

# UUFC BOARD OF TRUSTEES

## MINUTES FOR JULY 10, 2017

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Present: Craig Olbrich, Marcia Shaw, Carl English-Young, John Bailey, Kathy Kopczynski, Joan Rose, Virginia Shapiro, Kelley Kendall, Uta Hussong-Christian, Jen Akeroyd, Elona Meyer

Staff: Jill McAllister, Jean Gilbert

### Check-In

We established a new tradition in which Board members will take turns sharing about ourselves. Craig shared this time; Jen agreed to share in our August meeting. We signed up for readings, snacks, and set-up for the year.

### Consent Agenda

John moved that the Board Minutes of 6-12-17 and the Minister's Report consent items be approved, Virginia seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Other consent items were deferred for later consideration. Appreciation was expressed for the focus and format of the minister's report.

### Financials

Jean Gilbert provided an update on our year-end financials. We had drawn \$27,000 from the endowment fund, as has been our tradition. \$13,762 remaining unused. John moved that the remaining \$13,762 be returned to endowments. The motion was seconded by Carl. A discussion ensued, including

- The pros and cons of drawing money from our endowment fund for operational expenses, which is allowed according to our bylaws
- How to best determine the amounts to be drawn and the best timing, if we choose to draw from endowments
- The potential effect on cash flow (if any) if we do not have the option of drawing from the endowment fund
- The challenge of accurately predicting income from pledges when formulating budgets for the following year
- The general wisdom of "deficit" budgets and year-end surpluses (or shortfalls)
- The operating budget pays interest to the endowment fund for monies drawn and used.

The Finance Council is working on policies concerning draws from the endowment fund. They will bring suggested changes to the Board. At the conclusion of the discussion, the motion to return the \$13,762 to the endowment fund carried unanimously, with one exception. The treasurer noted that it would be advantageous to have input from the Finance Council before making decisions regarding draws from the endowment funds. Because the books must be closed for this fiscal year (2016-17), we cannot wait.

It was suggested that we review operational budgets over 4 to 8 years, taking a closer look at surpluses and shortfalls, to assess the need for infusions from the endowment fund or other sources from year to year. Without the draw from the endowment fund this year, we would have ended the year with a shortfall. Most years, we've begun with a "deficit" budget, however, most often we end the year with a surplus. In general, our finances are on very sound footing. It was suggested that the Finance Council take a look at past years in their consideration of a policy update.

The Finance Council will report back to the Board no later than December.

### Build Design Team

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We received a verbal update regarding progress by the BDT (Building Design Team). There will be an architects' contract drawn; Chris Bentley, with BDT input, developed questions for the architects to consider prior to the contract finalization. A timeline will be developed for design and construction.

We are also looking at timing for the distribution of funds from the capital campaign for expenses incurred over the year(s).

#### **Other Communication**

The January 2018 meeting will be Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> rather than the traditional second Monday.

#### **Vision Exercise**

A "Vision Exercise," required each of us to describe what we would like to change & what we would like to see in how the Board does its work. The following questions, observations, and suggestions were shared (among others):

- How can church management be more effective and inclusive?
- (The Board "president's") role is to listen, reflect back, help the Board see how to move forward.
- Currently, it is difficult to find people willing to serve a Board P and VP.
- When too few are saddled with the work, very few are going to want to do the job.
- How can the work of the Board be shared more equitably?
- While we're doing what we're supposed to be doing, are we having fun? Is too much required of those in the leadership positions?
- The minister is encouraged to raise "religious questions" for us to consider as a Board, not just provide activity reports. The report this week provided a perspective that was helpful
- We need to be more "relational." Having each of us take a turn sharing about ourselves is a great idea.
- We need to celebrate more.
- With shared leadership, there's more engagement, more buy-in. We have lots of expertise on the Board, which could be tapped. When one or two do all the work, others may check out.
- For important conversations we should use a facilitator to gather our ideas and give us time to reflect. Discussions and facilitation need to be planned ahead. Running a meeting and facilitating a discussion are really two different things, requiring different skills.
- Sometimes we just need to talk, but it's important to know what we're talking about—what motion is on the floor.
- Carl provided excellent groundwork. We have well-run meetings. As we move ahead, we will want to be focused, to have and follow an agenda, just as we have in the past. Facilitated discussions do not change that.
- Time management is important. We need to begin and end on time.
- How do we know if we're fulfilling our leadership roles?
- How do we know if we're hearing our constituents? Are we only hearing 4 or 5 of the loudest voices?
- Wherever we "plug in" as individuals on the Board, what are we hearing out there?
- Where do people stand on the issues we're addressing? We should be reflecting our community.
- We may want to consider a new way of note-taking the City of Corvallis is using. (Jen will contact Kathy about this.)

