

FUSN OPERATIONS COUNCIL MINUTES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Alliance Room, 7:00 P.M.

Present: Susan Bartlett, John Brennan, Jeannie Chaisson, Laurel Farnsworth, Andrea Kelley, Rowan van Ness, RE Director. Guests: Eric Haas (BoT); Cris Goldsmith.

Covenant

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

~ Invocation / Chalice Lighting: Andrea

~ Approvals: All

The Assistant Clerk asked if Ops Council minutes should be posted on the bulletin board across from Fran Clancy's office, along with the BOT minutes. The Council agreed we should do this.

- November Minutes: Susan will review them.

~ Report on BOT meeting: John

John reported that no new votes were taken at the BoT meeting. The Welcoming Congregation will give a presentation on the results of the survey next month.

Erin had raised the question of whether FUSN wants to post a banner on the building that says, "Black Lives Matter." Laurel said we cannot legally put up a permanent sign, though we can put up temporary signs (City of Newton sign ordinance). Free standing signs are okay. Historic signs are grandfathered in. She said this might be an Ops issue rather than a Board issue.

Andrea asked what policies FUSN should have to help decide what good causes should merit signs and banners. John pointed out that being across the street from the Newton Police Station raises issues of sensitivity, as well. Laurel said signage ordinances in the city of Boston are also

quite strict. Laurel pointed out that the sign ordinance for Newton should be researched. It could go in the Wayside Pulpit. Council members liked this idea.

Report on BoT continued: There was discussion of being a multicultural congregation and how this would relate to FUSN's organizational structure. It was pointed out that FUSN is a complex organization, but there needs to be some way to bring it all together for coherence, understanding and promotion. Should this message go into the pews, website, etc.? The UUA might have a template that could be helpful.

~ Financial

- Review year-to-date spending: All

Laurel said there's nothing to report yet. FUSN hasn't paid the roof bill yet, because a few things still need to be fixed, but the funds are available. No big utilities bills have been received yet.

~ Staff update:

Rowan: DLRE Report, November summary

- Youth
 - A Youth Circle (young people plus adult representatives from the Youth Group, Coffee House, Youth Teachers programs) is advising youth services overall. The Circle is functioning well. Dani is looking at how things might move forward.
- Children
 - 4th/5th grades - 3 OWL teachers were trained last month.
 - 6th/7th grades - This class is 14 or 15 students, with a gender gap. They discussed whether this will effect Coming of Age.
 - Christmas Pageant - email registration went out. Julia Huston has been very helpful with sorting and labeling costumes.
 - Home for the Holidays -- Kim Shanks and Beth are overseeing this year's effort, which brings gifts to homebound FUSNites for the holidays. Every RE class makes gifts. The Care Crew and members of the larger congregation will assist, as well.
 - Susan Bartlett and Wendy Atamian have taken on the Healthy Baby-Healthy Child project for this year.
- Adult
 - Working on putting together the brochure for the new year.
 - Working on Adult OWL teachers
 - Recruiting for Adult Faith Formation, i.e., how to configure adult ed next year.

- RE Council - Looking at how we interconnect with other FUSN entities.
 - Special Sundays
 - Liaisons to other committees
- DLRE projects
 - Worked on Thanksgiving Worship
 - Working on Safe Congregations - fire escape routes, etc.
 - RE staff are exploring how to get a better sense of their work and what can be delegated
- Ellie Foster is new children's music coordinator. Children seem to love her. She brings both musical talent and good classroom management skills.

~ Review updated rental use agreement: All

Jeannie, Gayle Smalley and Andrea worked on this.

The one-page version is similar to the original draft. Andrea prefers this version. It was agreed this would be the basic document for simple rentals. A cleaning fee and security deposit are required. Fran handles the rental agreements.

The 3-page version is for more complex rentals, involving equipment, alcohol, custodial services, etc. Fran recommended that the cleaning fee be paid up front. The Council agreed (perhaps a minimum of \$125). The UUA has guidelines for alcohol policies, involving liability insurance coverage, etc.

John asked what is the tipping point from the simple version to the longer one, and said the information should be consistent in both versions. Maybe it's better to have one version that would not require filling out all pages for simpler events. Laurel suggested adding abridged definitions on the back.

Andrea will do one more round of revisions. One issue was how to avoid having only one individual (Laurel) available for all rentals. Susan pointed out that for some rentals, we might need to add special provisions.

