

FUSN Board of Trustees
Tuesday, February 9, 2016
Children's Chapel, 7:30 PM

Attendance

<p>Staff: Erin Splaine, Minister Rowan Van Ness, DLRE</p> <p>Board: Lesley Sneddon, Co-chair Bobbie Sproat, Co-chair Brian Burba Gregg DiBiaso Eric Haas Juliana Lakomski, Youth Becca Lozinsky, Youth Cathy Morocco</p> <p>Clerk: Kit Ryan</p>	<p>Visitors: Karen Bottar, Finance Committee Judy Curby, Operations Council</p>
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Meeting began: at 7:34 PM

1. INVOCATION / CHALICE LIGHTING/BOARD COVENANT

2. CHECK-IN

3. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Committee Long-Term Forecast -- Karen Bottar

Karen distributed copies of the 5-page forecast report. She reviewed the numbers and their underlying assumptions with the Board.

A discussion of additional fundraising and related issues followed:

- There's been a suggestion to move the Fellowship Dinner to fall, October or perhaps September. Since it has already been separated from the Annual Budget Drive, it could become a welcome-back fellowship event, at a less busy time of year. Bobbie will talk to Ops Council about pursuing this possibility for next year.
- Becca: Youth Group may want to do open mic night(s) as a fundraiser.
- Discussion of Holiday Fair, which is under reconsideration by the Ops Council. The Fair requires a huge amount of work every year, and current/recent leadership of the effort needs new blood, which has not been forthcoming. One aspect of the Fair is whether we view/treat it as a fellowship opportunity or a fundraising event. If we choose to treat it as a

fellowship event and not rely on it for significant income, we could at least streamline it, and possibly abandon it if new leadership doesn't step up.

4. STAFF UPDATES

Erin Splaine, Minister:

- Focus groups prompted exploration of how to help congregants to feel connected.
- Soup lunches are being reinstated with Allan Hartman's assistance, targeting older and long-time members.
- She has a concern that members may feel spread too thin, and that we are too busy at FUSN. She would like to create more opportunities to simply "Be" rather than "Do."
- Work is ongoing with Black Lives Matter, with the participants focused on conversation, and sharing tasks without a hierarchical structure.
- The February 21 service and follow-up workshop, "Embracing the World beyond Binaries" from 1:00 to 3:00, will present different approaches to thinking about gender and sexuality.

Rowan van Ness, DLRE:

- Ash Engel and Rowan are meeting more frequently to plan how to maximize community building within religious education.
- 4th & 5th grade classes have 10 children total, with increased attendance since the new OWL classes began this semester.
- Pre-kindergarteners comprise our biggest class, with the most new enrollees; they represent an influx of newer and younger families.
- Beth Walton and Rowan have met with the Dorshei Hebrew School staff members who hold similar positions to Rowan's, to discuss how they might share resources. For example, a teen mental health workshop might be jointly offered.
- Planning for a Children's Budget Drive, one goal of which is to help families think and talk about money with their children.
- COA (Coming of Age) program needs ongoing evaluation of class sizes; she is planning to offer COA every other year, as long as current small class sizes prevail.
- Next year's 6th and 7th graders, who have been meeting as a combined 5th-6th class this year, will split into separate classes again next year, in anticipation of Coming of Age. The current plan for next year has the 7th grade using the Comparative Religions curriculum, and the 6th grade using the Amazing Grace curriculum for 6th grade.

5. STRATEGIC:

Welcoming Committee Assessment Team Report and Sunday's (February 7) meeting:

Discussion of who will be in charge of the Welcoming Congregational Renewal Team for the future, and what are the next steps. Volunteers have been solicited,

for working on an as-yet unspecified renewal program, based on the survey findings. Some perceive a need for further dissemination of the survey results. At a future Annual Meeting, after conducting a renewal program, the congregation will vote to submit to the UUA a completed application for recertification as a Welcoming Congregation.

Discussion: we can initiate some simple changes (“quick wins”), in anticipation of guidance from Annette Marquis of the UUA, who will advise us in selecting & developing programs, activities, and initiatives to promote the Welcoming Congregation ideals at FUSN.

Ministerial Sabbatical Plans:

- The earlier plan was for Erin’s contractual sabbatical to run from January-June 2017. A new proposal would have her be present to launch the church year with Water Sunday on September 11, 2016, take the bulk of her sabbatical from mid-September until late February, return for the FY18 Annual Budget Drive in the spring of 2017, and take an additional month at the end of the church year, allowing her to attend family events out of state.
- After discussion, the Board unanimously passed the following motion:
Notwithstanding any inconsistent language in the Ministry Agreement between Erin Splaine and the First Unitarian Society in Newton, the Board of Trustees hereby approves a sabbatical leave plan by which Rev. Splaine will take her sabbatical in two segments: 5 months beginning on September 20, 2016 and ending on February 20, 2017; and one additional month in late May-June, 2017, exact dates to be determined when event dates are finalized.
- Erin will have a conversation with the lay ministers to begin talking about their role during the sabbatical period.
- The plan is to hire a part-time contract minister to fill-in during Erin’s absence. The required funding will be included in the FY17 budget, pending ABD outcome.
- The job posting will be sent to UUA and to Massachusetts Bay minister lists.
- Erin suggested that there is flexibility in how a sabbatical minister’s contract is written, citing the experience of Ken Sawyer, a retired UU minister who served as a sabbatical minister several years ago.
- Lesley will take the lead in forming a search committee comprising three people: one member from the Board or Operations Council, one from the Committee on Ministry, and one from the Personnel Policy Committee.
- A transitional minister can be an ordained, retired minister. Sometimes it is an intern or student. The Mass Bay Ministers website lists possible candidates.

Youth members of the Board:

- Tom Bean, FUSN member and General Counsel for UUA, brought to co-chairs' attention the fact that the Massachusetts statute governing non-profit organizations requires that Trustees be 18 years or older. There was discussion of the implications of that fact for our current Board structure, and how to address it.
- Becca recommended that we increase the Board membership by one adult member, and change the Youth members' titles to Advisor or Representative. The change in member distribution and names would require changing FUSN's bylaws, which would require a congregational vote.
- The Bylaws Committee and Tom Bean will be consulted about this possible resolution.

Long range planning for Stewardship Committee: ABD (Annual Budget Drive): Deferred

6. PROCEDURAL: Vote on/discussion of previous minutes: deferred

7. CLOSE Meeting adjourned at 9:44 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Kit Ryan, Clerk