

First Unitarian Society Board of Trustees Minutes

Date and Time: April 25, 2018 6:30 – 10:00 pm

Location: FUS, Gaebler Living Room

Attendees:

Trustees:

- Joe Kremer, President (Governance Committee)
- Chip Quade, Secretary
- Maureen Friend (Personnel Committee)
- March Schweitzer (Finance Committee)
- Mike Lienau
- Dorit Bergen
- John McGevena

Clergy and Staff:

- Michael Schuler
- Kelly Crocker
- Monica Nolan
- T. Kay Browning

Guests:

- Pat Eagan and Eric Sundquist, Sustainability Task Force

Unable to attend:

- Youth Advisors: Alison Cotter, Henry Hill-Gorman
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Materials: Minutes from March Board meeting, Updates from staff, Materials from the Sustainability Task Force, Budget documents, Parish Meeting Agenda draft, Strategic Plan with Staff Goals

Current Vision of Ministry:

- Within us, enhance opportunities for spiritual, intellectual, and personal growth
 - Among us, nurture members in all stages of life and commit to build deeper connections
 - Beyond us, embody our UU principles in the larger community as we engage in outreach, service, advocacy, and activism
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Six-month Board Focal Points:

- Governance during the interim period
 - Communication
 - Radical hospitality
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Check-In

Agenda review and correction

No changes to the agenda.

Consent agenda

By consent, the Board approved the minutes from the March 2018 Board meeting and gratefully accepted the staff updates from Kelly and Monica.

Sustainability Task Force update

Eric Sundquist and Pat Eagan presented the current status of the task force's work. The task force has consulted with four vendors and explored options. FUS is facing two big sets of questions: What kind of configuration should we go for? And what kind of financing approach should we use? The

technical configuration is coming into focus. The task force has applied for and received a grant for \$20,000. The task force will use the proposal from one of the vendors as the basis for a second grant application.

There are many details to be worked out. **The task force would like to do a deeper dive with the Board on all of the issues, and will schedule a separate meeting for that.**

The timing for the next steps will depend on how soon the task force can address all of the bullet points in the charter. If they can come back with a written recommendation in May, we would then want to think about that for a few weeks. But we might be able to move forward after that without much delay.

The task force will seek input from Temple Beth Israel, which has recently done something like what we're trying to do. We think they did this through a co-op, which resulted in no organizational outlay at all. With the co-op model, we could bring this into the picture for next year. Without that, we'd have to consider other financing options.

The task force's current charter does not direct the task force to address financing options. **Joe Kremer moved that we expand the Sustainability Task Force's charter to include financing options for a solar installation. Dorit Bergen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

Financial Forum presentation and discussion about budgets

In advance of the meeting, Monica provided draft budget documents to the Board. These documents included an update on income and expenses for the current fiscal year and a proposed budget for the next fiscal year. During the meeting, Monica provided an overview of this year's and next year's financials by doing a run-through of her materials for the May 6th Budget Forum.

John McGevna asked for a closed-session discussion of next year's budget, asking Monica to stay for the purpose of providing specifics to illuminate the discussion. The Board consented to this request and proceeded with the closed-session discussion.

Following the closed-session discussion, the Board accepted the draft of the three budgets (operating, capital, restricted and designated) with two minor modifications.

Proposed changes to policy on accepting restricted funds

Dorit Bergen moved to add the following language to the policy manual, per the Finance Committee's recommendation: "New donor-restricted funds will not be accepted, unless they are equal to 1% or more of the annual budget, and are then subject to Board approval. All other gifts are to be given to the operating or capital fund and used at the discretion of the executive director, in accordance with the parish approved budget. Donors are encouraged to participate in the annual budget planning process, via the Budget Parish Forum, to advocate for the funding of specific initiatives." Maureen Friend seconded the motion.

During the discussion that followed, Board members asked for clarification of the intent of this policy change. The basic idea is that FUS will benefit from a more democratic approach to dealing with donations. If a donor wants to fund an initiative that is not in line with organizational priorities, FUS should not accept the donation. In addition, we want to be careful about adding to the administrative workload, as any restriction on a donation requires a certain degree of oversight.

The proposed policy change would not prevent people from donating into designated funds that currently exist, like the music fund.

The Board acknowledges that this may cause some consternation for some members of the congregation. Recognizing that it might be wise to seek input from the parish about this, the Board agreed to add this as a discussion item for the Budget Forum and to table this motion. The Board is not bringing this proposed policy change to the congregation for a vote; we are simply soliciting feedback.

Draft Agenda for the May 20th Parish Meeting

Joe and Monica presented the draft agenda. Chip noted that Bernie Tennis, a member of the congregation, has asked whether FUS would like to sign a letter to the Citizens Climate Lobby. In past discussion, we've noted that such an action would require a parish vote. Action items:

- The Board agreed to add this to the Parish Meeting agenda.
- Chip will help Monica draft a one-sentence motion about this before May 1st.
- Chip will work with Bernie to create a four-sentence blurb for the News From The Red Floors.
- Chip will work on how we'll circulate the letter to members of the congregation in advance of the meeting. This will involve posting the letter on the web site.

Strategic plan

Staff goals have been added to the Strategic Plan; now it's the Board's turn to add its goals. How will we do this?

- Individual Board members will each draft a set of goals. Members will complete their drafts a week before the May 16th meeting – so, by May 9th.
- To get the Board started on this, Chip will create a document that contains the current visions and outcomes, but no goals. Chip will then make seven copies of this document, one for each Board member, with the name of a Board member in the document's title. Chip will drop these into the Strategic Planning 2018-2019 folder.
- Once Board members have completed their individual drafts, Chip will combine the materials into a single document.
- To prepare for the May meeting, Board members should read and digest the combined document before the meeting.
- Board members will discuss the document at the May meeting, reflect on it between the May and June meetings, and finalize it at the June meeting.

Follow-up on the discernment exercise with Rev. Dr. Thandeka

At the March Board meeting, Thandeka led us through an exercise that she called *The Inner Game of Serving FUS*. During that exercise, we set some goals for ourselves. How well did we do toward achieving those goals?

- The group consisting of Maureen, Mike, John, and Henry accomplished its goals.
- The group consisting of Dorit, March, and Chip accomplished its goals.
- The clergy and staff group accomplished its goals with respect to soliciting staff inquiries for the Board and disseminating Board meeting minutes to staff on meeting days.

The Board did not make any decisions regarding whether to continue with this.

Assignments for next meeting

Snacks and readings: Dorit Bergen