begins in two weeks and on the day of this year's first New Member Sunday. Many are gathering all over the east coast for the **Women's March**. Jayme Trott has stepped down from **Worship Associates** to begin her work as chair of the Strategic Visioning Committee (Capital Campaign Committee); Marianne Alt is also beginning her transition off; Michele Ruopp and David Anderson will be stepping in as co-chairs in the spring. I am holding the first "**new member**" **gathering** of my time here (and including new members from the last five years) for an evening of gathering, check in, answering questions, and feedback. If there is anyone from the BOT who would like to be in attendance, I'd welcome your participation.

The Tuesday before our meeting the **staff** will be on the first of two day-long retreats with the theme of looking at Leadership Development. We have many **leaders transitioning** out of their positions this spring and our systems are poor for moving new (new members and new leaders) into such areas. Some positions include: Stewardship, Sound, Building (Andy Kidd has held this for many more years than the 4 year cap), Grounds, Caring, Membership. I've reached out to colleagues asking the specific question: Are there any congregations of our size and staffing who do not have a Membership / Volunteer Coordinator who do leadership and leadership development well: the resounding (and frustrating) answer was no.

I continue to lead the Facilitator Chalice Circle once a month, meet with Right Relations, Membership, Worship Associates, and the Pastoral Care Team. I am striving to meet with my colleagues at our local Cluster meeting once a month. I have begun meeting via video conference with two other young women, new mom, colleagues as a place of support and inspiration once a month.

Celebrate Life

Repeated from last month: there is a lot of grief in the congregation right now. Committee meeting check ins have continuously brought up how difficult it is to read the Caring Emails. A lot of illness; loved ones are passing unexpectedly or more quickly than expected; divorce among some of our young families; end of life planning; severe mental health issues, and other care that is in addition to the "normal" companionship. My ability to visit many of our elders who are in need of long-term pastoral care is far from what I wish it could be.

Karla Robinson's life was celebrated on January 7th. I was incredibly touched by the support and commitment of this congregation, who barely knew Karla, to still provide a beautiful reception; show hospitality to her family and friends; and be here in such awful weather conditions. I looked out on Saturday and thought: This is what makes UUCWC so special.

Change the World

After some discussion initiated by a member, I had a conversation with the Community Building, Council for Faith in Action, and Communication leadership regarding the Community Building **Facebook** page. Before and since the election the page has become quite partisan. It being a public forum, the leadership agreed that the church needed a private Facebook space to convene over political discussions. The CFA leadership has created a closed UUCWC Faith in Action page in which all such conversations will be had. Any political conversation on the Community Building page will be moved over to that page under the leadership of Community Building. This was announced in the recent Weekly and will continue to be on the Community Building page. It should be noted: We were not concerned about our 501c3 status but the messaging that we are of one political voice.

In the last month we have had 3 applicants for the **internship**. Each is a second-career candidate. I have interviewed two of the three; one of the applicants will be interviewed this upcoming Sunday by the committee. The Intern Search / Support Committee consists of: Tim Murphy (chair), Regina Zilinski, Michael Waas, Connie Raffle. Things are moving quickly; Personnel has created a communication plan for Pam and I to discuss that will come from each of us and be followed up by the Personnel folks.

The kickoff Strategic Visioning Committee will be January 17th! A recent meeting with Andy Hamlin helped bring Jayme Trott and George Faulkner on board.

APPENDIX B

Susan Irgang

January 2017 BOT Report

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

Creating Community

The majority of December activity in the office was concentrated on preparations for two Christmas Eve services, and one service on Christmas Day and one on New Year's Day. This included coordinating set up of candles and luminaries, as well as orders of service and inserts. Additionally, advance preparations were needed for the church/office closing between Christmas and New Year's, during which time Roberto Santiago was able to refinish the floors in the kitchen and downstairs hallways. I also coordinated a rental on New Year's weekend that occurs each year, and brought in approximately 25% of the projected rental income for the year.

During this time, we also planned the details for the memorial service for Karla Robinson and Caryl Tipton's 25th anniversary celebration, both occurring on the first full weekend of 2017.

Due to the timing constraints with the memorial service and the need to review leadership roles for those who are transitioning out of current positions and may be burning out (this to be discussed at the staff retreat on Tuesday; see Kim's report), I volunteered to coordinate the memorial reception for Karla Robinson remotely during the week the church office was closed. Organization of such events are time consuming, but it was wonderful to see how our congregation was so generous with their time and contributions for a member few had a chance to meet or know.

