

**Unity Church - Unitarian  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
December 17, 2014, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.  
Deborah Carter McCoy's Home**

**Attendees**

Board of Trustees (BOT) Members: Stuart Alger, Ginny Allen, Deborah Carter McCoy, Mark Foster, Hal Freshley, Rich Hamer, Steve Harper, Peggy Lin, Angela Newhouse

Executive Team (ET) Members; Lisa Friedman, Barbara Hubbard, Rob Eller-Isaacs, Janne Eller-Isaacs

Others: Lindasusan Ulrich, Laura Park, Lia Rivamonte, Marg Walker, Terry Linskey, Peter Heege

**Opening**

Rich Hamer offered a reading to open the meeting. Attendees thanked Deborah for her hospitality.

**Review of the Past**

Approval of November minutes:

Steve Harper moved to approve the November Board of Trustees meeting minutes. Deborah Carter McCoy seconded the motion. One correction was noted. There was a brief discussion about policy changes and updates noted in the minutes. The policy sub-team will use the minutes to inform their further work. All approved the motion.

Discussion of Annual Meeting:

Ginny Allen requested that the BOT and ET discuss the 2014 congregational meeting. Congregational feedback on the meeting was positive. Suggestions were given for next year's congregational meeting, including that the BOT continue to prepare the pre-meeting pancake breakfast; during the meeting ET and staff should be individually acknowledged by name; the parliamentarian should be recruited well in advance; congregational volunteers should handle the roving microphones.

Review of Monitoring Reports:

Hal Freshley moved to accept the Program Outcomes, Financial Condition, and Staff Changes monitoring reports as compliant with limitations. Deborah Carter McCoy seconded the motion.

BOT and ET members discussed:

- Continuing momentum in Unity's anti-racism work fueled by November services presented by Mark Morrison-Reed and Danny Givens. Rob Eller-Isaacs noted that the Selma trip, planned for March 2015, is full with a waiting list. Unity members, men of Ujaama, Above Every Name members, and others are expected to attend the Selma trip and participate in Beloved Conversations before the trip. Plans are also underway for a Selma event to be held in St. Paul. Volunteer support will be needed for Selma planning and for the St. Paul event. Madeline Summers will help direct interested volunteers to the right opportunities.
- Financial Condition. Barbara Hubbard noted that as of 12/12/2014 operating pledges were \$1.054M towards a goal of \$1.242M, which needs to be raised by year-end 2015. 204

pledging households still have not responded to the 2015 pledge drive; 2/3 of these households are expected to pledge. Discussion touched on dedicated gifts for anti-racism work, including a plan for “Faithify” (a crowdfunding program) in January. Barbara Hubbard also discussed year-end giving and the solid response to request for pledges for capital giving in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

The motion to accept the Monitoring Reports was approved unanimously.

#### Reflections on Board Service:

Terry Linskey, Marg Walker and Lia Rivamonte shared their reflections on serving as trustees, including appreciation for the Board’s practice of opening its meetings with focus questions, which help focus the trustees and ET members on the spiritual aspect of board service.

#### Reflections on 2014 Board Accomplishments:

BOT and ET members reflected on 2014 board accomplishments, including restructuring the MCCE position following Pat Haff’s retirement; the congregational survey, analysis of survey results and communication of those results to the congregation; and ET and BOT evaluations. The work of the evaluation subteam was further discussed in light of eventual senior minister transitions. Future boards will need to determine if the evaluation tools used by current BOT and ET members will make sense in light of new ministers and other ET leaders, who might not be as familiar with policy governance as the current ET.

#### **Creation of the Future:**

Barbara Hubbard distributed binders to new BOT members and updated materials to others. BOT members were asked to confirm that the roster is correct.

The 2015 BOT meeting schedule and perpetual calendar were reviewed. The perpetual calendar is a living document that helps the BOT make, keep and review its promises.

BOT members are asked to look for the sign-up genius email and sign up for board duties in 2015.

BOT and ET members brainstormed regarding work the board should undertake in 2015, including:

- Defining and refining the BOT’s focus in its antiracism work;
- Staff recognition;
- Defining and understanding the “state of the church”;
- Strengthening connections with Unity’s moral owners;
- Supporting congregation members in their journey to understand their values and put those values to work in the world;
- Building the beloved community;
- Better communicating the work of the BOT;
- Continuity, including maintaining the BOT’s institutional knowledge in light of members with 3-year service terms;
- Forming small groups of congregation members, including past BOT members, to support each individual trustee in doing board work well, and serving as effective fiduciary stewards;
- Partnering with other local UU churches for a daylong trustee “experience” workshop to focus on visioning the future of our churches;

- Asking staff to perform a growth analysis so the BOT can understand where congregational growth is coming from and integrate this understanding with Unity's commitment to multiculturalism; and
- Adding a "process observer" to BOT meetings to observe who speaks, who doesn't, and what is embedded in the conversation.

Further discussion focused on how to frame these ideas in terms of the ends. Staff "spotlight" presentations at future BOT meetings might be helpful in highlighting the state of the church and the work of staff and the ET vs. the BOT.

Hal Freshley offered a closing reading. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

#### **Follow-Up Items**

- The ET will prepare a consent item for the January 10, 2015 meeting regarding housing allowance amounts for ordained ministers on staff.
- The 2015 BOT will review the definition of Moral Owners found in Policy I:E.
- The 2015 BOT will formally monitor the board/ET relationship policies.
- The 2015 BOT will formally monitor the ends.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy D. Lin