

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert
Board of Directors Meeting, March 19, 2019
Minutes

Attending:

President Sarah Gonzales, 1st Vice President Vikki Porter, 2nd Vice President Jane Zaun, Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu, Secretary Rod Belshee, Director at Large Nancy Boyce, Reverend Barbara Fast.

Absent: Director at Large Susan Hannon

Congregational Members: Marty Gronewald

1. Opening and Chalice Lighting:

Sarah called the meeting to order at 6:30pm, and Reverend Barbara shared a message about Belonging.

2. Check-in:

3. Approval of the Minutes:

The February Board meeting minutes were approved.

4. Voices of the Congregation:

Marty Gronewald presented his concerns about the UUCOD website. He specifically raised concerns about the domain name ownership, website hosting service and the web development platform. He suggested that the Board produce a Digital Policy requiring UUCOD ownership of our digital assets. Discussion focused on the domain name and web development platform, with less concern on the website hosting service. The Board also referred to a recent study on our website design, which reported that from a user's perspective our website has a nice look and function, although that was not raised as a concern by Marty.

Vikki moved and Rod seconded a motion to form an ad hoc subcommittee to investigate and propose a Digital Policy on control and ownership of our online digital assets, in particular the two questions of domain name ownership and web development platform. The motion passed, and Sarah took the action item to form the subcommittee.

6. Current Business:

a. Attitude of Gratitude:

Cards of welcome were written for our new members, and cards of gratitude were sent to Barbara Storms for creating the Financial Policy and Chris Eager for the Stewardship Drive.

b. Building Policy:

The Building Policy (3/14/2019 draft) was reviewed and discussed. There were a few minor inconsistencies to clean up regarding detailed roles between the BOD, minister and administrator. The Board added the labyrinth to the fee schedule (\$75 labyrinth only, \$100 with access to building interior). Jerry offered to make minor edits to make the alcohol policy consistent throughout the document.

Rod moved and Jane seconded to provisionally accept the Building Policy, pending addition of the labyrinth next month. The motion was approved.

c. Financial Policy:

Minor amendment eliminated any single point of control without scrutiny. Nancy moved and Rod seconded to approved the Financial Policy as amended. The motion was approved.

d. Flooring:

Rod reported that Frank Riela had done considerable research and presented good information to the Facilities Committee for consideration. Many different floor covering options were covered in addition to carpet and concrete. The committee had a good discussion to gain understanding; no conclusions were drawn at this point, other than that the choice will now consider options besides carpet. Much will depend on the trade-offs such as design aesthetic and cost, or acoustics favoring music or hearing impairment.

Jane suggested that we ask Church Mutual (our insurance company) if they have any advice regarding safety concerns.

6. Reports:

a. President:

The **Annual Congregational Meeting** will be May 5 to approve the budget and elect new officers. On that same day, the service will include volunteer appreciation. The Board agreed by unanimous consent to fund a pizza celebration on May 5. Two weeks earlier, on April 14 Sarah and Jerry will lead a presentation and open discussion of the proposed FY19-20 budget, open to all UUCOD members.

The Board discussed the upcoming **UU PSW District meeting** and **UUA General Assembly**, and suggested UUCOD members that we might invite to attend. Sarah emphasized the importance of building bridges with other UU groups.

On April 7 we will have an open discussion of **Children's Religious Education re-visioning**. Is the Sunday School model dead? What takes its place? Sarah encouraged all continuing Board members to attend as this issue is critical and will take time to evolve.

The Board approved by unanimous consent a Building Use rental request for recurring weekly Monday afternoons.

b. 1st Vice President:

The **Church Council's** second meeting of 2019 focused on guiding church leaders (committee chairs) in sustainable stewardship development and shared leadership. Thanks to Rod Belshee, Sarah Gonzales and Rev. Barbara for providing the foundation for the meeting with a presentation on where we are as a congregation and where we may be going. Good feedback from participants. The Board discussed holding the next Church Council on Saturday April 27, but decided instead to request written committee reports for the Annual Report.

Led by Joni Paddock, a small planning group has formed to work with Rev. Barbara on another **Women's Retreat** (the first was held in January 2016 with Rev. Susanne Marsh and included 26 participants). Tentative location will be Borrego Springs Resort, probably January 10-12, 2020.

The **Safety Committee** did walk through of UUCOD building and campus using Church Mutual Insurance's self-inspection guide on Feb 26. The assessment was very informative and revealed a number of issues requiring correction. While Jerry is evaluating the risks we found for prioritization, Rod has already moved ahead on several fronts including replacing emergency lights, investigating best options for our unlit EXIT signs, status of extinguishers etc. So far expenses have been minimal. Next meeting March 26.

Vikki met with the **Stewardship team** March 7 to discuss how the **Communications Committee** can work more closely with the Stewardship Team and others. Vikki offered to help with promotion of events and suggested a "how to" workshop might be helpful for all committees. We also discussed the need for a long range communication plan for the Stewardship Team.

Vikki reports that our public Facebook page gets about 10 likes a month, and expects the videos to be helpful.

c. 2nd Vice President:

The Stewardship Steering Committee and The Communications Team had a joint meeting March 7.

Jane attended the second new member orientation class, and then emailed the new members the following Monday and connected them with mentors.

The Social bUUtterflies are blooming. Sheryl is happily carrying all of the load, but Jane would like to get her some assistance.

The Stewardship Steering Committee is planning the Volunteer Appreciation Day event on May 5.

d. Treasurer:

Treasurer's Report (oral)

Pledges total \$162,043 with everyone reporting. Jerry reviewed the written Financial reports.

