

Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing Board of Trustees

268 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road
Titusville, NJ 08560

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 12, 2017



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

Pam Shadzik, acting president, called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:01 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; and Rev. Kim Wildszewski. Ed offered opening words.

Consent agenda

We discussed issues related to the parking expansion project, as communicated by Office Administrator Susan Irgang in her monthly board report (Exhibit C). Susan has the authority to move the project forward through various agencies, but the bureaucracy she faces in doing so is a burden. The board recognizes that she could benefit from support from others who are familiar with navigating obstacles.

Andrew moved that we form a task force empowered with supporting Susan in overcoming regulatory obstacles to moving the parking project forward. The task force would present a final report to the board within 6 months and regular updates to the board through the office administrator's report. Ed seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Some congregants who may be knowledgeable about these processes will be approached about being on the task force, but we will also call for volunteers through *CrossCurrents*.

Mike moved the board accept the monthly reports of the minister, DLRE, and office administrator as written (Exhibits A, B, and C, respectively). Andrew seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Rollie Rahn Memorial Fund

Mike Muccioli, representing the Food Ministry, shared the Food Ministry's proposed use of donations to the Rollie Rahn Memorial Fund. The money is to be used to provide grants of up to \$1,000 to HomeFront clients enrolled in HomeFront's culinary training or nutrition programs. These grants would help to offset tuition/fees at a culinary arts program at an adult vocational school, community college, or other culinary arts instruction program under contract with HomeFront; or to be used to pay for ServSafe training and certification. Grant applications and funding would be routed through a HomeFront official. Lori Rahn and members of the Food Ministry and Finance Committee would have funding discretion.

Rev. Kim thanked Mike and the Food Ministry for treating the donations to the fund with love. Lynne moved that we thank the Food Ministry for the work it has done in honoring Rollie in this way. Ed seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's report

We ran a deficit during March, though Lynne expressed that this is not necessarily a concern; it is how our revenue-and-expenditure cycle runs at this time of the year. Year to date, we have a \$3378 surplus.

Pledges for the Stewardship campaign are slower to come in this year compared with last year, and though this may portend concern, Kim is optimistic that we will be close to our \$415K goal. The average pledge this year is considerably higher than last year. The Auction Committee also expects a good "take"; based on donations, a \$50,000 auction net is within reason.

Congregational meeting recap

Kim expressed gratitude for the behind-the-scenes work of Pam, Mike, and Steve Fishbein that ensured a smooth April 2 congregational meeting. She suggested that we retain this process for congregational

meetings in the future. Ed said he would like to have been involved in preparations as well, prompting discussion about board process and leading into the next topic listed in these minutes.

Kim also reminded the board of their role in receiving people's reactions to the vote at the meeting.

Process check

Process check is our “gut check” on how the board works or interacts. Tonight, we discussed how the board does its work at meetings. Some board members voiced a feeling that we move quickly through agenda topics and that the nature of some topics is not clear until the meeting. Combined, these factors leave inadequate time or space to think through the issues at hand or to come fully prepared for meetings.

Pam acknowledged adult learning theory and that “people who process more slowly” will be challenged at our meetings — and that the quality of their input is often high but they miss a chance to offer input if topics are dealt with quickly. Kim voiced a concern that we may be developing a certain culture for board work that may not be welcoming to anyone who wants to be on the board.

Some of the possible solutions discussed: setting agendas earlier, holding agenda-setting pre-meetings, sending more pre-reading out prior to the meeting, or establishing a twice-a-month meeting schedule in which new business is only discussed in the first meeting and then votes or other actions taken on the subject in the second meeting. We will take this up again at a future meeting, either in April or in May.

Personnel needs update

Regina Podhorin Zilinsky updated the board on how the 5-year personnel plan she presented last fall fits within the budget being developed for the 2017–18 church year. Selected priorities for the coming year:

- Ministerial intern
- A pool of hours (80) for the office manager that Kim must approve for special projects

Additional short-term considerations include a sabbatical for the DLRE in 2018 and staff salary considerations commensurate with our membership growth. In addition, Regina is working on proactive education to help the congregation understand the need for staffing recommendations in light of our growth. Currently, our membership stands at 284, the highest known in the history of the church.

Executive session

The board met in executive session from 8:05 to 8:20 pm.

Deferred until May

Owing to time constraints, the following agenda items were deferred until our next business meeting: Restroom renovations; bylaws revisions (per April 2 Congregational Meeting; Crossings magazine.

