

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH

Board of Trustees – Meeting Minutes

Date: April 12, 2017

Board Members Present: Sarah Estes (2019), Cynthia Heinrich (2017), Amy Hunt (2019), Beth McGrew (2018), Shelly Wallace (2018), Carly Wise (2017), Beth Whelan (2019) Rev. Benjamin Maucere (ex-officio), Dick Miltner, Treasurer (ex-officio).

Absent: Brian MacConnell (2018), Chris Dendy (2017)

Staff Present: Carrie Spiess, Meredith Plummer

Guests: Dan Schneider and Patricia Rohrer, board candidates, Steve Olden, First Church general counsel.

Call to Order: Shelly called the meeting to order at 6:30, and Beth W. shared an opening reading.

Consent Agenda, Staff and President's Reports: Carly moved and Beth M. seconded that the agenda be approved. Unanimous approval.

Minutes of March Regular Board meeting, and Special February 26th Board Meeting: A couple of corrections were noted for the March minutes, two families are supported by the refugee fund, and we need to add the full name to the Portland Curriculum. With those changes being made, Cynthia moved and Carly seconded that the minutes from those two meetings be accepted. Unanimous approval.

Treasurer's Report: Dick presented the report on the Treasury, of the operating money in our PNC bank account, and explained that we have just over 4 months in reserves. There was a question about the two restricted women's funds, and Carrie explained that one was money collected throughout the year for various needs, and one is simply for the Spring women's retreat. Dick then went over the capital budget, and said that having approximately \$22,000 this year and next to spend is unusual, but the savings on the mortgage payoff was approximately \$11,000 that will be added to our capital budget.

Canvass Update:

Canvass Update: The original pledges goal was \$386,225, reduced to \$384,000 based on updates since the first draft of the budget. At this time, the final total projected pledges to come in looks to be around \$376,000.

Budget for 2018: Finance would like to simplify the presentation of our budget, with expense categories of Ministerial, Outreach, and Support, along with some detail under each of those categories. This lets the congregation see our expenses relating to our mission better. Amy thinks this format will help non-finance people better understand our budgets. Carly thinks it will help us toward moving to a program size church model from the current pastoral size model.

Financial Report: Carrie reported that plate collections and revenue are down from last year slightly. The Kroger Community Rewards fundraising is on track, and other fundraising is over the projected amount. Total expenses show lower than normal for this time of year, but all are not in yet.

Benefits Change to Calendar Year: Currently our renewal follows our fiscal year start of July 1, but the deductible follows the calendar year, so employees don't get the full benefit of the deductible. The Human Resources Committee made a motion of recommendation to the Board that the provision of

health insurance benefits for eligible First Church employees be made on a calendar year (Jan 1 – Dec 31) basis rather than a fiscal year basis, beginning Jan 1, 2018. Cynthia moves we accept this recommendation from Human Resources Committee, Amy seconds the motion, and it passes unanimously.

Froehlich Estate Update: Steve Olden presented an update on legal action surrounding the Froehlich estate. In a special meeting of the board in March, we voted to engage the Blessing law firm to research the possibility of pursuing legal action with the intent to recover funds from the financial planners who perpetrated fraud against the Froehlichs. Liability was clear, but recovery of assets was in question. The firm is hiring a securities investigator to look at aiders and abettors and whether there are hidden assets to recover. A letter of engagement was signed, which set forth what the Blessing firm will do. Steve has clarified what will it cover. There may be extra fees for travel for depositions, but they will get our explicit go-ahead before proceeding. Within 120 days they'll present their findings, and whether they feel it's possible to recover the missing assets. At that point we can decide whether to go forward with the case, depending on what they offer, i.e. a contingency basis, or an hourly fee plus contingency, or something else. The Blessing firm is doing a lot of work for what we're paying them, and won't make money on our initial investment. Several other beneficiaries were listed in the will, including Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Ronald McDonald House, Alzheimer's Association, Finneytown High School, Queen City Hospice, and all at differing levels of benefit. Steve wants to check with some of the bigger organizations with a greater share to see if they want to sell their stake in the remaining assets for a nominal fee. As part of their services to the church for this fee, the Blessing firm will do a presentation to the congregation on scams that target the elderly. We will schedule in the near future.

Canvass Thank-You Notes to Top 20 Pledgers: Shelly distributed a list of the top donors in the church, so that the board could write thank-you notes to express our gratitude.

