

Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing
Board of Trustees
268 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road
Titusville, NJ 08560



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - APPROVED

April 14, 2021

Zoom Meeting due to Covid-19 Virus Social Isolation

President Nathalie Edmond called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:01PM. Also in attendance: Vice President, Sue Saddlemire; Treasurer, Jim Sanders; Secretary, Colleen McCourt; Scribe, Michael Howe-Smith; Trustees: Jeffrey Lang, Michael Waas, Jamie Evanini, Patrick Kahney; Senior Minister, Rev. Kim Wildszewski; Congregational Administrator, Susan Irgang; and DLFE, Robin Pugh. Also present were Marty Friedman, Joe Schenck and Mary Baltycki on behalf of the Personnel and Finance Committees.

First Hour

Minister Evaluation Process

Board Trustee Patrick Kahney reviewed the minister evaluation process, including:

- We have a more robust process than other congregations regarding frequency.
- The process has been streamlined over the past year (moved from manual to automated; can tabulate and track information; survey audience is smaller now which allows for more timely and targeted information gathering).
- **ACTIONS:** The Board needs to identify a member to take over the process next year. Patrick will consult with Rev. Kim Wildszewski and adjust the process as needed.
 - We should customize the survey as needed to reflect changes in church dynamics (e.g. in person vs. virtual nature of pastoral care expectations, etc.) while maintaining enough base content to allow for year-over-year comparisons.
- Parking lot item: Locate and/or recreate Minister Evaluation Policy

Budget Discussion

- Joe Schenk, Marty Friedman and Mary Baltycki joined the meeting to present budget and personnel input.
- Rev. Kim noted that staff is not usually present for such discussion (of personnel/salary information) but would be joining to provide relevant input.
- Marty Friedman presented the Personnel Committee's calculations and proposals regarding current and future staff roles.

- Propose to keep all existing staff; add new part-time roles - 4 titles/5 people as previously discussed with the Board.
- This year the Committee compared past-year data to make an apples to apples comparison of typical pre-COVID staffing costs.
- The Committee also looked forward 2 years because of the discussed deferment of the assistant DLFE and bookkeeper positions.
- A worship tech can be hired right away (in current fiscal year).
- DLFE Robin Pugh noted that the hours for the office assistant might need to be increased to account for children's RE work. **ACTION:** Robin will follow up with Personnel and they will update their calculations accordingly.
- The Board and Personnel discussed how staffing dollars are allocated (specific buckets for each role; not a single shared pool).
- Personnel is recommending specific salary amounts for Rev. Kim and Robin with specific increases - as a reward for jobs well done as well as a longer-term goal of being aligned with mid-point UUA salary guidelines; for other roles, there is a pool designated for increases at Rev. Kim's discretion.
- For new oncoming staff, salary figures are estimated pending negotiation, etc.; these numbers are less firm than figures for current staff.
- The budget including personnel needs is presented for 2 different time frames for reopening - e.g. September vs. January; these are not recommendations, only different reference points for comparison. There are variable costs for personnel based on date of reopening.
- Personnel also provided a longer-term view of the estimated costs for future paid bookkeeping staff.

Board Treasurer Jim Sanders presented a 3-year budget comparison/estimate. Jim recognized the contributions of the Finance team and advised that "this is a solid budget which should not provide anxiety," while acknowledging that it accounts for variables based on reopening. Jim advised that for the income side of the budget, messaging to the congregation should emphasize the need for additional staffing and cost of the building construction. Other key discussion points included:

- We should maintain/promote contactless giving as a norm going forward.
- The budget accounts for decreased rental income due to building construction.
- Per Stewardship, the number of unpledged households has gone down to a dozen, allowing for a firmer budget estimate.
- Auction income is budgeted for less than past years which takes pressure off the Auction Committee; virtual options will remain in place which leads to more consistent dollars.
- We are on track with Denominational Support; we are keeping up with our historical record, and we benefited from the investment this year with the support we received.
- Annual giving estimates for the next few years must consider/reflect the idea that newer members may have different giving patterns that are less predictably stable; this may become more challenging to rely upon than in the past.
- The PPE loan/grant proved to be helpful in providing budget flexibility.
- There was general discussion of progress and fundraising around the Capital Campaign.

Board President Nathalie Edmond and Rev. Kim thanked Finance and Personnel for their hard work in this unusually challenging year, and the visitors left the meeting.

Second Hour

Housekeeping and Upcoming Events

- Service awards for the upcoming Annual Meeting: Nathalie noted the deadline for the award submissions, and the plan for a Board subcommittee (per established policy) to review submissions and make recommendations.
- The Annual Meeting is June 6; we need to set up a meeting in May to plan the meeting logistics.
- Nathalie and Board Secretary Colleen McCourt agreed to attend a Faith Forward session on 4/20 in Rev. Kim's stead.
- Representatives from Nominating/Leadership Task Force and Capital Campaign Committee will be attending the Board meeting on 4/21 to provide updates. Joe Schenk's proposal for technical support was deferred to the May Board meeting.
- Congregational Administrator Susan Irgang lifted up the return of Rachel Hansen to the office assistant role.

Reopening Discussion

The Board and staff discussed the broad topic of reopening and its relevant considerations, including safety, logistical, and emotional considerations, acknowledging that there are still many unknowns. Nathalie lifted up input from Rev. Kim and Susan on scope of concepts that need to be considered. Key points included:

- Thinking about the concept of what we would need to have in place to reopen safely
- Acknowledging that we have made some informed exceptions for specific groups or events
- Even if the Reopening Task Force can't make specific predictions, they can explore the types of variables we should be considering and planning for.
- We are receiving helpful information from the UUA but it's not proscriptive regarding vaccination status. Many other churches are facing the same questions and challenges.
- Reopening considerations - including those around people's vaccination status and physical and emotional readiness - should be intentional and take place within the context of upholding inclusion. "We need to consider feelings, not just data."
- Rev. Kim and Robin have solicited input from parents around what physical church and RE would look like for different age groups.
- Based on pastoral conversations with individuals and groups throughout the congregation, there are mixed feelings on the spectrum of readiness to return; it may be more realistic to envision and plan for a gradual phased reopening over time than a complete reopening of all events and

services at once. There may be “early, middle and late adopters,” as well as considering the implications for visitors. We need to be aware of the differing needs of various demographics and how we can best serve them. Instead of returning to past circumstances; we have an opportunity to responsibly design and create opportunities for people to connect, and to consider creative and realistic possibilities for inclusion in line with our mission.

- It was decided that the Board should survey the congregation to get feedback on reopening, and to help guide and support the Reopening Task Force. **ACTION:** As Board liaison to the task force, Michael Waas will draft a reopening survey and review it with Rev. Kim and Robin.

Meeting adjourned at 9:04 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Howe-Smith

Scribe, Board of Trustees

Colleen McCourt

Secretary, Board of Trustees