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- It appears that we have a “strategic plan.” Do we consult it?
- As a new Board member, it would be helpful to know our goals and leadership structure.
- The P and VP roles were particularly challenging this year, with the sale of the house and the capital campaign. Without an elected P and VP, it feels as though we’re floating a bit. Do we need to keep the roles but define them more?
- If we don’t have a (consistent) P and VP, who will sign contracts, as they are approved by the Board? Is this something the COM could do? (It was noted that the COM role was conceived as an executive role; in addition, the Business Manager signs approved contracts as well.) There are legal ramifications for non-profits, which must be taken into consideration.
- Are we legally required to have a P and VP?
- There are pro-forma actions that a Board executive/representative would need to take care of. The Board President has represented the Board on appropriate occasions.
- Some congregations choose to suspend their Bylaws while they are undergoing revision.
- There must be wonderful structures out there for how UU Boards could function— we could explore those.
- This room (the social hall) is joyless. Do we have to meet here?
- Could we meet in a circle? Do we have to focus on the projected agenda? Couldn’t we each bring a copy for reference? We could tune into each other instead of the screen.
- It sounds like we’re chafing against the structures we have. We’re expanding our vision. But decisions must be made. We can be relational and efficient. We need deeper processing, time to think when important decisions are up for us.
- We could divide up our resources to address specific projects. Board executives could help us manage our agenda, while project facilitators plan and assist with their portions of the meeting.

As the discussion of our vision for the Board came to a close, Craig and Marcia agreed to continue in their roles as P and VP until the next meeting.

#### **Board Summer Social Activity**

We decided that a retreat that includes a team-building component would be an effective way to bring us closer together and work on our vision and goals. Because this would be ambitious for a half day event, it was suggested that we have an evening potluck for team-building and a half day for decision-making. Craig will send out a Doodle poll to determine dates in August.

#### **Sanctuary Carpet**

Flooring for the sanctuary was briefly discussed. The current timing for installing sanctuary flooring is to be in conjunction with the main building project. Because the current carpet is toxic, there is a strong need to address this issue sooner, as we have congregants who are unable to join us on Sundays. Virginia offered to meet with the BDT to help us identify questions and issues pertinent to the flooring decision. Jill estimated that previous estimates for flooring were in the \$9,000-11,000 range.

Board members were invited to email Kelley with any flooring questions or concerns the BDT may want to consider.

#### **Town Hall Meetings**

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We briefly addressed Town Halls to be offered over the 2017-18 year. The idea would be to facilitate each Town Hall somewhat differently, to experiment with varying approaches to an open communication process. Each Town Hall would address a specific, potentially controversial topic. Suggested topics were

- How should the Fellowship respond to climate justice issues?
- How should the Fellowship respond to racial justice issues?
- UUFC Leadership Structure

Councils related to the topics at hand could assist with an educational component in each Town Hall. Each Town Hall would be facilitated. The topics addressing justice issues are particularly timely, because the Board is interested in establishing Fellowship-wide goals for Racial Justice and Climate Justice.

For one Town Hall, we could ask participants to generate questions ahead of time, and have others primed to provide various perspectives on questions asked, with time set aside for (timed) short responses from the audience.

In another Town Hall, we could try out the “two mike” format, with participants invited to share pros and cons on each of several issues/questions provided in advance.

By providing open formats for communicating points of view, we will have a much broader sense of our congregants’ perspectives and the opportunity to be heard will be greatly expanded. It is hoped that the Town Hall formats will enable us to reserve the Annual Meeting for sharing and celebrating the highlights for the year.

With a change in Bylaws, it may be possible to handle the required voting for the next year’s budget(s) by mail, which would allow full participation by all members.

Board members are invited to email Marcia with any questions, concerns, or suggestions concerning the Town Hall concept.

#### **Board Roles And Responsibilities Orientation**

Craig suggested that the remaining discussion on Board Roles and Responsibilities be deferred until the August meeting. Carl recommended that we read the materials included in the Board packets related to this topic, if we haven’t already done so.

The meeting was adjourned. Our next meeting is scheduled for August 14<sup>th</sup>.