

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert
Board of Directors Meeting, May 22, 2019
Minutes

Attending:

President Sarah Gonzales, 1st Vice President Vikki Porter, Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu, Secretary Rod Belshee, Director at Large Susan Hannon, 2nd Vice President-elect Barbara Storms.

Present by phone: 2nd Vice President (and President-elect) Jane Zaun

Absent: Director at Large Nancy Boyce, Reverend Barbara Fast, Director at Large-elect Carol LaVoie

Congregational Members: Terry LeMaster, Marion Ellson, Michael Pagliaro

1. Opening and Chalice Lighting:

Sarah called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm and shared an opening message.

2. Check-in:

3. Approval of the Minutes:

The March Board meeting minutes were approved as written.

4. Voices of the Congregation:

S2S2S. Terry LeMaster presented a one-page White Paper on S2S2S and its relationship to the church, dated 2/26/2019. While S2S2S has existed for a decade, the changing membership of the Board means that questions arise at each transition. Terry offered to answer any questions regarding S2S2S for the Board.

Some key points in the White Paper include

- the founding purpose of S2S in 2009 was to assist emerging playwrights
- the UUCOD Board approved S2S as the performing arts project of UUCOD
- the artistic focus of S2S2S is guided by the seven UU principles
- S2S2S is an outreach project, neither a fund-raiser nor receiving UUCOD financial support
- S2S2S receives proceeds and has expenses, and is in compliance with UUCOD financial procedures
- S2S2S typically donates receipts in excess of expenses annually to UUCOD
- S2S2S has also donated to the service auction
- S2S2S is managed by an Executive Committee, with a minimum 50% UUCOD membership
- S2S2S has been recognized as a major outreach activity for UUCOD

Jerry asked about this years contribution, and Terry responded that it may be in the range of \$1,000.

Jane asked about alcohol permit compliance and Terry responded that they get daily permits (\$25 each night).

Sarah queried about scheduling conflicts, in particular if we shift Children's Religious Education from a Sunday event to an evening program. Terry responded that the church activities come first, that long term planning helps, and that S2S2S will adapt as needed – for example S2S2S has changed dates to meet the UUCOD choir needs. Each season the S2S2S Board selects 4-7 plays, and scheduling is coordinated with the UUCOD President or Administrator.

Sarah remarked that this White Paper provides the needed clarity to alleviate the question of whether S2S2S activities jeopardize the church non-profit status. Jerry added that the S2S2S financial practices are in conformance with the written UUCOD Financial Policies.

Barbara S asked how many UUCOD members are involved in the creative aspects of S2S2S (beyond mechanics like sound or facilities). Terry replied that Directors for some plays have been UUCOD members and that auditions are open, although there does tend to be a consistent talent pool of non-member actors. Vikki and others suggested that S2S2S increase publicity to UUCOD membership to increase involvement.

Terry offered that there will always be complaints, and he reviewed several including play content or language, room re-set, and custodial issues. None of these were judged in conflict with the UU seven principles, nor systemic issues, and Terry emphasized the need for and effectiveness of open dialogue.

Sarah reminded that the Building Use Policy stipulates that large groups must restock supplies (toilet paper, paper towels) and clean up, or pay \$50 to have Roberto come in to prepare before the Sunday services.

Foyer Flooring

Rod presented the results of the membership survey regarding foyer floor covering, and the recommendations of the subcommittee composed of Rod, Frank Riela, Marion Ellson, and Michael Pagliaro. The sense of the surveyed membership was that environmental concerns were predominant, that a very enthusiastic minority favored a contemporary aesthetic, and that both softness and costs were somewhat lower priorities. However, there was considerable difference in opinion with some people strongly prioritizing softness or cost, so a balance is necessary. Overall, environmental concerns need to be met, and a contemporary aesthetic should be met allowing some trade-off of cost.

Rod presented the results of the analytic investigation of floor covering options. Twenty two variations of seven different types of floor coverings (carpet, concrete, tile, laminate, vinyl, linoleum, wood) were evaluated against ten different criteria (environmental, aesthetics, musical acoustics, safety (slippery, hardness), future ability to match or adapt in sanctuary, lifetime, maintenance, durability (cut, scratch, tear, dent, water, UV)).

