

FUSN Board of Trustees
Tuesday, October 13, 2015
Children's Chapel, 7:30 PM

Attendance

<p>Staff: Erin Splaine, Minister Rowan Van Ness, Director of Lifespan Religious Education (DLRE)</p> <p>Board: Gregg DiBiaso Eric Haas Juliana Lakomski, Youth Becca Lozinsky, Youth Cathy Morocco Lesley Sneddon, Co-chair Bobbie Sproat, Co-chair</p> <p>Absent: Brian Burba Clerk: Kit Ryan</p>	<p>Visitors/Presenters Laurel Farnsworth Judy Zacek, Welcoming Congregation Assessment Team Karen Burns, Personnel Policy Committee (PPC) Karen Davis, PPC Judy Curby, Treasurer and Ops Council</p>
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Meeting began: at 7:30PM

Covenant: As we, the members of this Board 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 Board; to uphold the democratic process; and to lead with goodwill and faith in the work we can accomplish together.

Invocation/Chalice Lighting

Check-in

Procedural

- Eric requested, as a new Board member, further orientation in governance, finance and by-laws.
- Approved prior meeting minutes. Bobbie clarified that at the chair's discretion, the Board may be asked to do an additional, final review of a version of the minutes that has undergone substantive changes.
- Discussed the appropriate level of detail in Board minutes, for sensitive conversations about sensitive and personal topics like the annual meeting. Erin encouraged the Board to strive for balance in describing a conversation of difficult issues in the Annual Meeting, as the congregation develops new approaches to handling conflict.

- Affirmed the Board's October 7, 2015 unanimous email vote to hire Ashley Engel as the Membership and Communications Coordinator.
- Eric Hass will be the Board representative at the New to UU class November 7.
- Laurel Farnsworth led a discussion of whether to change FUSN's insurance company. Bobbie Sproat moved that the First Unitarian Society in Newton (FUSN) shift its 2015-16 Liability Insurance policy and its 2015-16 Workers Compensation insurance policy from Liberty Mutual to GuideOne Insurance, subject to a satisfactory rating report on GuideOne, as advised by our insurance agent Emery & Webb. The total annual premium for both insurance policies with GuideOne will cost FUSN \$10,911 less than identical coverage from Liberty Mutual. Rowan asked whether the safety requirements are the same for both. Motion seconded by Gregg DiBiaso. Vote carried unanimously.
- Upcoming absence: Bobbie Sproat will have surgery in November and Lesley Sneddon will cover for her during her absence.

Committee Reports

Welcoming Congregation Renewal Assessment Team: Judy Zacek

The five team members met over the summer to get to know each other. They found they engaged in respectful conversation with each other. They held open meetings, with notices to the congregation; a few people attended.

Goal: to find how the congregation perceives itself as a welcoming congregation.

Began their work by reviewing the assessment tool developed by the UUA LGBTQ and Multicultural Programs under Director Annette Marquis. Their goal was to determine whether it suits FUSN's needs at this time. The FUSN team revised the UUA's survey to update the language and clarify issues. The team added relationship/family structure items based on current FUSN concerns and a glossary. They provided feedback to Annette, who may incorporate some of the FUSN team's changes into her model survey.

The UUA is interested in the FUSN survey for potential use in wider setting.

The survey is available to be completed on line and it also will be available in hardcopy at Coffee Hour.

Beth Allen and Judy Zacek will hold a discussion of the survey at Ferry Beach.

Seventy-five surveys have been completed to date; 100 is the target.

Next step: to collect, collate, analyze the data, and then make recommendations for next steps based on the findings.

Personnel Policy Committee: Karen Burns, Karen Davis

Personnel Policy Committee (PPC) Manual is an internal guide for FUSN staff members that defines procedures for personnel. It is oriented to risk management and is not intended as a public document. It comprises a set of policies that can be amended individually.

The PPC is at the meeting to respond to the question that some in the congregation have posed: Why isn't the Personnel Policy Manual revision complete? Karen Burns explained that the current Personnel Policy Manual was

developed in 2001 and revised in August 2014. It is based on Federal, state, local, agency laws and judicial precedent, which may change. There are limits on what an organization can promise. It aims at "risk management"--watching what we say and how we frame it, to reduce risk of not complying with the law.

Karen Burns clarified that no individual congregant can investigate a personnel matter; it is the responsibility of the PPC. Usually non-discrimination clauses in a PPC document are only what are legally required. It is not a philosophical document, but a legal one that hones closely to employment law.

In their 2014 revision, the PPC looked for areas that were out of date or potentially unenforceable. They did not add policies; rather, they clarified content and removed inappropriate content. Review is ongoing; it is "a living document."

Staff Updates

Rowan Van Ness, DLRE

- The Adult Faith Formation Task Force will be launched in 2016-17 with Jenny Lerner as co-chair (a second co-chair to be named).
- Rowan has completed online training in a course, Sexuality Issues for UU Religious Educators. She will attend the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA) Fall Conference.
- She noted that there are available a lot of assessments of sexual health in congregations and among educators
- Ellie Foster is the new RE Music Coordinator and Family Choir Director, hired as an independent contractor for a few hours a week.
- A RE Council Retreat is being planned to continue working on a mission statement as a guide for our religious education work. They will be setting goals and priorities for this year, along with a tactical & strategic timeline.
- They will conduct a "Capacity, Will and Competence" Inventory of what we do in RE, what is core, what is valuable but needs work, valuable but needs new partners, valuable but not every year, and what no longer serves us. The follow up: Figuring out the capacity, will, and competence of RE Council Members & Staff (Skills and interest inventory).
- Conversation about terminology and meaning of "Religious Education" vs. "Faith Development."
- Discussion of having an RE table at Coffee Hour.
- Safety in our building and congregation is a continuing priority.
- Coming of Age coordinating team is working to figure out a succession plan.

Erin Splaine, Minister

- Myrtle Baptist is planning a November 4th panel discussion on the use of religion in the 2016 election rhetoric; Erin has been invited to be on the panel.
- Kate Mason is the point of contact for the Worship Committee for a FUSN and Myrtle Baptist end of year service on June 5. After the joint service, it will be "food and games all day."

- Given the June 5 date of the joint event, FUSN will reschedule our Annual Meeting to June 12th.
- The group working on winding up the Women's Alliance's affairs will meet November 22nd to determine how to fold their funds back into the FUSN Operating Budget. Judy Curby queried whether the Women's Alliance may transfer this money to FUSN as a restricted donation.
- A list of current and recent activities included the multigenerational service on opening Sunday, a Youth Group retreat on Sept. 13, and the Multicultural Ministry Initiative's planning for their retreat.
- Mandy Beal has requested that FUSN sponsor her in her ordination process as part of a Ministerial Discernment process. Every applicant for ordination must have a congregational sponsor. In this role we may be expected to contribute to her ordination costs. A letter is forthcoming on the subject.
- She raised the issue of scheduling her sabbatical. This is her 6th year, and the sabbatical must be taken every 5-7 years.
- Erin will be away Monday through Wednesday next week at her semi-annual study group.

Board Update

Because of time constraints, the Board Update and Strategic topics will be addressed at a follow-up meeting to be scheduled later in October.

Close

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kit Ryan