

FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY IN NEWTON
OPERATIONS COUNCIL - MINUTES
August 13, 2014
Alliance Room, 7:00 P.M.

- ~ The meeting was called to order at 7:07 pm.
- ~ Present: Rev. Erin Splaine, Laurel Farnsworth, Jeannie Chaisson, Judy Curby, Susan Bartlett, Anne Hess-Mahan, Andrea Kelley
- ~ Invocation / Chalice Lighting: Andrea
- ~ Readings: from Natalie Babbitt's *Tuck Everlasting* and from Deb Caletti's *Honey, Baby Sweetheart*
- ~ 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.
- ~ Approvals - All:
 - May and June Minutes. There was some discussion of an item in the May minutes regarding 2.5% of FUSN's budget going to social action. Ops members wish to review the May minutes before approving them. A motion was made to approve the June minutes; seconded and passed, with one abstention by someone who was absent.
 - Artitudes is requesting another event: 20% of sales in their gift store on November 2nd would go to FUSN. Jeannie moved to approve; Andrea seconded. Passed unanimously.
 - The Newton Cultural Alliance requests using FUSN space for a public meeting on 9/10, for free. Jeannie moved to approve; Anne seconded; approved, with Laurel's abstention, since she is involved with the Newton Cultural Alliance.
 - B&G is requests allocating funds to repair the flower room/chancel room window. Laurel said she took an opportunity to have a contractor fix the window in the flower room; since there was little advance notice, she went ahead, to avoid missing the chance to get it repaired. The window had been leaking in 3 places: the frame, through a crack in the top of the lintel, and a hole in a 3rd spot. The window is being rebuilt and will be returned in mid-October. The frame will be finished this week. Laurel requests taking \$10,000 from the Major Maintenance \$35,000 funds allocated

to the Children's Walk in the budget. She has 3 contracts/expenditures: builder, building conservation consultant, and window repair person.

Jeannie moved to allocate up to \$13 K for window expenses; the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

It was suggested that the flower room be cleaned out, to remove old vases, etc. Jeannie offered to do this but did not determine a specific date.

~ Staff Update: Erin

The summer has been somewhat quiet. In the fall, FUSN will mark Fran Clancy's 30-year anniversary with FUSN. Since she is active in supporting Autism Speaks, donation to that organization, plus a personal gift, were proposed. The Board and Ops will offer the gift together, half from each budget, with the amount to be determined.

Two new staff members will be starting soon: the RE interim director Rowan van Ness and Mandy Beal, Youth Coordinator, will both start actively on Monday. The RE search committee is preparing for the search for a permanent Director of Lifelong Religious Education. A timeline will be forthcoming. The multi-cultural ministry project is in active planning mode, as well. Erin has a new dog, from rescue.

~ Report on the Board Of Trustees meeting: Susan.

The date for a fall congregational dinner is under discussion, to separate it from the budget drive. Erin, Bobbie Sproat (Board Chair) and Ron Margolin (Chef) will determine the date, which should not conflict with a UN Summit on Climate Change in NYC, on Sunday, 9/21. There will also be a thank-you event after the budget drive. Both would be simpler than prior Fellowship Dinners, perhaps semi pot-luck, maybe with separate food stations, rather than one long buffet. Erin suggests changing the name from Fellowship Dinner to something else, like Welcome Back dinner, etc. Discussion ensued about logistics, including capacity for what number of people. Judy suggests that September is a good time, and there is no "perfect" date for such an event; we should get it going and evaluate the timing later.

Debbie Irving will speak on her book, *Waking Up White* at FUSN on November 1st. There will be pizza and small group discussion. This is one of the multicultural activities alluded to above.

There will be a discussion about FUSN's readiness for a Capital Campaign on November 14-16. Mark Ewert from the UUA will conduct the process. He'll come for conversation, write a report on Saturday and be available on Sunday.

There will be a public tour on November 9th, for West Newton congregations, including FUSN, Myrtle Baptist, Temple Shalom, and Second Church.

Also discussed were providing information about governance, finance and bylaws for newcomers to the Board and Youth Members. The Board wrote a summary of its accomplishments, which Susan will share with Ops Councilors.

Operations Council - Susan

- Review liaison assignments: Judy replaces Alan's committees. Others are happy to maintain their same committees.
- Review committee chairs and open positions:
 - Bonnie McDonald agreed to be a co-chair of the Holiday Fair again this year. Another co-chair is needed. Judy suggests a 3-person committee would be appropriate.
 - Welcoming Congregation has been dormant for several years. Perhaps in future it could be part of the multicultural efforts.
 - Jeannie says the Chancel Committee is making progress in using iVolunteer, vs. a paper sign up sheet, for Sunday morning support (ushers, flowers, greeters, etc.).
 - A new person is needed to follow up on unpaid, prior-year pledges, as Wendy Schwartz is stepping down.
- Laurel and Gayle Smalley are still working on a draft Rental Agreement for those who want to use FUSN space for special events. Questions will be asked and then it will be circulated for review.

~ A retreat/dinner for Ops Council members is under discussion. It would be a chance to get together informally and discuss priorities for the coming year. It has been difficult to schedule. One option is a potluck lunch, Saturday, September 6th, at Laurel's house, 1-5 pm. Anne will coordinate who brings what dish. Andrea will bring quinoa salad.

~ Judy asked about vetting second collections at summer services. Erin says the Steering Committee is working on it.

~ Thank yous - All: Susan asked if we could rotate writing the thank yous each month, rather than she doing them all. Andrea Kelley agreed to take over sending them from Susan for the time being. Erin mentioned there are note cards decorated with a painting of FUSN by Bev Droz.

Curt Lamb or Kate Mason will write thank yous for the summer services.

Eric Haas, Sam Haas and David Rohan helped move furniture this summer.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Schwartz,
Assistant Clerk