

FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY IN NEWTON
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
November 13, 2012

Present:

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

Staff: Erin Splaine, Perry Montrose

Guest: Barbara Bates, member of the Conflict Resolution Committee

Clerk: Sheila Ardery

Carl provided an inspirational reading after the Board read the covenant and Gordon lit the chalice.

Approval of the Minutes

The October 2012 minutes were approved without comment.

Community Minister Covenant

Gordon introduced the vote to approve the Community Minister Covenant which is the same as the year before. Lisa asked about how Cheryl Lloyd keeps track of her time. Erin stated that she is primarily at Mather School. The FUSN contribution is a stipend toward that work. Bruce moved to approve the Covenant and Alan seconded the motion. **The Covenant was approved unanimously.**

Conflict Resolution

Carl introduced the work of the Conflict Resolution Committee and how the discussion could proceed. The members of the Board had reviewed the report submitted at the last meeting. Barbara facilitated the collection of comments from the Board and staff. Barbara and Carl addressed the concerns and questions raised about the program.

Topics discussed included:

How to ensure it (policies and procedures) stays accessible and in use (now & in future)?

How do we weave it into FUSN's muscle memory so that it is used when we need it in the moment of "fire"?

What tools (such as Non-Violent Communication, NVC) or related rubrics can help us make it habitual?

What would the timing be for implementing this and how does it fit with other Board/congregational goals?

How are patterns of undesirable behavior (as distinct from a single event) addressed by the Disruptive Behavior policy?

How does the spiritual component integrate, especially during implementation?

How will all the remaining work involved in the Implementation get done? Who will do it?

What is the Leadership Development Committee's relation to this effort and to providing support for leaders?

Carl stated that the committee wants to be a resource to a body that will move this forward into implementation. Barbara suggested that three people on the Board shepherd this project and make recommendations and reports to the Board. It was agreed that the Board would continue the discussion at the next Board meeting to come to a decision on how the Board will proceed and how and when the

Ops Council would be involved. **Charlie volunteered to develop a decision tree in preparation for the next meeting.**

Visioning

Jonathan reported that he and Charlie met with Barbara Bates and Jeff Baker to get past information on what has been done over the past four or five years. Charlie and Jonathan have worked on a document that captures the meeting with Barbara and Jeff and how it applies to the current work towards delivering a Board vision statement. They will send that out along with a survey that Jonathan has developed to help us discuss a vision statement for the Board.

Financial Oversight

Strom stated that there has been some discussion but no product or report yet. He stated that it is important that we identify some people who had accounting experience that can serve on the committee. Alan said that it might not be necessary to have an accountant but someone with some familiarity with financial processes to use the checklist provided by the UUA. Alan also said that he has some discussions with audit firms who would be willing to discuss with us what an audit would entail and its cost.

By-Laws

Pamela McA'nulty and the committee are finalizing the proposed amendments to the by-laws that should be presented prior to the next meeting. There would a meeting to review the by-law changes with the congregation in late January and one mid-week evening session. There is an Open questions session on February 10 that may also be used to discuss these amendments with the congregation. The by-laws will be voted by the congregation on March 17th.

Database

During a conversation on membership at a previous meeting, it was noted that recordkeeping for membership was cumbersome and redundant with lists made for different purposes. Bruce volunteered to investigate a computer program that would track membership activity. At this meeting, Bruce said that a list of questions is being developed to survey congregations on their databases. Dan Stoll, Jud Leonard, Greg Sullivan and Bruce Henderson are working on this effort.

External Communications

Strom and Gordon met with David Morocco to discuss the topic. Gordon stated that we need to put an effort into a strategy before we start placing ads. Gordon also talked to Pat Rohan to say that we need a reformed communication committee or committees. Carl said that other organizations have communications policies to identify who can say what for the organization. Margaret and Alan said that we have something like that and it needs to be researched where it is and what it says. Erin says that it affects the social action group which has policies on what can be said on behalf of FUSN.

Gordon reported that at the Chairs meeting Kristin brought up the topic of how the information of the website should be updated and how can the website be redesigned and how much resources can we put to it. Bruce stated that there are improvements that can be made to automatically sending out emails to recipients based upon their interests and upon what is being announced or changed on the respective Web site. He is developing such a system with other organizations which he is willing to share with FUSN.

The Board went into executive session to discuss personnel issues.

New Members

Applications of Christine and Saul Lookner (daughter Zara); Dan Mausner; and Erin and Chris O'Donnell (son Carter) were brought before the Board for approval of the application for membership. **Gordon moved and Alan seconded approval of their memberships and the vote was unanimous.**

Staff Reports

Erin brought her concern to the Board about pre-service announcements. She requests that the announcements be limited to being written in the order of service so that it doesn't distract from the spiritual aspects of our gathering together.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Ardery
Clerk