

# MINUTES

## Unity Church-Unitarian: Meeting of the Board of Trustees September 9, 2017

The meeting was held in Anderson Library at Unity Church.

From 9 to noon, Trustees and the Executive Team participated in the church's intercultural competence workshop for Unity leaders.

The Board meeting convened at 1:30.

**Board of Trustees (BOT) members present:** Stu Alger, Estelle Brouwer, Justin Cummins, Nancy Evert, Mark Foster, Angela Newhouse, John Steiner-Manning, Bailey Webster

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

**Others present:** Andrea Johnson, ministerial intern

Stu Alger gave an opening reading.

### Prophetic Leadership

- Board Capacity Sub-team

*Recommendations for Board member nominations.*

Bailey Webster reported on the three candidates the sub-team recommends as new Board members: Nila Gouldin, Ruth Kirkland, and Jill Van Koolwyk. If the Board approves the slate, the three candidates will stand for election by voting members of the congregation at the annual meeting in November.

**John Steiner-Manning moved to approve the nomination of the recommended slate of candidates. Nancy Evert seconded the motion.**

**The motion was approved.**

*Selection of Board officers and Board facilitator*

Mark Foster reported on the sub-team's recommendation that Justin Cummins continue as chair and Bailey Webster serve as secretary for the coming year. Justin described the new proposed role of Board facilitator, which would take the place of whip. He recommended that Nancy Evert serve in this role; Nancy accepted.

**John Steiner-Manning moved that the Board approve the recommended slate of candidates. Stu Alger seconded the motion.**

**The motion was approved.**

- Communication & Linkage Sub-team

*Update on linkage plan/calendar.*

Stu Alger reported that he has circulated the linkage plan/calendar to sub-team conveners; he also handed out paper copies at the meeting. Angela Newhouse will convert the spreadsheet to a Google sheet. Sub-teams are asked to populate the Google sheet by 9/23.

The Communication & Linkage sub-team and the Evaluation sub-team will have a joint meeting Monday, September 11, to discuss and agree to key messages from the congregational survey to communicate with the congregation.

- Evaluation Sub-team

*Update on Executive Team performance evaluation.*

Angela Newhouse reported on the performance evaluation, which was very positive overall. As has been the case in the past, the Executive Team rated itself lower than the Board rated them.

- Policy Sub-team

*Recommendations for revisions of the bylaws and related discussion*

Justin Cummins provided an overview of the by-laws revisions and Sally Scoggin's summary. The documents are the result of several meetings of the policy sub-team, Laura Park, Janne Eller-Isaacs, and Sally Scoggin. The sub-team also solicited and received input from Ginny Allen, who was Board chair when by-laws revisions were last considered, as well as several members of the congregation who voiced concerns when changes to the by-laws were considered at the 2015 annual meeting.

**Bailey Webster moved to forward the by-laws revisions to the congregation for consideration at the annual meeting in November 2017.**

**Angela Newhouse seconded the motion.**

**Discussion:** A question was raised about section 5 and the meaning of the word "organization." It was suggested that the sentence be clarified by moving the word "organization" after the word "supervision," or by re-ordering the clauses in the sentence. A question was then raised about this sentence in Section 1: "The Board of Trustees may establish individual Executive Team member reporting relationships as it deems appropriate." The question is whether this refers to reporting relationships between the Executive Team and Board or within the Executive Team. Justin Cummins agreed to ask Sally Scoggin about this. Nancy Evert suggested the following language be substituted for the sentence reference above: "The Board of Trustees may establish reporting relationships within and among members of the Executive Team, if and as the Board deems it appropriate."

Another suggestion surfaced as an alternative to the first sentence of the paragraph, which states that an Executive Team shall be appointed, to something like this: "The Board will establish the executive leadership structure of the organization."

The question for consideration by the Board before the annual meeting is – do we want to change the by-laws now to provide greater agility for the upcoming ministerial search, or keep in the by-laws for now the assumption that Unity Church will have an Executive Team, and potentially propose revision at a later date when and if the need arises. After much discussion, the Board reached consensus that the proposed by-laws revisions should be tabled pending a full review of the by-laws in their entirety.

**Bailey and Angela withdrew their motion and second and by-laws revisions were tabled.**

- Transitions Sub-team

*Update on the identification and use of a transition consultant*

Rob Eller-Isaacs reported there are two candidates for the role executive coach to work with the Executive Team and the decision will be made soon. The transitions consultant from the UUA, who will work with the Board, will be appointed as quickly as the UUA is able to place someone.