Laurel, who is also on the board of the Newton Cultural Alliance, said that the Allen House hired someone to do a business plan for their rentals. They ask higher rental rates than FUSN. She wonders if we want to raise our prices, based on Fran's suggestions.

Andrea moved to adopt the new fees. See addendum. Jeannie seconded. Passed unanimously.

~ Transportation proposal: Cris Goldsmith

Cris passed out a proposal on behalf of the Lay Ministers. Erin had asked them to consider a way to resolve the need for getting people to FUSN who cannot come on their own, for

whatever reason. It is anticipated this problem will increase as some of FUSN's population ages. A member of the congregation, Barry Goldberg, runs a transportation company (First Call Trans) and offered some ideas. Whereas carpooling is free and Barry would oversee the logistics, Cris pointed out that it is logistically challenging. Barry could also provide van service. His vans are equipped for transporting individuals with special needs. The expense would be to pay driver at cost. Multiple trips could be made when needed on any given day. There could be 2 pick ups and 2 return trips: early and later. The overall estimated cost could be \$1800 annually, including summer. If we omit summer, it could be \$400-\$500 less.

Laurel pointed out that FUSN is not insured for van transports, whereas we can give rides as friends. We could hire Barry as a contractor and need to be certain that he has liability insurance. Laurel pointed out that we could implement an experimental trial period, so the cost would be less for the remainder of this year.

Andrea asked what the radius of pickups would be, as well as who would be eligible. Times and routes would need to be coordinated. Many details need to be explored. Exceptions could be covered by Lay Ministers. Riders should not have to pay for the service, but they could tip the driver if they wish.

Laurel moved that we try out Barry's van service, enter into a contract with him and his company, subject to insurance coverage that works with FUSN's insurance, for up to \$1,000 for a 3-month trial. John seconded. Passed unanimously.

Cris suggested inviting Barry to attend the Ops Council meeting on March 9th, to discuss the process and whether to move forward. Someone suggested having a second collection, and Laurel pointed out that this project would be counter-productive, as we don't want to fund FUSN direct services separately. Cris will share the information with the Lay Ministers and Erin and work with Barry on implementation. Laurel will help coordinate insurance issues with Barry and Fran.

~ Review priorities agreed at the Ops Council retreat and identify leads/action steps: All

Susan suggested that Ops Council members each take on one or more of the priorities to oversee progress on that issue.

Laurel pointed out that the new membership database is quirky, and Peter Farago seems to be the only one with full expertise. Before we expand its use, we should figure out whether it is the most appropriate software for FUSN. Rowan said it might not be best for RE registration. John asked if it is a question of user skill or software capability. To add new features or customize requires additional costs. Jeannie pointed out that additional costs might be worth it, since the current basic cost is lower than other options. John will take on database and communications priorities.

Laurel would like to take on re-envisioning the holiday fair. She noted that old-timers come to it who don't connect with FUSN in other ways. She said Anne Bancroft's congregation sets up booths, and this could result in even better sales. She also said currently no one wants to chair the Fair going forward. We should find out how Anne's congregation does financially. It could be a craft fair, for example, but we shouldn't compete with other local events. Laurel was pleased with the work of the young people they hired from Newton Odd Jobs this year.

Other Ops members will look at the list and get back to Susan about what priorities they'd like to oversee.

~ Update: Committee issues/reports: All

- B&G: Fire Safety - Jeannie will get floor plans from Jacki Rohan to make building maps. Rowan would like to have a plan and exit routes in place and suggested having a fire drill toward the end of a worship service. Laurel said if we ring the alarm, we would need to coordinate with the fire department. Since the weather is already getting cold, she suggested setting a date for the end of September 2016, to be coordinated with the fire department. She also pointed out that a Sunday school has fewer requirements than a regular school. Susan said we could have a walk-the-students-out drill, without fire department involvement. Planning a fire drill will happen after the maps are created, and routes and signage are coordinated with teachers and parents.

- Fundraising activities from social action - tabled for the next meeting
- Other committee updates - tabled for the next meeting

Laurel suggesting coordinating BoT meetings and Ops meetings and revising the schedule for next year. Tabled for another time.

Thank yous: All
Bonnie MacDonald for chairing the holiday fair.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Schwartz,
Assistant Clerk

See Addendum...

ADDENDUM**RENTAL RATES:**

Location	Current prices	Fran's suggestions
Alliance Room	\$150	\$250
Parlor	75	100
Parish Hall	300	400
Kitchen	100	150
Chapel	100	200
Classrooms	50	75
Headstart	200 (300 w/ kitchen)	400
Sanctuary	800	1000