Based on the membership priorities and the analytical evaluation, materials were narrowed to concrete, linoleum, some eco-plank flooring, and bamboo.

Aesthetic evaluations include many extended visits to local shops and visitations, as well as drawing on prior experience (especially Michael). Three committee members preferred linoleum and one preferred polished concrete. Three members agreed that high-quality bamboo was a strong second choice.

The Board approved a motion to adopt a linoleum flooring with a non-to-exceed budget of \$6,000, and delegated to the committee the ability to select the specific pattern, solicit bids, accept a contract, and complete the installation.

5. Reports:

a. President:

The storage rooms have been cleaned out thanks to Carol LaVoie, Barbara Storms, Jerry L'Hommedieu, Rob DuWors, and Sarah Gonzales. Most of the items have been donated to charity. Sarah mentioned some items in the storage rooms have monetary value and will be sold. The Board unanimously agreed that proceeds go to the Ministers Discretionary fund, consistent with prior garage sale items. A wet/dry shop vac that has been in storage for years has minimal value and will be given to Randy Steele and Dave Carter as thank for their service.

Kay Faas is a delegate to the UUA General Assembly, and Jane Zaun will be an Off Site delegate. No other members have been approved as delegates this year.

Sarah would like training as an "Our Whole Lives" instructor to assist our youth and adults. The Board approved by unanimous consent to pay the \$225 fee plus books, from the Children's Religious Education budget.

b. 1st Vice President: *(this is a lightly edited version of her written report)*

Faith Community Workshop:

Attended the April 17th workshop sponsored by Jewish Federation of the Desert with Rev. Barbara and Rod Belshee. Incredibly valuable exercises and resources provided by Secure Community Network, a national organization dedicated to working with both government and local communities in planning for emergencies such as intruder/active shooter or other life threatening events. Info and resources informing the Safety Committee work.

Safety Committee:

Reviewed draft Safety Policy and Emergency Procedures Action Plan prepared by Jerry which provides good framework for UUCOD. Need to fill in the blanks by beginning to identify potential IRT (Incident Response Team) members from congregation. Need suggestions from the Board and others – share potential names with Safety through Jerry. Need to be local and have personality and willingness to act when needed.

Shanti (Dr. Rosario Carrillo) emphasized the value of CERT Training, and we will hear more next meeting to determine its value to our efforts.

Divided major crisis issues among willing volunteers to do deeper dives about practical needs.

- Major medical (most likely, including heart attack, stroke, life threatening or serious injury) – Randy and Jane;
- Earthquake preparedness – Shanti;
- Intruder/active shooter – Vikki and Carol L.

Will put notice in newsletter this week confirming Safety Committee is working on issues and inviting people to join us or attend.

Rod reviewed the Safety-related facilities actions, notably the inspections and repairs to our fire systems and corrections to deficiencies. Eleven actions identified during our initial self-inspection have now been resolved, including all of the more important ones.

Communications:

The committee has expanded to these members: Diane Carmony, Susan Hannon, Vikki Porter, Jack Fitzsimmons, and Rose Baldwin.

Recent accomplishments include providing publicity for the YouTube channel of Rev. Barbara's sermons; creating a Facebook event for the Climate Change weekend workshop at UUCOD, providing publicity and media outreach for the Kurt Jordan concert and helping to disseminate the Facebook event created by Kurt; and meeting with the Stewardship Committee regarding how we can help their mission.

At the Communications Committee's April 28 meeting, we agreed to provide an upcoming article in the UUCOD monthly newsletter regarding the committee, articles to pitch to UU World, planning to start an Instagram account perhaps in the fall, the possibility of using podcasts to get more exposure, development of additional content for the Facebook page, and discussion of a UUCOD logo.

In addition, Jack has developed beautiful graphic representations of UU principles that can be used with many of our communications efforts and possibly in conjunction with the "micrograces" concept created by Rev. Barbara.

Women's Retreat: January 10-12, 2020. Waiting for contract from Borrego Springs Resort.

c. 2nd Vice President:

May 5 Service: The combined Volunteer Appreciation Day, Music Sunday, Celebration of a successful pledge drive and Congregational Annual Meeting was a great success. Huge thanks to everyone who helped make that day so successful. Also thanks to those people who put in so much effort for Kurt Jordan's successful presentation on May 11, especially the communications committee (Diane, Vikki, Susan, Jerry, Rob, Sarah and Barbara)

Harvey Milk Breakfast: Nine UUCOD members attended. Unfortunately the sound system was poor and most of the speakers could not be understood.

