

FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY IN NEWTON
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
April 9, 2013

Present:

Board: Strom Thacker, Ann Woodbury, Charlie Watts, Jonathan Reuman, Margaret Costello, Bruce Henderson, Alan Cody. **Absent:** Conrad Buys, Gordon Moriarty, Carl Metzger

Staff: Erin Splaine, Perry Montrose

Guest: Jeff Baker and Margaret Zaleski, Green Sanctuary Committee

Clerk: Sheila Ardery

Margaret Costello provided an inspirational reading after the Board read the covenant and Strom lit the chalice.

Approval of the Minutes

The March 2013 minutes were approved without comment.

Investment Proposal

Jeff introduced a proposal that would be a social action to address climate change. Jeff first explained that he was also a member of the "Green Sanctuary Committee". Jeff reviewed information gathered by that committee regarding the impact and source of climate change. Jeff proposed that the Society divest of its investment in fossil fuel companies. The Board explored how this action could be approached. Jon Reuman volunteered to contact the Board of Investment on behalf of the Board of Trustees to find out what the current situation is in terms of our investments in fossil fuel companies and what the implications of such an action might be.

Staff Reports

Perry reported that the Passover Seder was a successful intergenerational event. Over 900 books were delivered to the Mather School. Many other youth activities have taken place this month. The Adult RE committee is coming up with new topics for the fall which are targeting life changes and challenges. There were 18 people at the "New UU" session. The Coming of Age visioning process will be finished in the next four weeks.

Erin reported that there has been a lot going on and the services have been well attended. The Catie Curtis concert was a wonderful event. There were about 350 people at the Easter service.

The search committee for the new assistant minister has five members. There is a new FUSN member on the committee. Erin put the ad on the UU website and another relevant website. Eight people so far have expressed interest in the assistant minister position. The position has been defined as hire to hire instead of hire to call.

Erin said she would be away at the end of April and also the beginning of May but hopes to attend the May board meeting.

Charlie stated that he attended the Coming of Age event and Erin and Perry did an excellent job answering the kids' questions.

New Members

Margaret Zaleski, a member of the Green Sanctuary Committee, is applying to be a new member.

Valerie Miller is also applying. She and her husband, Greg DiBiaso, are the owners of Artitudes in West Newton. They have donated to the Auction and are planning to hold a FUSN discount day at the store as part of the pledge drive.

Margaret Arndt and David Snieckus are applying. Their daughter, Abigail, is a member of Creationdance.

Alex Muggah has recently moved from Canada to Newton. He was a Unitarian in Canada. His son, Cameron, was also mentioned.

Carolyn Mapes came to FUSN in 2011 and is the sister of Cindy Mapes. She is applying.

Maryann Mapes, Cindy's mother, is also applying.

Bruce moved to approve them all and the motion passed unanimously.

Annual Budget Drive

Bruce reported on the status of the pledge drive. Of the 426 targeted people, 310 have responded. Of those, 136 pledged, 147 will pledge, and 27 will not pledge. 116 have not responded yet. The drive should be over by the end of April. Of the returning pledgers, the average increase is 7.5%. The goal is 10% increase in the total amount pledged. There was some discussion of having a survey of respondents to evaluate how the drive went. Charlie offered to help with the survey. FUSN has a Survey Monkey account that can be used.

There was some discussion as to how to recruit the next leaders of the pledge drive.

Conflict Resolution

Charlie led the discussion on adoption of the Conflict Resolution Policy. Charlie developed a decision tree and introduced the document to the board. Alan reflected that there was a distinct, proposed policy on how to deal with disruptive behaviors. He suggested that the policy could be reviewed and voted on as it was the most developed. He didn't think that a sub-committee was needed for it.

Charlie proposed that this current board review the disruptive behavior policy and take it up at the next meeting. Then the current board should recommend that the next board take up the remaining action plan on implementing the remaining conflict resolution policies. Since the procedures involve the Ops Council, Charlie will reach out to Pat Rohan to see if he has any comment on it.

Minister's Evaluation

After her first three years in the position, there is a minister's evaluation. The makeup of the evaluation team is spelled out in the contract, but Erin wants the Board to pick all the members instead of the minister picking two. The Evaluation should be scheduled for the fall. There is a district workshop on minister evaluation which Erin thinks is on May 11th. Erin expressed a preference that the evaluation

comments not be anonymous. Board members expressed the view that the evaluation should also be a two way conversation so that Erin can express her assessment of her position and how we can facilitate improving it.

Leadership

The nominating committee is currently searching for two new Board members. With four members (including the Treasurer) leaving the Board and one resigning earlier this year, it is expected that the Board will have eight members, including the youth member. Strom stated he will not be Chair next year and he asked that the remaining existing Board members think about how to fill that position.

Financial Oversight

Alan stated that he would be happy to sit down and discuss the development of the policy for the committee. Now that the by-laws changes have been approved, Charlie and Strom will work on the next steps for establishing a Financial Oversight Committee.

Board Priorities Going Forward

Bruce said that the UU organization is prioritizing “stewardship” of the congregation and that he would recommend that we discuss this. Ann recommended that a book discussion group be formed to study “Raising the Roof,” which addresses growth of congregations.

Bruce moved to adjourn and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Ardery
Clerk