

## **Unity Church Unitarian: Meeting of the Board of Trustees**

### **March 10, 2018**

The meeting took place at Unity Church-Unitarian, 733 Portland Ave, St. Paul, Minn.

**Board of Trustees (BOT) members present:** Nancy Evert, Justin Cummins, John Steiner-Manning, Bailey Webster, Jill Van Koolwijk, Nila Gouldin, Ruth Kirkland, Jennifer Tong, Terry Linskey

**Executive Team (ET) members present:** Rob Eller-Isaacs, Janne Eller-Isaacs, Barbara Hubbard, Lisa Friedman

**Others present:** Jane Thompson from the ARLT, Laura Park from Unity Consulting, Sharon Dittmaer of the UUA Mid-America region

Justin called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

The meeting started with a brief check-in. Prompt: "My most important takeaway from the Ends renewal retreat is..."

Bailey Webster offered an opening reading.

#### **Continuation of Ends renewal retreat discussion (Laura Park)**

Discussion of drafted values, mission, and ends as presented by Laura.

#### **Prophetic Leadership** (subteam conveners)

Board Capacity Subteam: rollout of BoardEffect software will happen in May. Barbara and Bailey will get access immediately and begin populating the software. There was some discussion about etiquette around use of devices in meetings.

Evaluation subteam: the team is beginning the process of planning for the congregational survey. Some questions: will we include Spirit Map again? Ways to promote participation from the congregation? The team will report back.

Staff and volunteer evaluation: need to get list from Barbara about who receives that.

Discussion about using SurveyMonkey or some other electronic method, with a secure Board account. Currently the survey is mailed out as paper copies, color coded, and returned to the Board Chair for confidentiality reasons. The team will discuss and report back.

Financials Subteam: Presented subteam work plan for 2018/2019: what the subteam should accomplish in the next two years, when they will evaluate if the subteam should continue or be folded into another team. Met with Wendy Harden, who does the financial review for the

church, to discuss review vs. audit. Developing a visual training method for understanding the financials of the church.

ET feedback: some urgency around Endowment Policy, would like to schedule time for the ET to have input to the Board before summer.

Policy subteam: the subteam has been working on policy revisions for the last several months. Notes on the revisions are included in this meeting's board packet. The subteam will make policy/bylaw change recommendations to the Board in April or May. They are also strategizing how to present the changes to the congregation (probably in a separate meeting from the annual meeting).

Transitions subteam: there are four options for bringing in (a) new minister(s). Option #2 is a "layering" option, where an "heir apparent" would begin before Rob and Janne leave to benefit from working with and learning from them. This option needs a decision very soon. Subteam members are reaching out to other congregations who have had similar transition situations and will report back at the May meeting for discussion and decision making about option #2 specifically. If we decide to go with option #2, the other options will be off the table and there will be no other decisions to make. If we don't go with option #2, the goal will be to make a final decision regarding the other options by November when new Board members come on so that we don't have to redo the work of this subteam.

### **Selection of Unity and Above Every Name Task Force**

Jill Van Koolwijk and Bailey Webster volunteered to be the board members on this team. The Board Chair will appoint two other members of the church (most likely from "Team Danny") to fill out the Unity portion of the group.

### **Consent agenda**

***Jill Van Koolwijk moved to approve the Feb minutes. Nancy Evert Seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

Bylaws revisions: The Policy subteam will bring a final draft to the next meeting, looking for a preliminary approval.

***Ruth Kirkland moved to accept the changes to Article III, section 1. Jennifer Tong seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

***John Steiner-Manning moved to accept the changes to Article III, section 3. Ruth Kirkland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

***Jill Van Koolwijk moved to accept the changes to Article VI, section 2. John Steiner-Manning seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

***Ruth Kirkland moved to accept the changes to Article VI, section 4. Jennifer Tong seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

## **Monitoring**

Policy II.B. (Staff Changes) 3 new facilities staff, newly budgeted hours in the RE program, new Youth Ministry position taken on by Ray Hommeyer.

***Ruth Kirkland moved to accept the Executive Team Report as compliant with the limitations of II.B. (staff changes). Jill Van Koolwijk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

Policy II.E. (Financial Condition)

***Jill Van Koolwijk moved that the Executive Team is not in compliance with the limitations of Policy II.E (financial condition), and the board is satisfied that the plan the ET has presented will move us toward compliance. Nila Gouldin seconded the motion.***

Discussion of the plan to get into alignment on the endowment issue. Barbara will send out the details of the plan.

***The motion passed with eight votes in favor, one vote not in favor.***

Policy II.G. (Conflict of Interest)

Not in compliance, did not get multiple bids for the organ renovation project. There is no competition among companies able to do this work, so the lack of compliance was out of necessity.

It was suggested that the board have a form for “sole source” contracts and bring it to the Board so that the ET can be in compliance in the future with circumstances like this.

Also failed to bring the contract to the Board, as it is over \$20,000. This is out of compliance as well. Also, the bid went from \$70,000 to \$108,000, and increase of more than \$20,000. That should have been brought to the Board a second time.

Perceived conflict of interest in renting the duplex to the ministers’ daughter and her fiancé, who is on the facilities staff at Unity. They also receive a caretaker allowance, another perceived conflict of interest. The amount of the caretaker allowance could be considered an actual conflict of interest. Sally Scoggins has said she doesn’t believe it’s a conflict of interest.

Discussion about avoiding even the appearance of conflicts of interest. Do we want to form a sub-group of the board who determines if/when there is conflict of interest (or the appearance of it)? Board Chair will build time in the May meeting to have this conversation.

There is a Trustee conflict of interest policy in the bylaws, but not for the ET. It would be standard practice to have such a policy for the ET. Something to revisit in May.

***Nancy Evert moved that the ET report is not in compliance with the conflict of interest policy. Jill second the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

Policy II.H. (Communication and Counsel)

Brief discussion of the Beloved Community Staff Team. They are teeing up a conversation about what it looks like to move Unity towards being a multicultural community. The conversation now is about the allocation of resources. The new ends statements will have implications for this.

***Nancy Evert moved to accept the Executive Team Report as compliant with the limitations of II.H. (communication and counsel). Nila Gouldin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

Policy II.I. (Facilities Planning)

***Ruth Kirkland moved to accept the Executive Team Report as compliant with the limitations of II.B. (staff changes). Jill Van Koolwijk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

Discussion: ministry provided by use of the facilities. This place is alive!

***The motion passed unanimously.***

**Debrief**

Feel free to call or email the Board Chair with concerns.

John Steiner-Manning offered a closing reading.

The meeting adjourned at 1:12 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Bailey Webster, Secretary*