

OPERATIONS COUNCIL MINUTES August 2020 FINAL

Tuesday, August 18, 2020
Via Zoom online

Attending via Zoom: Susan Bartlett, Laurel Farnsworth, Jud Leonard, Karen Bottar, Sharon Sisskind, Eric Haas, Barbara Schmitt (BOT) Linda Ross (asst clerk); Brian Hicks and Bruce Kimball (7:50 p.m.-8:20 p.m.)

Called to order 7:05 p.m.

Invocation/Chalice Lighting/Reading - Laurel

Covenant

As we, the members of this Council and staff, gather to serve this congregation in leadership, we commit to ourselves and to each other: to be present and prepared for the work of this meeting; to listen well and contribute respectfully; to balance both our short and long-term visions with fiscal responsibility; to support the decisions of the Council; to uphold the democratic process; and to lead with goodwill and faith in the work we can accomplish together.

Approvals:

- July minutes - Karen moved to approve the minutes, Sharon seconded the motion, unanimous approval, motion passed.

Staff Update

Erin had emergency dental surgery today and is unable to attend.

Susan for Amanda (also unable to attend) – an assistant RE director has been hired; she is currently living abroad, has done RE work in the past; has done a lot of anti-racism work and work with youth.

Amanda had done surveys of parents during the lockdown. One of the findings is that parents and children missed getting together. Amanda is contemplating getting groups of parents and children together outdoors in September.

Laurel – would like to see an activity associated with the meeting.

Eric – agreed with Laurel. Some groups of children are rambunctious; will be hard for them to stay 6 feet apart.

Report on July BOT Meeting –Laurel

- Most of the discussion was about the closing of the building. She was asked several times if the OC was aware of the financial impact; she responded yes.

- They voted on committee chairs.
- There was some discussion of the ministerial review, but it is still ongoing so no final report or recommendations yet.
- Board then went into executive session.
- Barbara – ministerial review has yielded one finding – that there is a question of how FUUSN handles conflict and can we do it better.
 - FUUSN also needs new and creative ways to get together.
 - § Suggestion for groups of people to meet online for dinners, etc.
 - § Restart Dinners for 7 on Zoom
 - § Barbara – Belmont UUs have “neighborhood nuggets”, based on those who live geographically close to one another; those people can connect with each other.

Financial

- July expenditures – Karen – as of July, pledges are way ahead of what she would expect at this time of the year, as are prior year pledges. Expenses are low; she is very comfortable with where things are right now.
- Thanking large donors – Karen – for those who have given extra donations over and above their pledges, of which there are several. She would like to establish a protocol for thanking them. She suggested a letter (can be form letter) signed by Karen and the BOT. There was a short discussion; general agreement that this is a good idea. Karen will draft a letter and send around for comments.
- Venmo redux – uncashed checks. Karen can work with Village Bank to set up Venmo – primarily for classroom aides.
- Plate offerings – Sharon – it is all set up to donate via text (Realm); just need to pull the trigger. Susan will bring up at next steering committee meeting.
- Quickbooks update – we are using the 2014 version, on a separate computer in Fran’s office. To switch to the latest version, the computer needs to run Windows 10. Jud – Fran has an older computer that may not be able to run Windows 10. He will check on this. Jud estimated a new computer at \$800; Quickbooks is about \$200, with yearly fee about \$200. Sharon moved that we authorize Jud to replace Fran’s computer if needed. Laurel – friendly amendment to authorize purchase of Quickbooks as well. Laurel seconded the motion, with a \$1500 limit for these purchases. Unanimous approval, motion passed.
- Legacy Circle campaign update – Bruce Kimball and Brian Hicks
 - FUUSN Legacy Circle Matching Appeal – has been discussed since last fall; there was great interest from some legacy circle members. The idea was put on hold when Covid started; they are now looking at it again. They are closing in on \$60,000 to match 10% of new bequests to FUUSN up to a maximum of \$5,000 per pledge. Jay of the UUA thought it was a great idea. He indicated that it would be critical to have the enthusiastic backing of the BOT, OC, and minister

(leadership of congregation). He suggested tweaking the program so that there is a match for smaller bequests. This is a good time because many people are reviewing their estate plans now.

○ Susan – has some concerns about the timing of the proposal. Discussion of idea:

§ Laurel – concerned about not enough operating budget for major repairs (e.g., \$180,000 for roof repair). No capital campaign for years, which could supply money for repairs.

§ Eric – clarified some points in the proposal. He is not knowledgeable enough about how money moves around to make a recommendation, but thought probably worth trying.

§ Barbara – agrees that many people are reviewing estate plans right now, and that there is a real opportunity here. Capital campaign would be hard right now (asking people to donate now), vs pledging money for the future.

§ Sharon – it can be difficult to talk to people about making a bequest, and can be helpful to have a marketing tool. She says go for it.

§ Brian – Over 60s group was especially enthusiastic about the proposal.

§ Karen – thought it was a good idea to try.

§ Jud – thinks it is an opportunity and a terrific selling tool.

§ Susan – will get in touch with Chris and Erin to discuss next steps.

§ Laurel – moved that Brian and Bruce's proposal be accepted; Jud seconded; unanimous approval; motion passed.

· GuideStar database – database of non-profits; FUUSN is in the database. They are requesting additional information to be included. Discussion; Laurel thinks they are more for non-profits than churches. Susan will check to see how many churches are included, and what kind of report can they provide; what benefit can they provide to FUUSN.

FUUSN 2020-2021 Calendar

· Christmas trees – not clear yet whether trees will be able to be supplied to us.

· Holiday Fair – Laurel thinks that if there are tree sales, she can figure out a traffic pattern to sell wreaths, high end gingerbread houses, maybe jewelry and gifts, and have a silent auction.

· Services auction – worth having a discussion with Pat Rohan, but many services will not be able to do done with social distancing.

· Social action – would be good to touch base with committees to see what they're doing in this climate (OC members should liaison with their committees).

· Ferry Beach – discussion of whether some activities could be done virtually, as was done for Sandy Island. Could ask Ferry Beach organizers (Chris O'Donnell) to think about it; also Amanda, who organized online activities at Sandy Island.

Website

Jud is concerned about it; it is disorganized and gives a lot of incorrect information. The issue is finding someone to spearhead upgrading it. Need someone who will update the site on an ongoing basis. Laurel suggested asking Jaelynn Linares if she could do some of this as a consultant for pay. Long discussion of how to approach fixing the web site. Conclusion – the first step is to contact Erin and discuss; Susan will discuss with her. Jud will approach Jaelynn.

Update: Committee issues/reports

- B & G Laurel
 - Per the fire department, the CO2 detector in the boiler room must be hooked up to the fire alarm panel, which is old and cannot support this. Therefore, it will need to be replaced and could be expensive; she is waiting on the price – could be \$60,000.
 - She has contacted an HVAC contractor to see how to adjust air flow in some places in the building; could also be \$60,000.

- Status of Pine Village return – no issues reported.

Thank yous – Curt Lamb and the others involved in organizing the summer services (note: summer services committee is Joan Caplan, Kate Carney, Curt Lamb, Cathy Morocco, Bob Persons, Demie Stathoplos, Jud Leonard, Lois Shapiro); Anne Watson-Born for Vespers.

Meeting adjourned 9:15 p.m.