- Ends Statements Task Force

*Recommendations for the Ends renewal plan*

Nancy Evert reported that the task force discussed how to involve a broad array of people in the Ends renewal process. Laura Park, who is working with the task force, will reach out for facilitator suggestions; training for Board members and facilitators will take place on January 6, 2018, from 8:30 to 2. The task force is working with Barbara Hubbard to schedule 14 or more discussion sessions to take place from mid-January through February 23. Trustees will be asked to observe these sessions; each trustee will need to observe about three sessions. Regarding engaging people of color, the group is reaching out to individual people of color about the best way to proceed. Rob suggested that the Board work through ministerial intern Arif Mamdani on that, as he's meeting individually with every person of color in the church. The Board and Executive Team are asked to reserve March 2-3, 2018, Friday evening and all day Saturday, for the nested bowls retreat to process the results of the group sessions. The canvass team is aware of the Ends process and will weave the themes and the powerful question into the pledge process this fall. It was also suggested that the powerful question and Ends renewal be incorporated where possible into sermons and other worship theme-related communications.

- Financials Task Force  
*Update on action plan for the Task Force*  
Bailey Webster reported that the task force hasn't met and expects to have a report at the next Board meeting.

## **Business Matters**

- **Consent agenda**  
Angela Newhouse proposed a friendly amendment clarifying that the Executive Team developed the revised RFP, not the Transitions sub-team.  
**Stu Alger moved approval of the consent agenda as amended. Angela seconded the motion.**  
**The motion passed.**

## **Monitoring**

### ***Executive Team Report***

#### *I.B. Program Outcomes – “Beyond,” Membership and Ends Interpretation*

**Stu Alger moved to accept the Executive Team Report as compliant within the limitations of Policy I.B. Bailey Webster seconded the motion.**

**Discussion:** Rob Eller-Isaacs explained that the Executive Team had hoped to revise the measures used for this report partly through convening focus groups but they've discovered they do not have the bandwidth to conduct or compile the results of focus groups.

**The motion passed.**

#### *II.B. Staff Changes*

**Angela Newhouse moved to accept the Executive Team Report as compliant within the limitations of Policy II.B. Mark Foster seconded the motion.**

**Discussion:** Barbara Hubbard reported that interviews have been conducted for the janitorial position and she hopes to report at the next meeting that the position has been filled.

**The motion was approved.**

*II.C. Compensation and benefits report and executive team salary review*

**Stu Alger moved to accept the Executive Team Report as compliant within the limitations of Policy II.C. Mark Foster seconded the motion.**

**Discussion:** Barbara Hubbard distributed the staff compensation report and there was discussion of how Unity's staff compensation compares to UUA and NACBA salaries. Justin Cummins recommended that the newly formed financials task force engage with Barbara on this. It was suggested that the Board should have a broader conversation about compensation and how it relates to our larger values and goals.

**The motion was approved.**

*II.E. Financial Condition*

**Bailey Webster moved that the Executive Team is not in compliance with the limitations of Policy II.E. and the Board is satisfied that the plan the ET has presented will move us toward compliance. Stu Alger seconded the motion.**

**Discussion:** Barbara Hubbard reported that she's now able to pull financial reports electronically and this is significant progress.

**The motion was approved.**

*II.G. Conflict of Interest*

**Angela Newhouse moved to accept the Executive Team Report as compliant within the limitations of Policy II.G. Nancy Evert seconded the motion.**

There was no discussion.

**The motion was approved.**

*II.H. Communication & Counsel*

**Angela Newhouse moved to accept the Executive Team Report as compliant within the limitations of Policy II.H. Stu Alger seconded the motion.**

**Discussion:** Unity will participate in the Poor People's campaign and will be protected from related administrative responsibility. Janne, Arif, and others who participated in last year's Mosaic Makers' conference will be invited to participate in the Mosaic Makers' conference in California this fall.

**The motion was approved.**

*II.I. Facilities planning*

**Mark Foster moved to accept the Executive Team Report as compliant within the limitations of Policy II.I. Nancy Evert seconded the motion.**

There was no discussion.

**The motion was approved.**

**Debriefing/Potential Future Training Topics**

Justin Cummins asked Trustees to consider future training topics arising out of today's meeting.

Bailey Webster offered a closing reading, "The Farmer".

**The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 pm.**

*Respectfully submitted, Estelle Brouwer, Board Secretary*