

## Minutes of the UUCA Board of Trustees August 25, 2015

### Attending

Board Members: Amelia Shenstone (presiding), Karen Martin (recording), Howard Lewis, Marie Palena, Christian Harden, Cindy Hoffner, Grier Page, Jon Johnson, Mike Kuhar, Jane Mengel

Staff: Senior Minister Rev. Anthony Makar, Interim Associate Minister for Lifelong Learning and Growth Rev. Jonathan Rogers, Director of Administration Karen Roy

Absent: Melissa Marion-Landais, Erin Stanfill

Amelia called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

### Spirit & Community

Chalice lighting: Cindy lit the chalice with words from Amy Poehler and Tina Fey.

Introductions and Welcoming Guests: No guests in attendance

Announcements: Amelia made announcements as listed in the agenda.

- The City signup table at coffee hour  
Sundays- August 8,16,23 & 30, 2015
- SUULE going on this week – Melissa and Erin attending
- Wednesdays, 8/26, 9/2 & 9/9 - Faith in Film -UU Spiritual and Faith Enrichment; Time 7:00pm-8:30pm
- Wednesday, 9/9- End New Jim Crow Monthly Meeting; Time 7:00pm-9:00pm
- Sunday, 9/13- Rosh Hashanah Service; Time 7:30pm-9:00pm
- Thursday, 9/17, Friday 9/18 & Saturday 9/19- Underground Theater Performance; Time each night: 8:00pm to 10:00pm
- Saturday, 9/19- Underground Theater Matinee; Time 2:00pm to 6:00pm
- Tuesday, 9/22- Yom Kippur Service; Time 7:30pm to 9:00pm
- Saturday, 10/10- Black and Blue; Time 1:00pm to 4:00pm
- The UUA has five ways to support Black Lives Matter. Please go to this site <http://www.uuworld.org/articles/5-ways-support-black-lives-matter> to learn how to get involved.

Circle of connection: All attendees were asked to name and comment about the people who inspire them. Responses included friends, family, colleagues, fellow UUs and famous people.

This month's *Thank You* cards were written to Jeff Nickerson and Terry Carpenter for beautifully chiming the hour before services each Sunday and to our dedicated team of office volunteers.

### Decisive Action 1

Approval of Minutes of July 2015 Meeting: The minutes from the July Board Meeting were approved via email.

Approval of Reverend Rogers' Housing Allowance: Amelia explained the purpose of the housing allowance and moved to approve the Housing Allowance for Rev. Jonathan Rogers in the amount requested. Grier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Board Education**

EnterCulture: Rev. Rogers explained that he is the new staff leader for EnterCulture. The team has developed plans to use our recently approved Board Policy to lead the Congregation through a process that could culminate in our taking a public stand to support the Black Lives Matter Movement. This public stand would also support the Action of Immediate Witness to support Black Lives Matter that was approved at GA this summer in Portland. The EnterCulture Team has met with Amelia and Melissa to clarify their understanding of our process. Among other things, they will circulate a petition to present to the Board and hold Town Hall and ARAOMC trainings. The education piece will be tied to the celebration of our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary at our Cliff Valley location and how racism played a part in that move. They are hopeful that the process of congregational education and approval of a Congregational Public Stand might be used to build a program of certification for becoming an ARAOMC Congregation in the UUA similar to the process we have for becoming a Welcoming Congregation.

## **Need to Know**

### Executive Report:

*Year 4 implementation plan*: Rev. Makar reviewed the Executive Report sent to the Board via email. He highlighted the following:

- Julia Austin has been selected to provide music for Children's Chapel each month. Her position is funded through Growth Initiatives and is intended to bring energy and enthusiasm to that piece of our programming.
- We have a process for crafting new Chalice Lighting Words that will include our Lay Ministers working with our children. It is an opportunity for an investment of our children in our liturgy. Liturgical changes can signal an important time in the life of a congregation.
- We now have a 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of the proposal from RE consultant Larry Peers.
- We have made an offer to a new Facilities Administrator who has verbally committed to stay in place for 5 years. Upon hire, our staffing will be complete.
- The minutes from the EnterCulture meeting are included in the Executive Report.

*Report on Status of AVOM items*: Rev. Makar pointed to several items from his monthly Executive Report.

*Fair Compensation Plan*: UUCA will work under the following understandings about what it means to offer competitive salary and benefits. For Ministers and program staff for which recommendations are available, we will seek to follow UUA Fair Compensation Guidelines. For office and administrative staff, we will seek to offer salary and benefits that are competitive for the Atlanta area. We are currently working on revamping our benefits packages. The UUA recommends health insurance to be paid 80% by the congregation and 20% by the staff member; UUCA currently pays 100%. Amelia explained that it is the role of the Board to determine whether the Fair Compensation Plan falls within Executive Limitation C. The Board will vote on this next month and is asked to re-familiarize themselves with EL C prior to our next meeting.

*Attendance Data:* Attendance data was sent to the Board via email.