Housekeeping

- The April board contribution to *CrossCurrents* will describe the task force the board established this evening to help move the parking expansion project forward. Heather will write this piece.

Adjournment and next meeting

The board adjourned at 9:21 pm. Our next meeting is a budget meeting at April 26 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Mike Dalzell, Secretary, Board of Trustees

Exhibit A

Rev. Kim Wildszewski
Board Report April 2017

UUCWC Mission

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

Create Community

Worship life at UUCWC has been vital in moving certain conversations and goals forward. In the last month we've considered accessibility challenges through a Standing on the Side of Love sermon; the Youth Group offered their annual spring service on taking Risks; Stewardship Sunday was only a few weeks ago; I preached on the risk of not putting up a public value statement by way of the Resistance Banner for vote the following week; and then the Auction sermon's topic was Humility. Each week has felt "about church" which is both good and a challenge in wanting to keep it deep and available to newcomers.

Charles will be here and preaching on the 23rd!

The recent congregational meeting was run expertly and I commend Pam Shadzik, Mike Dalzell, and Steve Fishbein on their preparation before and expression of authority on the day of. The vote to hang the banner was successful but the learning in preparing for that vote --- for the congregational meeting but also in the process of listening circles, Q&A, communication efforts, etc was vital. I say this noting that this was the first congregational meeting or potentially contentious experience many of our newest folks might have experienced.

There are, of course, pastoral concerns following the congregational meeting. Both the RRC and I are available to specific individuals and also trying to make that availability known on a larger scale.

The most recent Roots conversation had 11 potential new members; the majority under 40. Challenges continue around 1. Capturing information on our returning visitors, 2. moving newcomers through the path to membership and 3. Moving new members into the congregation in intentional ways. One person has been tapped to take over Membership this summer but she is still in discernment.

Marianne Alt has concluded her time as co-chair of Worship Associates. David Anderson and Michele Ruopp have taken over for her and Jayme Trott (who stepped down in January). Considering the conversations and work at the UUA, we are intentionally considering who we ask to step into the upcoming vacancies in this ministry and looking to provide support to anyone of color who might exist in that space as the only non-white participant.

Celebrate Life

There was a lot of pastoral care before the banner vote and I imagine there will be very different, with different parts of the congregation, pastoral care following. Pat Czerowonka, Denny Rogers and George Desser have taken over the Pastoral Care Ministry and they are already doing an excellent job in organizing themselves, attending district trainings, and reaching out to the congregation on difficult circumstances.

I have two member-weddings coming up in late spring / early summer that I am preparing for and meeting with the couples to plan. Child Dedications were offered for April 30th but at this point none have been scheduled.

Change the World

I offered three Getting Connected evenings for anyone in the congregation to come and ask questions. Thank you to the Board Members who were available at each; they were very different! Themes that felt present throughout were: Leadership Development, Growth and Connection, Governance, Finances (Capital Campaign, Parking).

The Nominating Committee continues to work hard to fill the slate but not without challenges – internally they are “under staffed” and losing Lynda Shapiro who is over extended in other parts of congregational life. I have spoken with them about process, purpose and a challenge to think differently about how they go about asking individuals into leadership roles. The changes will require more work but, we all believe, a better outcome. I’d encourage anyone with 30 minutes to watch this old but good video on the subject:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5xd8pqN50k>

The first offering of Beloved Conversations has concluded with 56 (of 58) members completing this course. This is about 20% of our membership and it is certainly shaping the conversations around programming, worship, staffing, and the like. Next steps are very much up in the air but a planning group is forming. We plan to offer this again come August.

I meet with the People of Color group the first week of May to hear their reflections on congregational life and shared themes that continue to arise.

The Adult RE offerings are being considered for next year and, alongside Robin, we are reconsidering how we do Chalice Circles, if we will continue WellSpring, and other ways in which we can use ARE to help build relationships among the membership.

Other Ministries:

Katie Seeley, our Office Assistant, will be finishing up her contract with us through June 30th after finding employment that will afford her more hours and a greater potential for growth. We

will likely look to fill that position before June if possible. An announcement about Katie's position will go out in the caring and weekly this week.

Work to get Sue Flynn, the "resident" is underway. We are rethinking space usage in the office, her housing availabilities, and what exactly we will be asking of her (and she of us).

I have been attending my monthly ministers' cluster meetings as well as monthly video-calls with colleagues of a similar demographic.

I look forward to our time on Wednesday.