Seed Fund – Request for Proposal Updates: The Seed Fund for Innovation supports new, creative programs which may increase our membership or provide new ways of fundraising. A revision has been suggested to increase the cap on Seed Fund grants from \$300 to \$500. Carly moves we accept revisions as stated for the Seed Fund, Amy seconded. Unanimous approval.

Nominating Committee Nominees: The board provides one nominee from off-going board members, and Carly has agreed to serve for this one-year term. In addition, two nominees are presented from Church Council. Beth M. solicited those names, the board ranked them, and Beth M. will call the top ranked people to ask if they would be willing to serve.

Board Goals: Goal 4: Carly reported that our planned board retreat fits well into this focus area. She suggested having off-going board members be part of that retreat, to impart lessons learned that should be carried forward, input toward new or evolving goals. Shelly suggested off-going members come for first hour to share their perspectives. Carly has noticed that lots of our attending two-parent families have regular church involvement from only one of the partners. She wondered how that impacts family priorities of giving to the church? Have other churches encountered the same, and do they have a strategy? Carly would of course like to get both partners involved, but wants to look for ideas. Carly also suggested that we not discount the importance of younger members even if they don't give as much; we eventually will lose older members, and these younger members will become the older members. Also, we're a multi-generational church, and should not treat this as an exclusive club. We could grow in this area of appreciating younger members. Carly asked if anything had been done in Church Council about

digital presence. Carrie mentioned that a member would like to donate some monitors. Ed Rider is aware, and has talked to the member. Beth M. will write up a paragraph about what we're looking for digital signage to accomplish, to make sure our needs will be met. Shelly and Benjamin will have a conversation with the member.

Goal 3: The board task force on governance issues also includes Gaut Ragsdale, who is a parliamentarian and Barb Rider, who has worked on these issues in the past. A student Gaut works with will help us combine bylaws and constitution documents by June. Some work will be done to streamline the documents and we will have conversations in July and August with congregation, with the goal of having a reading in September of changes, for a vote in January. Having a clean set of bylaws shows that we've got our governance documents together when we recruit a new minister. Seed Fund money was applied for to hire this student, and it was approved by that committee.

Goal 2: Family programming is working on rites of passage with different age milestones, such as child dedications, kindergarten step-ups, and high school graduation. They are looking at different age groups and coming up with a rite of passage for each; sometimes during services, but sometimes afterward. Beth W. said we should include something about graduation from OWL. We need to creatively bring kids into the congregation, and communicate with all that there's way more to family programming than just the kids singing the chalice song.

Goal 1: We've had workshops with a total of 87 participants working on elevator speeches, why UU and this church is important to them. They'll be posted on our website, in newsletters, and maybe on a new digital monitor at some point! Dot's conversations about the pastoral vs program size church have been lively with 20-25 attendees each session. Planning for the next program year (fall) for work on a behavioral covenant and conflict management. Design thinking prototypes, such as the hiking club, and Dan's conversations with members of Shiloh Food Pantry and how to reach out to Avondale community are developing.

Endowment Fund Nominees: Dave Wallace was asked if he would be willing to serve for the 5-year term, and he accepted. Amy moved to officially nominate Dave Wallace to serve on the Endowment Fund Board, which will be voted on by the congregation on May 21st and Carly seconded. Unanimous approval.

Leadership Training: Susan Christy has attended the UUA Midwest leadership school in the past, and had a wonderful experience. She came back and led the worship committee and did a phenomenal job. It is highly recommended that if we could afford it, to send some people to leadership school to build up our capabilities in this church. July 9-15 is the next one, in Iowa. Fees are \$1,200 for first person, less expensive for additional attendees after first one. GA registration funding: in 2017, the board didn't add registration fees to budget because it's far away and we had a deficit. The Search committee fund will pay a portion of the registration fee for search committee members. Two volunteers for on-site delegates have agreed to attend, Dan Schneider and Lee Meyer. Remote delegates can sign up too, but registration is the same as if they are attending in person. Discussion surrounded whether we want to supplement registration fees for attending delegates Dan and Lee, and supplementing remote delegates. A suggestion was made that delegates give a report when they're back. Perhaps study any issues in advance, so we know how they're representing the church. Dan doesn't think there are big issues to vote on this year other than the UUA president. Benjamin doesn't believe there's a huge benefit in perception to potential ministers whether we send the maximum of 6 delegates. Carly moves

that we allocate up to \$140 per delegate up to 6 delegates. Beth W. seconds the motion. Passes unanimously.

