

FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY IN NEWTON
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
January 27, 2015

Present: Gregg DiBiaso, Cathy Morocco, Jonathan Reuman, Jacki Rohan, Lesley Sneddon, Bobbie Sproat, Becca Lozinsky

Absent: Alison Costello, Rowan Van Ness

Staff: Erin Splaine

Clerk: Ruth Comstock

Meeting conducted by Skype, due to blizzard conditions.

Executive Session from 7:30 – 8:26

Small Group Meetings (Small Conversation Groups)

Jon Reuman reported on his Small Group meeting with Dwight Golann. Training for the facilitators of these meetings will be held on February 1, 2015, with Conversation Groups starting soon thereafter. The Committee on Ministry is asking for a show of people who are interested, and Conversation Groups times and facilitators will be listed and open for registration. These will be advertised on the FUSN e-mail, newsletter, bulletin board and Facebook. Bobbie will send out an email from the Board Chair on this topic.

The goal of these groups is not to solve problems or to find or propose solutions or actions, but to allow participants to speak and to listen to each other. Board members will not participate. Although the Board does not see these group meetings as an information gathering exercise, it welcomes any feedback the groups choose and agree to offer.

These facilitators might later become members of a group of Conflict Consultants.

Next Steps Report

Bobbie mentioned a “Searching For the Future” weekend with Mark Ewert might be able to include aspects of the Slogan Project, Small Group Conversations, Budget Drive discussions and parties, and Leadership Development Committee.

Mark described the “Searching for the Future” weekend in some detail. After Cathy and Bobbie described all the Board activity happening this winter and spring and the Annual Budget Drive, Mark agreed that a strategic planning process should be put off until fall.

Mark thought the Slogan Project was a great idea, particularly if it was viewed as a part of a longer term project leading to more formal strategic planning that included forming a “Vision” statement for FUSN. He suggested that he thought the Slogan Project could be considered a foundation for further Leadership Development work.

Gregg’s discussion with the Operations Council indicated that they too thought the fall would be the best time for this process.

Discussion of specifics of the Next Steps report was deferred until the next meeting. The Board will publish a summary of the report to the congregation and thank all who participated in the process. Gregg will make a first draft.

Other Discussion regarding “Healing Process and Strategic Plans.”

The Board will continue to look at other means to continue the current “Healing” process.

There will be another UUA Regional workshop with Doug Zelinski on February 6 from 1-4. Cathy, Bobbie and Jacki will attend.

Jon suggested we shouldn’t hire an Assistant Minister until we have a strategic plan confirming that is the correct direction to go.

Bobbie met with Sue Phillips, the UUA New England Regional Lead. Bobbie stated that she made the following suggestions:

- Facilitated listening circles should speak to the covenant of listening to each other and recognition of the difficulty of the conversations.
- Resist polarization.
- Tell the process of how the Board looked at all sides. Discuss with the congregation the process the Board used to resolve the current situation.
- Other suggestions we’ve considered, which Sue endorsed: Board column in the newsletter and Adult Education offerings on Adult OWL and Communications skills to be offered in the fall.

Board Work

- A motion was made and seconded to vote on the Board minutes for September, October, November and December. The minutes were approved.
- The Operations Council approved expenditure of up to \$1,000 by the ABD team, for consultation with Mark Ewert on this year’s budget drive.

Minister’s Update

No report.

Finance Committee

No report.

Annual Budget Drive

No report.

Financial Oversight Committee

No report

Leadership Development Committee

No report.

Board Projects

- **Communications Revamp**- no update
- **FUSN goals and “slogan”**- no update.
- **Conflict Resolution Group**- no update
- **GA Delegation Selection**- no update
- **Bylaw proposal made by FUSN member James Frances**- no update

Closing

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made and unanimously approved at 9:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ruth Comstock, Clerk

v.031115