

October Meeting Minutes:

Unity Church Unitarian: Meeting of the Board of Trustees

October 17, 2020

The meeting took place on zoom.

Board of Trustees (BOT) members present: Jackie Smith (chair), Jill van Koolwijk (secretary), Jennifer Tong, Nila Gouldin, Ruth Kirkland, Clover Earl, Alex Askew, Justin Cummins, Louise Livesay-Al

Executive Team (ET) members present: Barbara Hubbard, KP Hong, Rob Eller-Isaacs, Janne Eller-Isaacs

Guests: Laura Park

Jackie Smith called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

An opening reading from Tony Kushner was offered by Justin Cummins.

Focus Question: "Identity, Perspective, Experience - Think about one of these and how they impact your work with the board, and your life in general."

Monitoring Reports – ET report

Policy II.E. Financial Condition:

Louise Livesay-Al moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy II E. The Financial Condition here refers specifically to the August 2020 financial reports. The motion passed unanimously.

(Discussion: We are in a very strong financial position due to the various factors: continued congregational pledges, the PPP loan Unity received and the Currier gift. We are also managing our debt well and anticipate our PPP to be forgiven in its entirety.)

Policy II.D. Financial Planning and Budgeting – Budget Review and Recommendation

Justin Cummins moved that the Board of Trustees recommends approval of the 2021 Operating and Capital Budgets to the congregation at the Annual Meeting in November. The motion passed unanimously.

(Discussion: There might be another PPP loan opportunity in the future. This means that the availability of the Bose and Currier bequests would be pushed into next year's budgets. \$75 000 are planned to go towards capital expenses in 2021.)

Policy II.G. Conflict of Interest:

Clower Earl moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy II G (Conflict of Interest). The motion passed unanimously.

Policy II.H. Communication and Counsel to the Board:

Jill van Koolwijk moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy II H (Communication and Counsel to the Board). The motion passed unanimously.

(Discussion: In collaboration with the St Paul Sanctuary Coalition, Unity Church welcomed a family into our Sanctuary space on Friday, October 9th. The family has been living in encampments for the past four months, and one member of the family has asylum status. We are strengthening our lay team to work with our staff in providing welcome and support to the family as they navigate legal status and permanent housing. This may be a very short stay.

We are already in conversation with another coalition agency / church about housing trafficked construction workers who are in danger of deportation. They are refugees from Central America.)

Policy II.J. Anti Racism and Racial Healing:

Alex Askew moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy II J (Anti Racism and Racial Healing). The motion passed unanimously.

(Discussion: This policy is unusual for non-profits and churches. We are committed to this work and have pursued the contracting and education of vendors with the lens of anti racism and racial healing for the last 15 years.)

Break

Subcommittee Reports

Transition Team:

We are presenting a group of 21 candidates to the full Board today. We will bring them to the full congregation for a vote to select 9 final nominees (5 top votes from the membership and the remaining 4 selected by the board from the candidates) to the Ministerial Search Team. Before the Annual Meeting, we will assemble pictures and bios from the candidates to present their experience with Unity to the congregation. Voting will take place electronically.

Evaluation Team:

The results of the ET evaluation are in the Meeting Book including comments from Board members and ET members. The Board believes that the ET is currently doing very difficult work under very difficult circumstances and they are doing a good job.

End 1: Building a multicultural spiritual home, how will we move forward? Unity is currently offering a series of programming in collaboration with Team Dynamics called Equity and Racial Justice to broaden the congregational learning around anti racist work. One option might be to have the Board take the IDI again to see if we have made progress on the IDI scale towards Acceptance and Adaptation.

The Ministerial Outreach Teams at Unity are growing. Membership has been growing in response to the racial uprisings and the Coronavirus pandemic. Congregants want to be more involved in the outreach teams' leadership and actions.

Financial Taskforce:

The Financial Limitation in our policies were updated in October 2018 and approved but did not get implemented into the working version of policies.

Justin Cummins moved to reaffirm the Financial Limitations relating to Policy F. and to publish them. The motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Approval of September 12, 2020 Meeting Minutes and Policy II.B. Staff Changes:

Ruth Kirkland moved to accept the September 12, 2020 Meeting Minutes and to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy II B (Staff Changes). The motion passed unanimously. (There were no staff changes)

Board Business – Planning for the November 21, 2020 Annual Meeting of the Congregation

(Discussion: A concern was expressed that we have to invite enough congregational members to the Annual Meeting to meet a quorum and to vote on the Ministerial Search Team. The ET and Laura Park will discuss further about what format to use for the Annual Meeting.

Meeting evaluation: Jackie Smith asked for a meeting evaluation with a reflection on Identity, Perspective and Experience in regards to the present meeting.

Justin Cummins offered a closing reading from Rumi.

Jackie Smith adjourned the meeting at 11:27 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Jill van Koolwijk, secretary.