

**First Unitarian Society of Newton  
Board of Trustees  
October 13, 2009**

Present: Dede Vittori, Pat Rohan, Adrian Bishop, Alan Cody, Jonathan Lilienfeld, Barney Freiberg-Dale, Phil Davis, Pamela McA'nulty, Susan Bartlett, Lesley Sneddon, (Clerk); also present: John Nichols, Barb Greve, Brian Burba, Jeff Baker, Tom Bean, Carl Metzger, Bill Horne

Meeting was called to order at 7:31 PM

**Invocation/Chalice Lighting**

Pamela McA'nulty

**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.

**Administrative (Adrian)**

- Jing Cox-Orrell resignation from Board; Will Batchelor plans to continue as youth representative.
- Mayoral Forum update – 10/14: goal is 20 FUSN attendees. Platform was put together by Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) earlier this summer, FUSN was not involved. FUSN attendance is not in support of the platform per se; attendees are participating rather than endorsing a particular platform.
- Major maintenance projects status: one vote was approved by email:
  - Repair of water line. However, the City has changed the proposed task. In future, BOT would like additional information (possible alternatives; e.g. moving the water meter, in this case).
  - Vote on 24 new memorial niches still outstanding. There is a memorial fund (in which niches are pre-paid), which was not part of the original decision. Motion: to use the remaining balance of memorial fund to create the 24 memorial niches this year. Second. Motion carried unanimously.
- Dorshei Tzedek lease renewal: lease is renewed for 2 years. There is no increase this year, but 5% increase next year; if our new space is available, they would like right of first refusal.
- Annual Meeting scheduling for a Sunday: question to move Annual Meeting from Monday to Sunday, for consideration. No change required in bylaws. Change suggested at the behest of John Nichols, as most UU

congregations have their annual meetings on Sundays. Congregations are more rested, more attentive, and better able to take on the business of the meeting than they would be during the week. Consider providing a light meal. Quorum is 15% and FUSN has been very close to this. Will need to move up the deadline for the annual report. Motion: to move Annual Meeting to a Sunday rather than Monday. Second. Discussion: none. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Purpose / Values Status (Jeff Baker)**

See handout distributed at meeting (also posted on web; and in hardcopy newsletter). Jeff provided update on plans for purpose and values statements. Committee will start where the annual meeting left off.

- Committee intends to provide recommendations to BOT, but require feedback. Plan: to conduct a straw poll to gauge the sentiment of the congregation, and to provide the results to the BOT prior to the next meeting. Tables will be set up for votes on two consecutive Sundays (November 1 and November 8); email and snail mail voting will also be an option to encourage as close to 100% participation as possible.
- Prior to this, two discussion sessions will be held: Thursday, October 22 and Sunday, October 25. The intent is not to generate new ideas; no wordsmithing of current text. Simply a means for people to provide their thoughts. Request for at least one BOT member at each session. Dede will attend on October 25; Jonathan and Barney will attend October 22.
- Draft ballot provided at meeting. Two questions, one for each statement (no descriptions, only bullets). Choices: a) no change – accept old statements; b) adopt new statements; or c) change statements, but not as currently worded – requires more work before I can enthusiastically endorse. Only members will be allowed to vote.
- BOT recommended talking points on why this vote is important, perhaps on back of the ballot. Also make clear where the ballot goes and by what date.
- The Board and the Committee will need to decide on next steps depending on the results of the straw poll

Jeff's work was acknowledged.

## **Ministerial Search Committee update (Brian Burba and Carl Metzger)**

- Draft report presented on FUSN ministerial survey. At summer meetings, committee talked to congregation about how the process works. A modified version of UUA survey was then put out on Survey Monkey.
- Survey data from 161 respondents were compiled. Some of the questions were open-ended, so the data were not strictly categorical. Some comments were single, and not representative. Common themes: importance of sermon; community. Survey monkey results were largely consistent with summer meetings. The raw data will not be included in the prospective ministers' packets so as to avoid an emphasis on non-representative statements. Numerical data will be written up and distributed to the congregation.
- Contract (Bill Horne): distributed at meeting, includes suggested changes provided from first review. Two areas require discussion: 1) dollar amount of compensation; and 2) disability / termination. For tonight, focus on compensation. Issue: how should it be presented in the package? Total compensation, or salary / housing / benefits?
- Pamela presented more detail from new UUA guidelines. Health insurance is the biggest change from previous two contracts. Low end plan for single coverage is just over \$5K, as opposed to family: \$26,381.
- Other variables: a) According to UUA, FUSN is in GEO 4 category. BOT recommends placing FUSN in GEO 5 category, same as surrounding communities. b) FUSN is on the cusp of mid-size 2 and mid-size 3.
- Discussion ensued on how to present compensation in the package. Alternatives: present the amount we budgeted (total cost of ministry, TCM), and allow the candidate to determine how to allocate it. John: compensation usually listed as salary and housing. However, additional items are now recommended by the UUA. Belmont provided a base figure with a limited health insurance plan (individual coverage). Recommended changes: a) Disability clauses: 4.5.1.change to "any violation of the UUMA code of ethics"; "and/or" in 4.6.4.; remove gender-specific language.
- Bill will incorporate comments, email the amended contract. Motion: BOT receive amended contract and will be approved if majority does not object within 48 hours. Motion carried unanimously.

## **Potential New Members (Pat Rohan)**

Recommendation: Catherine Sacks, Wendy Santis

Motion to accept: passed unanimously.

## **Board Retreat Priorities next steps (All)**

Process: Ops Council members are doing double duty, so their BoT work load needs to be lighter than that of the non-Ops Council members of BOT. How to deal with the priorities?

- Define membership: John offered to send some materials out by email. Start with denominational experience, then address exceptions that we may want to address. Start with UUA standard practice. Assigned: Pamela, Phil
- Formalize SAC priorities and policies: Barney, Dede, with periodic participation by Will. (Caution: will be working in a bit of a vacuum, absent the purpose and values). Questions: What activities is the congregation initiating? What is the process? Gray area between Policy Board, Ops Council, and SAC. Must be sensitive to how SAC operates currently. How does remainder of congregation get behind what SAC doing? What is the role of the Board?
- “Finish” Purpose/Values initiative (in progress)
- Governance implementation: Jonathan, Sue, Adrian; includes several facets, including conflict resolution, Leadership Development Committee, and BoT/OC policies.
- Dede has another draft of Limitations, will send out over the next month.
- By next month: draft definition of Membership, including scope, priorities.

Meeting adjourned at 10:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Lesley Sneddon, Clerk

## **Action items**

### **Carryover Action Items from Prior Year:**

1. Begin discussions of fund raising for the organ (Judy)

### **New Action Items from June 17, 2008 meeting**

1. Fill vacant committee chairs (Pat to take lead)

### **New Action Items from August 12, 2008 meeting**

1. Keep track of conflict of interest policies developed by UUA and evaluate them for adoption by FUSN

### **New Action Items from September 9, 2008 meeting**

1. Remind the congregation of the ability to send comments and volunteer for things to the board via the e-mail system that is in place. Publicize answers to questions.

### **New Action Items from August 11, 2009 meeting**

1. Neither Alan nor the Assistant Treasurer is bonded. Suggest that this should be done.
2. Review end of year Balance Sheet and reconciliation and get any questions to Alan.