*Financial Health of the Congregation:* Rev. Makar reported:

- At this time we are tracking on the positive side by \$33,000. Pledge Donations, Plate Collections and Rentals are trending higher and helping to offset other income categories.
- We are excited to welcome Pride School Atlanta who will be leasing space from us for two to three years.
- After securing three bids and reference checks, a new custodial service, Anago Cleaning Services, has been hired to begin work effective September 15, 2015.
- The Board will see a budget in September and will vote in October. We will only be halfway through the year-round pledge drive. We may need to establish different indicators to determine whether the budget is reasonable. We may need to establish a dynamic budget.
- Going forward the entire staff will meet on the first Monday of each month and the Senior Staff will meet on the second through fourth Mondays. The staff has been asked to submit a budget with a 10% increase from last year.

## **The Work of the Board**

Open Question- Hotchkiss recommendations: In which ways will we change our mode of governance in response to the Hotchkiss report?

There was no consistent outcome from the survey regarding priorities from the Hotchkiss report.

Hotchkiss suggests that there are three main types of work that boards should be involved in: fiduciary, strategic and generative. We need to determine the appropriate amount of Board time and effort that we should devote to each category. The group divided into Board Committees to discuss the following:

- What is your committee currently doing?
- What might we do differently?
- What questions do Committees currently try to answer?
- How do we hold UUCA accountable to its mission?

We then determined whether our committee work/questions were Fiduciary Oversight Questions, Fiduciary Inquiry Questions or Strategic Thinking Big Picture Questions. Committees reported back to the full Board.

Further work will include contemplating:

- Who is the right group to answer these questions?
- If we want to spend more time on strategic work, how will we handle the fiduciary work?

Open Question-Long Range Plan: What should our next Long Range Planning Process look like?

Committees met to discuss and chart what was important and the main idea of the chapter they had been asked to read from Holy Conversations. We then formed new groups and participated in a jigsaw activity to read and discuss each chart led by a member of the committee who created that chart. October reading assignments for Holy Conversations are:

- Chapter 4- Bylaws and Governance
- Chapter 5- Finance and PEM
- Chapter 6- Congregational Life

Bylaws and Governance: Cindy read a draft of a new Board Attendance Policy.

Board Members will commit to attend all regular Board meetings and come to the meetings prepared. Occasionally, a situation may arise that prevents a Board member from attending a meeting. In that case, the member may submit a brief explanation to the Board President (prior to the meeting if possible). The Board will then vote on whether the member should be excused. If the member is excused, this will be reflected in the Minutes and that meeting will not be considered a “missed” meeting for that member. On the third unexcused absence within a board year, the board member will be considered to have resigned.

Comments included:

- This has the advantage of not asking the board to decide whether some of a board member's 3 absences were excused, but on the other hand, having to vote about it each time someone can't make a meeting is creating a lot of work for ourselves.
- Should we have a limit on how many absences can be excused? If someone is missing 6 meetings (even with good reasons) should they still serve on the board?
- We should also reach out (via uu-leaders or policy-governance listservs) to see how other congregations are handling this.
- Will we be voting on absences at almost every meeting?
- Should we default to the current policy and only vote to reinstate after three absences?
- Should we include a list of what constitutes an excused absence?
- Could we handle this issue by strengthening our Board Covenant rather than revising the Policy?
- In the past, this issue has been a burden for the Board President to address alone and full Board participation in these decisions would be welcome.

The Committee was asked to continue to work on this policy.

Finance Committee: Grier reported that the budget will be reviewed in September and voted upon in October. The Board responsibility is to determine whether the budget supports our Ends and our Mission. Currently our finances are good and on target for a possible surplus of about \$30K. The Finance Committee is discussing how to plan for large, long-term expenses like the parking lot, roof and piano. The MCC church has bought the building across Cliff Valley and will have services at 11:00. This will limit our parking spaces across the street starting next July. Karen Roy and Rev. Makar have a meeting scheduled with the owner of the Office Park next door to determine whether we can strike a deal to return to using their spaces on Sundays.

Congregational Life Committee: Christian reported that Congregational Life is keeping a tracker of their work and it will be posted to the Google drive. Karen is working at the table in the Social Hall with Jessica to encourage sign-up for The City. Christian attended a Faith in Film class and posted a blog post about it in The City. The committee has created a correlation between UUCA Ends Statements and UUCA Groups which work toward each End. We will meet with groups to discuss how their work is furthering our Ends and whether our Ends Statements need revision. We are encouraging Board participation at the Underground Theater performances of *The Hundred Dresses*, September 17-19. It was suggested that the Board might host a Wonderful Wednesday dinner. Marie will speak with Jessica about this.

Jon announced that our reading assignments for September are from the book The Other 80% by Scott Thumma and Warren Bird.

Introduction "Wandering Sheep" - everyone  
Chapter 1 - P&G and PEM members  
Chapter 2 - Fin and Cong Life members  
Chapter 3 - Staff and Erin & me

## **Closing**

Observer's Insights: Mike and Jane shared observer's insights.

Extinguishing the Chalice: Cindy extinguished the chalice with words from Stephen Colbert.

Amelia adjourned the meeting at 9:12 p.m.

## **Next Meeting: September 29, 2015**

Meeting Host: Karen Martin

Process Observer: Erin Stanfill

Chalice Lighter: Melissa Marion-Landais

Above Board [*due October 11 at 5pm*]: Howard Lewis

Upcoming Committee Meetings:

- Bylaws and Governance: September 15, 8pm
- PEM Committee: 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays
- Finance Committee: September
- Congregational Life: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays 10:00am
- Signup Genius for meeting roles:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0948abae2ca75-uuca>