Alice the Chalice Presentation: Carrie presented the award this month to Brian. He has stepped up to help in many ways; he edits newsletter, helps with Facebook posts, and even though he's quiet and works behind the scenes, it's very important work.

Closing Business for Fiscal 2017: the board shared our positive thoughts on Cynthia's board service, as she will be missing the last meeting.

Shelly will be sending out a poll to figure out a retreat date, and touching base about exec committee next year to hear thoughts.

Cynthia made a motion to adjourn at 8:50, Carly seconded the motion, it passed unanimously.

Sarah Estes, board secretary

Interim Minister's
Report to the Board
April 2017

The Transition Team is offering several “What Do You Say After You Say UU” workshops, and many Small Groups have used workshop exercises in their meetings. These workshops followed and built on the “First Church at its Best” appreciative inquiry workshop and coincided with the pledge campaign.

“Elevator speeches” from the workshops will be given to Ray Sinclair to put on the web site (with the writer's permission) and some used during the pledge drive either on canvas literature or read as part of canvas updates.

In addition, Dot is offering four sessions to discuss Robert Latham's *Moving on from Church Folly Lane*. They will look at size transition issues and educate participants about Pastoral and Program church issues.

Shelly and I have had several “stewardship lunches” with church members.

I will miss the April 26 Exec meeting—I'll be in Chicago for the pre-regional assembly ministers' meeting.

Yours in faith,
Benjamin

Operations Manager Report to the Board
April 12, 2017 Board Meeting

A. Top Accomplishments March

a. Facilities

- i. Work with vendors, as needed, to attain bids for upcoming B&G projects including Sanctuary lighting modifications
- ii. Begin review of current contracted janitorial services by obtaining bids from vendors
- iii. Negotiate contracts for outside rentals and organize logistics for events
- iv. Collaborate with B&G, MVP Coordinator, and Office Administrator to revise checklist for committee/member events and determine best channels for dissemination of information
- v. Continue work with Safe Congregation Task Force to create a single document for an emergency action plan

b. Finance

- i. Support canvass and members during the pledge campaign
- ii. Collaborate with Treasurer and Finance Committee chair to improve processes for task completion and decrease time spent on weekly and monthly responsibilities
- iii. Complete payoff of second mortgage
- iv. Provide support to members for pledge information that includes making payments on pledges through EasyTithe (online payment and texting option) and transferring stock shares to FC

c. HR

- i. Performance appraisal packets handed out to supervisors
- ii. Manage employee benefits
- iii. Utilize Employers Resource Association for guidance on employee issues

d. Other

- i. Vacation April 14 – April 22
- ii. Prepare presentation with Dick Miltner to communicate findings of churches surveyed and the data gathered as part of the Design Thinking project

B. Priorities for Months ahead

- a. Canvass support
- b. Employee Performance Appraisals

Top accomplishments this month:

- Met with key individuals upon my return (Denys Steele, Rozy Park, Patricia Rohrer).
- Met with Stephen Willis, Jr. High Youth Advisor.
- Met with FP Staff two times – Began the Evaluation Process.
- Met with Barb Rider about Welcoming Committee / FP Coordination.
- Facilitated March PNO.
- Prepared 2 classrooms for 3 Sundays.
- Prepared and presented 2 TFAA.
- Prepped FP Kiosk for April.
- Attended Worship and Family Programming Committee meetings.
- Helped facilitate Jr. High OWL Gathering #9.
- Coordinated coverage for Stephen's upcoming absence.
- Began preparing for Easter (Story, Flowers, Egg Hunt, and Teacher Coverage).
- Began advertising New Family Classes (April 23, 30, & May 7).
- Read Part 1 of Connect: How to Double your Volunteers by Nelson Searcy (see 'Other')

Priorities for the months ahead

- Coordinate Jr. High OWL overnight and graduation (April 7 – 8).
- Prepare for April PNO event.
- Easter Sunday (Story, Flowers, Egg Hunt, and Teacher Coverage).
- Facilitate New Family Classes (April 23, 30, & May 7)
- Prepare classrooms for lessons.
- Prepare FP kiosk for May.
- Meet with FP Committee.
- Finish Staff Evals.
- Assist Youth group in preparing for their overnight (May).
- Prepare for Volunteer Recognition (May 7).
- Prepare for Special End of Year Events (May 28 & June 4)
- Begin preparing for flower communion (June 11).
- Assist Jr. High in preparing for their Youth Service (June 18)

Other

- **Connect:** The FP Committee and I are reading this book together. While the book does require a bit of UU translation, I have already found it to be full of insight. I believe it would be worthwhile for the leadership of the church (Minister, Board and Church Council) to read this book together, and strategize using its suggestions. However, as I know this church is currently enveloped in the interim / search process, I will share some of its most intriguing insights here:
 - **Develop a Theology of Ministry:** This, essentially, answers the questions – Why should people volunteer within this congregation? I have a few thoughts, but ultimately, the answer to this question should harken back to our mission. And, as our congregation does not have a clearly defined mission, this question can't really be answered, except on a program by program basis.