Jerry discussed the proposed budget. Nancy moved to approve the budget as amended, Rod seconded, and the motion carried. The budget categories will be summarized and presented to the congregation.

Treasurer's Report (written) *(this is a condensed version of his written report)*

As of February 28th, the church had \$120,959.53 in its bank accounts. There were no short-term liabilities; reserved and restricted funds totaled \$43,418.82, leaving a balance of \$77,540.71 in unrestricted available funds. Included in the unrestricted funds amount is \$7,262.05 in FY 19-20 pledge payments. The Labyrinth Fund ended the month with a balance of \$6,434.87.

At the February Board meeting, the Board agreed to increase the budget for 5060 General Maintenance/Supplies from \$900.00 to \$3600. The congregation approved an additional \$16,000 for 5042 Capital Repairs at a special meeting on March 10 for repairs and painting of the pergola and replacement of foyer flooring, bringing that budget amount to \$19,600. Given budget funds that we don't anticipate spending, we will only need to draw approximately \$8,000 from unrestricted reserves.

Jerry met with Terry LeMaster in February regarding S2S2S and reviewed its financial processes, purpose and position within the church; all of which appear to be in order. They will continue to discuss reporting and potential financial contributions to the church.

e. Minister's Report:

Minister's Discussion

Belonging: How do people become Friends? Randy notices after a few visits and prepares a plastic name tag. We can use Constant Contact to reach out to new Friends as they are added. The Board will ask Andrea to record attendance while re-hanging name-tags.

Rev Carolyn is developing a proposal for **Adult Religious Education** in May. Rev. Don will help the Care Team. (Rev. Barbara has provided cost estimates to the budget proposal.) We will bring Nonviolent Communication to the congregation in the Fall.

Minister's Written report *(this is a condensed version of her written report)*

Developmental Ministry: Stewardship

Proposed Minister Focus

Lifespan Spiritual Growth for 2019-2020:

Gather folks & facilitate to vision/mission Adult Spiritual Growth Team and programming.
Timing TBD.

Gather folks to vision/mission CRE: April 7 & District meeting April 27.

Care Team – Enlarge the Care Mission/process.

Membership Committee – outreach, education, communication.

Leadership Development – How can we be more inviting to folks?

Expanding ministry – Both Rev. Carolyn and Rev. Don are happy to move into more formal roles here at UUCOD.

Anti-Oppression/Anti Racism Work – There seems to be energy to take the next steps with Waking Up White and bring a congregational invitation into Non Violent Communication Practice training.

Worship

Sermons are going onto You Tube. Attendance is up significantly, which is a nice challenge to have. Since the Sanctuary is so full, we are looking to move the choir to the platform and are seeking to purchase 15 chairs for that purpose.

Is there feedback on new OOW?

FEB 24 – Compassion & Choices - Erika Bieranowski, California Outreach for Compassion and Choices, explained the range of end of life decisions each of us has the right to choose from. Thank you Nancy.

MARCH 3- Free & Responsible: Rev Barbara preached The Auction Sermon on the challenge of living the First Principle.

MARCH 10 – Rev. Don's wonderful sermon on becoming a Chaplain.

MARCH 17 - Belonging – Rev Barbara's sermon on the benefits and challenges of being in community and the dangers of isolation.

Membership: How can we better foster meaningful connections?

On March 17th we welcomed 5 new members, and enjoyed a pot luck lunch. The new welcome seems to be working. We are looking at how we can communicate the process of “belonging” better.

Care Team

We are in process with a new organization of pastoral care team with a mission and set of policies that will better share the responsibilities. Rev. Dr. Don is available to be a part of a process to train and support our UUCOD Pastoral Care visitors. He and Rev. Barbara are meeting to discern the scope of his ministry at UUCOD.

Social Justice/ Community /Charity

Waking Up White has concluded. We are discerning Next Steps through Non Violent Communication Practice training. **Share the Plate** for March – Palm Spring , Desert Aids Project was very successful. Many thanks to Tim Hill.

April

Community Security Through Resiliency and Empowerment. April 17, 9 am to 12 pm, Jewish Federation of the Desert. Rev Barbara has reserved three spots for UUCOD.

Pacific Southwest District Meeting – Rev Barbara will be attending the SW District meeting at the end of April 25-27 in Long Beach. The Board discussed other members we could choose to encourage to attend.

All Congregation Pot Luck Seder Saturday April 20th, 5-7:30.

SCHEDULE: Reverend Barbara will be away May 17-June 2 to visit Vienna /Europe with Jonathan as he does research on a book he is writing. She did not take her week of time in February or March.

Weekly schedule:

Monday – Sabbath

Tuesday & Thursday from 1-5, office hours

Tuesday & Thursday evenings – committee meetings.

Rev Barbara is in the office at other times, as needed, and takes one day for writing at home, usually Wednesday.

7. New Business:

a: Spring Cleaning-What gets stored at the church

Sheryl will lead a Spring Cleaning and Removal in our storage areas. Obsolete items, and unneeded donations are accumulating, so she will lead the task to tag that which is needed and remove of the rest.

b: Piano humidifier

Sarah reports that Dorian has mentioned that the piano humidifier has been unplugged a couple of times. Rod agreed to look into it.

8. Closing. The Chalice was extinguished.

9. Adjournment. The Board Meeting was adjourned by Sarah at 8:45 PM.

10. Executive Session. The Board met in Executive Session.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rod Belshee, Secretary

Date

Approved: _____, 2019