

## **FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH**

### **Board of Trustees – Meeting Minutes**

**Date: February 7, 2017**

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

**Board Members Absent:** Brian MacConnell (2018)

**Staff Present:** Carrie Spiess

**Call to Order:** Shelly called the meeting to order at 6:36, and Sarah provided an opening reading.

**Consent Agenda: Minutes of previous meeting, Agenda for current meeting, Staff and President's Reports:** Cynthia moved and Carly seconded that the minutes and reports be accepted. Unanimous approval.

**Financial Report:** The revenue and expenses are on track as expected, but Carrie reminded us that if we reach the budgeted goal, we will be \$21,000 short, as we budgeted a shortfall. The plate collections are a little short of budget expectations for this time of year, but after a question, it was clarified that the only plate collections reported are what's collected for First Church, not shared plate collections designated for an outside organization.

Chris reported for fundraising that there was a request for a Seed Fund grant for Facebook advertising that would be considered. Memorial/honorary chair plaques were discussed at Endowment Fund board meeting and Building and Grounds committee meeting, and all are in agreement to move forward. The suggested donation will be \$250, which will be split between the operating fund and endowment fund, and Building and Grounds will order and install the plaques. No vote was required, as this is a fundraising activity.

**Froehlich Estate Update:** The estate was settled January 27 2017 at \$134,000, and the church will receive approximately half that amount. [UPDATE: we've received corrected information that the estate settled at \$268,000, and the church's portion is \$134,000.]

There may be some future legal action against those who perpetrated the fraud on the Froehlichs, and we could consider becoming party to the action to possibly receive an additional settlement, but we would have to pay retainer fees for an attorney.

There was some discussion as to how we prioritize capital expenditures, and amending our unrestricted gift policy to clarify the Finance Committee's role as merely advisory in financial matters, with the board having final authority. Beth M. will look into finding our capital request form and updating it to distribute to committees.

**Endowment Fund:** As Dick reported at the Congregational Meeting, the endowment stands at \$1,031,000, an all-time high. \$42,000 will be distributed to the church in FY18. Disbursements have been made quarterly in the past, and Carrie recommends keeping it that way this year.

**Search Committee Budget:** The committee was voted on in January by the congregation, and an overnight retreat has been scheduled for April for which the church will incur some costs. The UUA recommends \$16,000 be budgeted for the duration of a Search Committee's term. Dick talked about the status of the treasury; what is currently in our account at PNC and what it's restricted to. Because we have 4.1 months expenses in reserve, we're in a healthy position, and this \$16,000 can come out of the treasury and be restricted for Search Committee expenses. Cynthia made a motion to take \$16,000 from the treasury and dedicate it to Search Committee expenses, and Beth W. seconded. Unanimous approval.

**Executive Session:** The board went into executive session at 7:38, and continued the regular business of the meeting at 8:37.

**FY18 Strategic Budget Discussion:** It was decided that the board would hold a special meeting after church on February 26<sup>th</sup> to discuss budget planning.

**Board Goals:** Focus area 1, What does First Church exist to do: Benjamin's six-month evaluation is scheduled. The January workshop that had to be postponed due to bad weather has been rescheduled for February 25<sup>th</sup>, and other workshops will follow. Beth W. will be doing an article on the Seed Fund for the next newsletter. The Seed Fund was also mentioned at the Congregational Meeting in January. A hiking club, that was first used as an example at the Church Council Meeting in introducing design thinking, was met with much enthusiasm, and will be prototyped.

**Policy Review:**

At \_\_\_\_ moved and \_\_\_\_ seconded that the meeting be adjourned. \_\_\_\_ approval.

## President's Report to the Board for February 8, 2017 Board Meeting

### 1. Development Activity

Nothing new to report.

### 2. Board Activity

- a. Carrie and Beth McGrew have completed development of a categorized Capital Projects list. They will be working on reviving the process for committee chairs and members to fill out and submit a form of Capital Project ideas for the board's consideration.
- b. At the congregational meeting, the congregation was made aware of an "All are Welcome Here" poster that Brian and Laurie Rivers shared, and there was a request that we consider posting it. The Board's Executive Committee has requested that the Building and Grounds Committee determine an appropriate location for the poster in the entry way of First Unitarian Church.
- c. The Congregation / Interim Minister 6 month evaluation will take place on February 12 with Rev. Maucere and the board members that are on the minister evaluation team – Amy Hunt, Beth McGrew and Carly Wise.