- **30/50/20 Rule:** Searcy believes that a thriving church should have, at any time, 30% of our church goers be sitting on the sidelines (pre-servers), 50% of church goers serving one hour per week, and 20% of church goers involved in some kind of outreach / evangelical ministry.
- **Numbers:** Our congregation is growing. In an effort to put some data behind our growth, I thought I would provide you with a monthly numbers report.
 - **Total Registrations:** 98 children and youth from 57 families
 - **Average Attendance this Month:** 37.5 (Jr. High in the Service 2/4 Sundays – Attendance Not Taken).

March 2017 board report from the music director

Accomplishments:

- Rehearsed singers 5 times
- Rehearsed ringers 3 times
- Hired trumpet soloist for Easter handbell piece
- Hired musicians for April 23, Music Sunday
- Reviewed pieces for a men's duet, performance TBD
- Revised Spring choir calendar
- Attended worship committee meeting
- Acquired Bruce Bowdon to sub for me on April 2 and May 7
- Practiced and played music for 4 services

Goals:

- Perform flawlessly on April 16th and April 23rd
- Register for UUMN conference in Arlington VA in July

Help needed:

- Continued support

Submitted by,
Jera Cox
Director of Music

President's Report to the Board for April 12, 2017 Board Meeting

1. Development Activity
 - a. Nothing to report.

2. Board Activity
 - a. I have received the letter of notification of available funds for FY18 from the Recorder of the Endowment Board, Bob Wones. The Operations Manager, Treasurer, and Finance Committee Chair were consulted regarding whether or not to take the full available distributions and what, if any, adjustments they would recommend to the distribution request. The request to the Endowment Board Recorder follows on page 2.
 - b. Executive Committee agreed that we would revisit decisions on the remaining funds from the Froehlich Estate at the beginning of FY18.
 - c. The draft minutes from the January 2017 Congregational meeting are on the board web site in the April 2017 Board Packet folder. **Board members, please review and send suggested edits to board secretary Sarah Estes by April 30, 2017.**

3. Committee Activity
 - a. Nothing to report.

4. Member Activity
 - a. Martha Walker reached out to me, Meredith Plummer, Director of FP, and Dan Schneider, Social Justice Committee Chair, regarding her desire to organize a field trip for First Church members to visit the Center for Holocaust and Humanity Education in Montgomery, Ohio <http://www.holocaustandhumanity.org/>. They have a temporary exhibition titled "Anne Frank: A History for Today" ending June 9 in addition to their permanent exhibit. She will be putting announcements in the newsletter and listservs and will coordinate things with the CHHE; they will provide a docent-led tour if we have 10 or more people. Martha is in the process of deciding the best date for this given the busyness of spring at First Church!

5. Community Activity
 - a. Nothing to report.

Shelly Wallace
Board President

Bob –

Thank you for providing the church Board the information on possible FY 18 distributions from the Endowment Fund. We appreciate the EF Trustee's and RiverPoint's efforts in continuing to grow the fund and its distributions to the church.

The church will take the full distribution from the EF. The Board requests that distributions be made quarterly on or about the first business day of each quarter (July, September, December, March), beginning in July, 2017, in four equal amounts.

The Board will use the funds as follows:

- \$1,528 from the EF's General Account will go into the operating budget to support general operations of the church
- \$1,809 from the Outreach Account will go into the operating budget for the Social Justice Committee's use in supporting First Church's social justice outreach and advocacy activities
- \$596 from the Religious Education Account will go to the operating budget for the Family Programming Committee's use in providing flowers for children and supporting First Church's religious education children's programs in family ministry
- \$34,681 from the Historical Building Account and \$4,276 from the Restated Building Account will both go the capital budget. The funds will be used make building loan payments and to support capital building projects approved by the Board.

To ensure recognition of the EF's contributions, the church's FY18 operating and capital budgets will show these five distributions as five line items of revenue from the EF. They will also show the uses as described above.

Thank you,

Shelly Wallace, President
First Unitarian Church Board of Trustees