

**First Unitarian Society of Newton  
Board of Trustees  
February 8, 2011**

Present: Alan Cody, Gordon Moriarty, Phil Davis, Barney Freiberg-Dale, Jeannie Chaisson, Pamela McA’Nulty, Margaret Costello, Susan Bartlett, Conrad Buys; also present: Barb Greve, Erin Splaine

Meeting was called to order at 7:32 PM

**Invocation/Chalice Lighting**

**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 (Jonathan)**

- Re: renewal of Barb’s contract. Mass Bay District suggested a change in Barb’s title to Interim Consultant DLRE. Revised job description was written by Pat, Erin and Barb. The renewed contract includes an extension from July 1, 2011 – June 30 2012. In addition, the job description was modified to accommodate changes in the ADRE job description. The review to continue, and vote will be taken via email. Motion to accept the contract extension was unanimous.
- There will be a lay-led Board service in early April. Jeannie will be the point of contact, and she will communicate with Mary Lou McArdle.

**Board of Investments report to Board (Eric Riak)**

- Eric reported that there are continued improvements in FUSN’s investments. Equity markets are in much better shape than they were at last report. Returns from calendar 2010: FUSN endowment up by 15.8%; benchmark up 14.9%. There was still some underperformance relative to UUA in longer-term numbers due to bad quarters during the economic downturn. Eric addressed a question regarding the role of emerging markets. Over the long term, emerging markets are a good value because they have lower volatility over time. The BOI did a review of allocations, and there is some leeway in targets. BOI sold some domestic stocks to take advantage of weakness in emerging markets. Emerging market now up to top of range of our own guidelines. That is where growth is expected to be over the next 10 years. Portfolio has done well so far. EM bond fund is too expensive. Some discussion ensued regarding the role of BoT

approval in changes to financial policies. It is the understanding of the Board of Investments that changes in financial policy are not subject to BoT approval, but the new governance documents do state BoT has approval authority. Language will require clarification. Eric's work was acknowledged.

#### **Planned Giving Update (Bill Dusett)**

- The Planned Giving committee has been revitalized, and is undertaking a multi-year campaign. The goal is to increase the endowment, which is the buffer for budget drives. Two introductory presentations to congregation are planned to convey the concept of planned giving. The Committee designed a new bequest brochure, which was distributed at the meeting and will be mailed to the congregation. Conversations with the UUA are planned to determine how can they can support us. In future, the Committee plans to revitalize the Legacy Circle, those members willing to make a bequest to enhance endowment. There will be some gatherings during early summer and fall to reintroduce the Legacy Circle. Alan notes that he attended both sessions and they were excellent. Bill requests that BoT spread the word, and encouraged BoT members, as leaders, to consider becoming part of the Legacy Circle. The fundraising will be structured the same as the budget drive, to make visits and conversations with people about making a bequest. Bill's work was acknowledged.

#### **Finance Report to the Board (Alan Cody)**

- Alan distributed a budget spreadsheet for discussion: income for fiscal year to date is \$388K, which is about 48% of the annual budget. We have not drawn on endowment yet; we draw from endowment at the end of year to provide cash through the summer, and we may not draw all of it. Expenses to date are \$357K. Major maintenance needs not finalized yet. Office expenditures are lower because we haven't yet hired the membership coordinator. We will have a better estimate on utilities expenses by March. We budgeted conservatively, and we may do better on utilities than budgeted. We are tracking expenses faster than income. Growth will be a big issue for BoT. Prior year surplus and cell tower income have been moved into this year's budget, but these are one-time income sources only. Alan suggests an audit committee do an independent review to ensure that policies are being followed. Responsibility for budget development is primarily that of Ops council and treasurer, with review by the BoT.

#### **Committee on Ministry – Nomination of proposed members (Erin and Jonathan)**

- Goal of Committee on Ministry is to function as a liaison between the congregation and the minister. It allows a means for Erin to explore her ideas and to get positive as well as constructive feedback. The Committee

also functions as a ministry to the church by receiving and reviewing any concerns about the minister from the congregation. Issues are brought to the Committee, who then communicate them to the minister.

- The current committee, completing its role at the end of the month, was comprised of the ministerial search committee which filled the role of the Committee on Ministry for the first 6 months, with a permanent Committee to be established going forward. An amendment to Erin's ministry agreement changed Committee membership term from two years to three.
- Membership selection process: two separate lists of potential members are developed, one by Erin, the other by the Board. Three final names will come from Erin's list, and two from the Board list. A Board Executive Session is held during which there is discussion, and a vote on the final ordering of the list. Potential members will not know who nominated them. Each will be approached by a Board member successively until the five positions are filled. Erin will know only the final list of names.
- Membership criteria: a) diverse group; b) active and connected to FUSN; c) good listening skills; d) represent the congregation without holding their own agenda; e) discretion. Would like to broaden the group to include others who are not necessarily in current leadership positions.
- Membership responsibilities: a) Time commitment is one meeting a month, from 7:30-9:00 PM, to be rotated at the homes of committee members. Meetings may occur at other times as needed, but are generally not anticipated. b) Members do not have authority to take action, and they do not function as an intermediary between minister and the Board.
- There was a discussion about term length to address minimizing Committee simultaneous turnover by ensuring overlapping terms among members. Decision: from Erin's list, one member will hold a one year term, another for two years, and a third holding the full three-year term. From the Board's list, one will hold a three year term, and one for two years.
- Erin distributed a copy of "Serving with Grace" to each Board member with plans to discuss it at the next meeting. Erin also provided LDC and OC members with copies.

### **SADC update (Barney Freiberg-Dale)**

- See handout from congregational meeting; meeting was well attended (> 50) and ideas were well-received. Attendees were enthusiastic, and provided good positive feedback. The first committee meeting following the congregational meeting will be held tomorrow.
- Discussion ensued regarding external communication about social action issues on behalf of the congregation:
  - Is there currently a designated person who can speak on social action issues on behalf of FUSN?
  - If the Board approves a task force, are members of that task force given more authority to speak publicly (e.g. address the press)

within the realm of that particular charter? If the Council on Social Action (CSA) endorses a task force, is it tantamount to congregational endorsement? External communication must be consistent with mission statement

- How are financial resources directed? If a large project chooses to be a project rather than a task force, would financial resources be directed away from projects to task forces?
- CSA will be responsible for developing a charter
- Social Action Development Committee (SADC) will discuss these issues further tomorrow and return with a proposal at next Board meeting.
- The CSA won't be established in time to vote on any task forces at this year's annual meeting. This gives the congregation a chance to further consider the new social action model.

**Job title change of Assistant to DLRE to Assistant DRE (Erin, Barb, Jonathan)**

- Wendy has been assuming more responsibility in recent years, and as a result, she approached Kim Shanks with a request for a job title change. The title change required an amended job description, which was drafted and distributed to the Board prior to this meeting. The amended description documented the work that Wendy has already been doing, and also provides documented authority, including some budgetary authority. The amended description also clearly documents the position limits: nursery through 7<sup>th</sup> grade, but not Coming of Age or other education programs. The status of this position as exempt needs to be clarified. All FUSN positions should be reviewed in light of recent IRS changes. Motion to approve job description; passed unanimously. Action item: Gordon will follow up on reviewing job positions with Karen Davis.

Regular Meeting adjourned at 9:43 pm