### 3. Committee Activity

- a. Rev. Benjamin Maucere and the Transition Team have rescheduled the congregational workshop, *First Church at its Best*. The workshop will be held on Saturday, February 25 from 10 AM – noon. The workshop is designed to help us explore questions that will inform the Search Committee for their upcoming work.
- b. The Search Committee will go to Transfiguration Spirituality Center for their Search Committee Retreat on April 7 and 8, 2017. Lisa Presley of the UUA Midwest Region will be their coach through the Settled Minister Search process.
- c. Our Family Programming 4th and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade class recently engaged in activities for a curriculum of "Making You Voice Heard." One of the activities associated with this included each of them writing a letter to the Board of ideas they have to make First Unitarian Church a better place. Amy Hunt, Board Liaison to the Family Programming Committee, will meet with the children during Family Programming class time to address their suggestions.
- d. The Futures Task Force has made the board aware that the implementation of some of the Design Thinking Prototypes has begun. Watch for communications regarding these experiments. Dave Wallace will continue to work with First Church committees on prototype implementation.
- e. A Safe Congregations Task Force has been formed with the purpose of updating our Safe Congregation document to include recommendations from the James Whalen's presentations to First Church.
- f. The Communications Committee, with assistance from Carrie Spiess, Susan West and Joe Busby, have added a link to the home page of the First Unitarian Church website that includes a link to the WCPO closings page. They have also added an inclement

weather option to the church voice message that will direct callers to the WCPO closings page.

- g. The Social Justice committee has provided an update on their work with the AMOS Project. The report is attached.

4. Member Activity

Nothing new to report.

5. Community Activity

Nothing new to report.

Shelly Wallace  
Board President

AMOS Project Report  
January 17, 2017

The AMOS Project was heavily involved in the successful initiative to win public support for universal access to preschool education in Cincinnati. The 7.93 mill education levy (Issue 44) that passed on November 8 will support Cincinnati Public Schools and provide high quality preschool to many more children in our community. It will provide access for all four year olds and three year olds whose families live below 200% of poverty. The hope is that additional funding will provide access for all four year olds. The AMOS Project and its member churches view universal access to preschool as a fundamental tool in fighting childhood poverty in Cincinnati.

The United Way will manage the preschool portion of the levy at low administrative cost. Part of the funding will be used to enable preschool providers to upgrade their quality ratings.

A number of First Church members were involved in voter canvassing and voter registration to help support passage of the levy. AMOS has been heavily involved in voter registration efforts and has been a leader in the city and state. We have cooperated by registering people who go to the Shiloh Food Pantry and have had good results.

The next quarterly AMOS Leadership Assembly will take place Thursday, January 19, (1:00-3:00 or 6:30-8:30) and Saturday, January 21 (10:00-12:00) at Crossroads Church. The focus for the first part of 2017 will be on listening to the concerns of people as a means of developing strategies for promoting racial and economic justice.

Dan Schneider

Interim Minister  
Report to the Board  
February 2017

It was my plan to lead a workshop on Saturday January 14<sup>th</sup>. We were going to do some exercises to identify what you value most about First Church and what this tells us about the core values of First Church. The icy road weather advisory forced us to postpone and we'll do it on Saturday February 25.

To follow up on that workshop, in March, the Transition Team and I will lead some exercises in workshops called "What Do You Say After You Say UU?"

It's all part of a vast conspiracy to empower you to invite someone to church, or to respond when someone says, "A UU? What's that about?"

In the words of Marge Piercy,  
It starts when we care to act.  
It starts when we do it again after they say "no!"  
It starts when we say *we*

And know *who* we mean  
And each day we mean one more.

Yours in faith,  
Benjamin

## January 2017 Board Report from music director

### Accomplishments:

Rehearsed singers 4 times

Rehearsed ringers 2 times

Completed Spring Choral Calendar

Determined repertoire for April 23<sup>rd</sup> Music Sunday

Attended January Worship committee meeting

Called organ repair to stop high pitch coming from pipes-attempted to fix myself with assistance from

Jed-I was not successful

Coordinated music for 4 services

Hired Matt McAllister (percussion for January 15<sup>th</sup>)

Hired Matt McAllister for Canvas Sunday (March 5)

Completed list of familiar hymns from the teal hymnal for Benjamin to review

### Goals:

Hire 9 musicians for Music Sunday

### Help needed:

None at this time

Submitted by,

Jera Cox

Director of Music/keyboardist