Celebrate Life

Our membership numbers are 276 Church Members, 39 Friends and 28 Attendees. This reflects the passing of new member Karla Robinson, whose memorial service was January 7th.

Celebration of Caryl Tipton's 25th anniversary on January 8th was a wonderful, love-filled event, and one that also required significant planning and execution of the service, reception and luncheon.

Change the (UUCWC) World

Last month I reported the difficulty we faced with increased costs for snow removal. We received bids from only two providers, as we could not get a third bid due to lack of interest and before the snow that had been forecast; we made a decision in part on the need to have a contract in place immediately. Unfortunately, the two bidders pricing structures were not "apples to apples", making a decision challenging. Kathleen Konopka and I created several common scenarios of storms (snow only, ice only, combination), and the newer vendor was slightly less expensive. Having received glowing references for this new provider, we opted to contract with them for this year to minimize the impact of the increased costs. We estimate that plowing and salting of our driveway and lot as well as clearing sidewalks will range from approximately \$800 for about 2" of snow to upwards of \$1400 or more for 6" or more of snow. We are anticipating an average of approximately \$1100 per snow occurrence if we have no major storms; of course, it is impossible to predict how many snow occurrences there will be this winter. We had an opportunity twice this weekend to evaluate the new provider, and we found their response to be equal to that of our previous contractor.

We will finish the new storage closet project in the next few weeks, with painting and shelving to be added to a closet to be used by the auction committee. This new space adds badly needed storage and was in part necessitated by finding new storage spaces to be in compliance of fire regulations. With the new closet as well as revamped storage space in Room 101, we are ready for re-inspection by the fire department on Wednesday, and we do not anticipate any issues.

Due in part to the holidays, there is no new information to report on other ongoing projects.

Conclusion:

Once again the challenges to the office team revolve around supporting special events such as additional services with specific needs (luminaries, candles, special inserts for Christmas; special set up and reception for memorial services; planning and execution of celebratory events like anniversaries), and the everyday work of keeping the congregation informed through emails, Crossings II, orders of service, phone calls and emails and tending to ongoing projects and issues that arise as part of the day to day operations of the church.

APPENDIX C

To: UUCWC Board, Barbara Jensen, and Kim Wildszewski

From: Robin Pugh

Date: 1/9/17

Re: Monthly DRE Report

Create Community:

- I said this last month but it bears repeating because this speaks to a larger systemic issue of there being 2 (or 3) churches at UUCWC. As more parents take on leadership roles at UUCWC, I am losing some good teachers. This is good for UUCWC (and I am all for it) but it is not good for children's RE. I need more adults without children to be good RE teachers. That takes a certain kind of person (not anyone) AND additional training and coaching before they can lead teach.
- I am falling short in my recruiting efforts for more teachers for Jan- March. This is time consuming for me because if I don't have teachers in place for an upcoming Sunday, I recruit for one slot at a time. With 12 teachers needed every week, if I am looking for 4 teachers during the previous week it's time consuming and energy draining work and a band- aid to the problem.
- For the past 3 months, I have not spent any extra time on children's RE because of Adult RE and Beloved Conversations. I will be refocusing on children's RE, teacher support and RE families this winter. I realize that even though the children's RE systems can be functioning well, the program needs my "heart" to sustain its quality over the long term.

Celebrate Life

- OWL 5-6 starts this month and will go through the end of March. There are 15 kids in the class. Some from "solid" UUCWC families and some from fairly new ones. During OWL, these families will attend weekly. I am thinking of ways to use this precious time with their parents to integrate them further into the life of UUCWC. Additionally, for some parents this is their first experience with OWL. Explaining to parents why UU churches believe sexuality education is important is a great opportunity to teach them what it means to be a UU.

Change the World

- Beloved Conversations continues to take a chunk of my time, though less than when it began. We are the first congregation to run 5 groups at the same time! I am not complaining, just noting. I think it is absolutely worth it. I see the engagement and commitment going on for the 57 participants. For me mentally, running 5 groups of Beloved Conversations is like an additional Sunday morning program. I check in with the 11 facilitators regularly, prep the materials, and keep tabs on the experience of the participants.