Kim

Exhibit B

To: UUCWC Board, Barbara Jensen, Susan Colket and Kim Wildszewski

From: Robin Pugh

Date: 4/10/17

Re: April DLRE Report

Create Community:

- I am planning for children's and adult RE for this summer and fall.
- Scheduling teachers for April- June.
- I attended a very good LREDA NJ Cluster meeting on " Stop Recruiting, Start Retaining" volunteers, which affirmed the time I spend nurturing RE teachers. I'll report on what I learned next month. I can share my knowledge at a council meeting.

Celebrate Life

- I was on vacation the last week of March.

Change the World

- Beloved Conversations ended on April 5th. I am glad that so many people in our congregation participated in this program in light of the discussions about white supremacy and racism at the UUA. We will offer it again in the fall.
- I am at a LREDA Board meeting Tuesday- Thursday this week.

Exhibit C

Susan Irgang
April 2017 BOT Report

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

Creating Community

Many discussions are still being held surrounding the logistics of the addition of a ministerial intern. We are excited about the possibilities for UUCWC that this brings while we determine basics like where to have Sue Flynn sit, at and on what, etc. We are still working through several ideas to maximize our office space and her experience with us.

I have been working with Nominating on leadership for the groups that comprise the Facilities Management Team, as leadership is changing for Building, Grounds, Safety and Tech (thankfully John Harvi will continue one more year as Sound Team Leader so there is one less position to fill). Building and Grounds in particular are currently one person committees that, as such, require more assistance from me as Team Leader/Office administrator than most other groups in the church. I have met several times with the current chairs of the Building and Grounds Committees to convince them of and help usher in the revised committee concept from a one-person committee to a co-led committee with task-focused members. I have written and gotten approval from existing chairs on new job descriptions to match this change. I have met with several potential candidates for leadership in these areas to explain the new vision of the committees. This also requires not just finding leadership, but assisting in finding team members as well, as some of the candidates are newer members who do not know many people. I am hopeful that we can move these groups into healthier systems that do not overtax our leaders and require less day to day assistance from me.

Administrative support was offered this past month to:

- Auction Team, emailing new members who will receive “special offers” at the auction, publicity, etc., as we approach this important and fun event.
- Stewardship pledge drive, generating reports and lists of pledgers, publicity, etc.
- Board of Trustees, sending announcements regarding the congregational meeting and preparations of quorum cards, attendance lists, etc.
- Strategic Vision Task Force, finding funding for, understanding the process involved and scheduling a septic inspection as part of their investigations.

I worked closely with a new renter, Hope Loves Company, who held a fundraising concert here in late March to support their work helping families dealing with ALS. Their rental required more than the average amount of my time, as it was their first event of this type, their first time here, and their need for solutions to numerous technical or other challenges. The event went well, with an above and beyond assist from Mike Muccioli who was our Rental Representative at the event and during which there were issues with clogged and overflowing toilets.

Celebrate Life

On April 2nd, another Wings attendee signed the book. With this addition, our membership now stands at 284 Church members, 31 Friends, 41 Participants and 11 Attendees. While this number historically is likely to go down following the canvass, we should celebrate it as the highest membership recorded at UUCWC at least since 2009 (as far back as records of this nature are available), according to quarterly membership reports; previous highest recorded membership was 275.

Change the (UUCWC) World

Parking: Several weeks ago, we were required by Hopewell Township to apply for an extension on the existing parking resolution, as the two year expiration had been reached. This required a letter of request for an extension with explanations as to why, to be presented by UUCWC representatives at a Planning Board meeting; additionally, more money was needed for our escrow account. Prior to the Planning Board meeting, Farzad Shadzik and I met with the Hopewell Township engineer to review what is preventing us from moving forward the project. It is clear that the parking project has reached a crossroads. More immediately, I am awaiting a follow-up response from the Hopewell Township engineer about updating that is needed to the site plan, which must occur before we can proceed further with any work/approvals or make a decision about next steps. Meanwhile, I worked with Grounds to address how to deal with the annual mud issues and parking that come with spring.

Grounds, Safety and the RE Committee (representing RE families) have been in discussion about the use of the creek at the back of the church property. Each group brings different perspectives and needs, which will need resolution.

All of the above was accomplished, along with the regular work of creating emails, printed communications and orders of service, supervising staff and volunteers. This month there was a slightly higher than normal amount of spontaneous visits from members, church leaders, visitors, and others to discuss an event, drop something off, make a payment, ask a question, voice an opinion or just say hello. We do our best to greet everyone with a welcoming and professional response and lend a caring ear, while meeting our deadlines and work obligations.