

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
Board of Trustees

Minutes – Monthly Meeting

April 25, 2007

Present: Doug Zelinski, Chair; Chas Williams, Vice Chair; Jim Bailey, Secretary; Debra Boyd, Treasurer; Ben Blee, David Carr, Barbara Fisher, Dan Hronek, Bill Inglis, Jim Pinkham, Kate Power; Gretchen Faulstich, Past Chair; Lydia Delphia, Youth Representative.

Absent: Judy Houston

Ex Officio: Mark Belletini, Senior Minister; Wendy Fish, Associate Minister; Caroline Balderston Parry, Interim DRE; Michael Brennan, Church Administrator.

Guests: Michael Shifrin, Steve Kraynak.

1. Opening Words and Lighting of Chalice

Introductions

Doug opened the meeting with words from William E. Du Bois. All present introduced themselves.

2. Review Agenda/ Approval of Minutes

There were no changes to the agenda. Jim Bailey offered a correction to the published minutes, correcting the spelling of Balderston. Chas moved and Bill seconded approval of the minutes as corrected. Motion passed.

3. Accessibility Concerns

Michael Shifrin came before the Board to speak about accessibility concerns. He noted that he had spoken to the Board previously and that he prepared a section for an environmental audit accepted by the Board in 2005 but his suggestions for improving accessibility have not been implemented. He said that by not acting the Church sends signals to persons with disabilities. Several of the modifications could be made fairly easily and without great expense.

Doug thanked Michael for coming and speaking and said the Executive Committee will re-examine the report in the environmental audit.

4. Reports from Councils, Committees and Ad Hoc Groups

Program Council – Chas circulated a written report on the April meeting, which included a worship component and a leadership development component. He said they continue to work on how best to shape these meetings.

Administration Council – Debra reported; at its last meeting, Council worked on the budget process and on the reconciliation process.

Development Committee – Gretchen said that the first phase of the stewardship campaign is completed with about \$525, 000 pledged from 400 pledging units. Phase two, with follow up letters, is under way.

Treasurer’s Report – Debra circulated reports of income and expenses through March 31. The Church’s financial situation continues to be good. Debra said that the mortgages with National City Bank have to be re-negotiated by 2009 and discussions will soon begin.

Task Force on Church Committees and Groups – Doug led a discussion of three motions from the Executive Committee in response to the Final Report, including recommendations, from the Task Force.

Motion One: B. Moved that the Religious Education Council and the Interim Director of Religious Education evaluate the Religious Education restructuring prototype and report its findings and recommendations to the Executive Committee in the month of March, 2008. (Issues that RE Council may explore in its evaluation are listed, a through f, under B. 1.)

Bill moved and Chas seconded the approval of Motion One. Motion passed.

Motion Two: C. Moved that by its November 2007 meeting the Board of Trustees will consider the creation and implementation of a “Church Life Overview” that includes program categories reflecting the life of the church and speaking to its mission and vision. (Criteria to be considered are listed, 1 through 4, under C.)

Ben moved and Debra seconded approval of Motion Two. Motion passed.

Motion Three: Moved that by December 2007 the Board will establish a three-year staffing plan that confirms or revises current staffing patterns and prioritizes which areas of church life will receive future staff support.

Bill moved and David seconded approval of Motion Three. Questions were raised about the December date, given that the Board’s December meeting is in early January and that the Board’s winter retreat is usually in mid-January. Gretchen said a January date would make the staffing plan too late for Development to make use of it. Motion passed.

NOTE: Letters preceding the motions refer to the Specific Recommendations in the Report.

5. Staff Reports

Rev. Mark Belletini – Mark prepared a written report. He said his recent trip to Berlin was extremely satisfying.

Rev. Wendy Fish – Wendy asked for questions about her written report. She remarked on the recent first year anniversary of Michael as Church Administrator.

Michael Brennan – Michael’s written report was available for questions or comments. He said that all the staff reports were supposed to have been e-mailed but there had been a problem. He said Marian is on vacation and that several volunteers have kindly helped in the church office.

Caroline Balderston Parry – Caroline circulated a written report and a document proposing a plan for redefining and realigning volunteer roles in religious education.

6. Board Leadership –Congregational Focus on Welcoming

Dan presented for discussion a draft version of a “Board Action Plan for Membership Goals,” which grew out of ideas presented at the Open Space exercise at the Board retreat.

Steve Kraynak, Chair of the Membership Committee, was also present for the discussion.

Doug pointed out that committed Board leadership is essential for the Church to make progress in becoming more welcoming and also in retention.

In regard to Board members setting examples, Debra moved that Board members should consider themselves as participants in all Sundays of Hospitality and Grace (and not just on assigned Sundays). Kate seconded the motion.

Mark said that being deliberate and conscious about being welcoming is important and cited examples from the JUC video.

Chas questioned the effectiveness of trying to “legislate” hospitality and welcoming. Dan said it would be good to send a follow up memo about Sundays of Hospitality and Grace to Board members since assignments were made several months ago.

After discussion, Debra withdrew her motion.

Dan said he will revise the draft, as he gets more feedback, and will bring it back to the Board for action after taking it to Executive Committee.

7. Special Announcements

Doug called attention to the handout about the BREAD meeting on Monday, May 7. A sign up sheet was circulated.

Doug spoke of an ad hoc conversation to occur with the ministers about achievements and the future. It is an auspicious time for such a conversation as Mark nears his tenth year as Senior Minister.

8. Thank You from the Board

Board members and ministers suggested several people to thank: Wayne Clark for his new book; Bill Fullarton, Social Justice Chair, for the plays presented at Church; the Caring Committee for the Alzheimer's Workshop; Nina Lewis, Adrienne Novak, Michael Lange, and Vinnie Roscigno for their dedication in working with Coming of Age; David Krohn and Barbara Fisher for lighting the Weisheimer sign; Eve Catus, Steve Kraynak and Bob Gordon for volunteering in the office while Marian was on vacation; Mark Merchant for helping with the website, Carole Pruiksmas for organizing the Seder meal at Church; and Diana Del Bianco for creating the gallery display in which members highlighted women important in their lives.

9. Announcements

Everyone was given a handout about the OMD Workshop on Managing Conflict, to be held on May 19 at Kent.

May Board Meetings are on the 16th and the 30th.

10. Adjournment

Debra moved and Dan seconded that the meeting adjourn. Motion carried.