Stewardship Steering Committee: Met with Randy Steele (Membership) on April 25th and discussed more robust orientation materials, such as a "The 25 Things You Want to Know". Also discussed adding a third session to the orientation, which would be led by the Stewardship Committee.

UUA District Meeting: Attended the District meeting in Long Beach, CA. The Keynote speaker was the Music Director at the largest congregation in Atlanta, and he gave an awesome talk. Attendance was very helpful and very rewarding.

UUA General Assembly: Jane is registered as an Off Site delegate, and will be able to show many of the GA sessions live at the church.

d. Treasurer:

Treasurer's Report: *(oral)*

Kurt's Concert raised \$2,700, with 103 people in attendance. Music Sunday added another \$1,970. Together those essentially close the \$5,000 gap between the music expenses planned and the music expenses budgeted.

Pledges total \$166,543 with one more pledge this month (goal was \$165,000). We already know of pledging members who are leaving the area, but we have a 5% allowance for shrinkage in the budget.

Treasurer's Report: *(written, as of March 6)*

As of April 30th, the church had \$113,700.74 in its bank accounts. There were no short-term liabilities and reserved and restricted funds totaled \$58,171.83 which includes \$12,493.73 in pledges for next year. This leaves \$55,528.51 in unrestricted available funds; \$7,823.22 lower than last month.

For the month, expenses exceeded revenues by \$7,561.45, largely due to a reduction in pledge

payments and expenses for new tables, chairs and exit and emergency lighting. This is not unusual for this period since pledge payments dwindle to only monthly payments. Year to date total revenues are \$193,886; the annual budget projected revenues of \$198,000. Year to date expenses are \$158,648 versus the annual budget amount of \$221,354. Year to date net revenues are \$35,237.

At month end, the Labyrinth Fund totaled \$5,294.56 and there was \$4,142.18 in the Music Fund; up about \$1,200.00 due to in concert receipts. As of May 6th, Music Sunday added contributions of another \$1,973.50 to the Music Fund

e. Minister's Report:

Vacation: Reverend Barbara is on her well deserved vacation May 17 through June 2, so submitted no report.

6. Old Business:

a. Facilities and Safety Update and Approval of Recommendations for Improvements

(Covered during 2nd Vice President's Report.)

b. Approve Covenant with Community Minister and Affiliated Minister

The Board approved a Community Minister agreement with Reverend Carolyn Price, a UU minister. Carolyn will offer Adult Religious Education, preach, and attend some events on behalf of UUCOD.

The Board approved an Affiliated Minister agreement with Reverend Don Stouder, affiliated with a non-UU ministry. Don will preach 4-6 times per year, train pastoral care associates in the care team, and be on call for pastoral needs.

c. Technology Work Team and Update

Based on decisions taken at the April Board meeting, we moved forward to have Frontier provide internet and phone service to the building, and Sarah will instruct Bill Edwards to transfer the UUCOD domain name ownership to UUCOD.

We still need volunteers to reconstitute a Technology Team.

c. General Assembly Delegation

(Covered during President's Report; nothing else to add.)

7. New Business:

a. Celebration for Outgoing Board Members

The continuing and new Board members will honor Sarah and Susan, retiring Board members, with a lunch on June 9 after the Finance and Facilities Committee meetings (Dutch Treat except for Sarah and Susan).

b. Discussion about Animal Policy

The Board approved Jane's proposal for her to draft a Procedures section to add to our Dog Policy, to clarify enforcement procedures and roles. We need to gently communicate to a couple of dog owners and lovers that our current policy allows only Service Animals, which means that the person should have a specific disability and the animal is trained to perform a particular task.

c. Approve/Discuss Use of Storage Rooms

After the huge effort to clear out the storage rooms, we want to prevent them from filling up again. Much of the content was unsolicited donations dropped off at the church, some of which sat unused for many years and were just hauled to Angelview. The Board discussed signage restricting storage to only items of the church (or renters). The need to label and date items in the refrigerator was also discussed.

Sarah showed a new format for written Policies, and will be working with Andrea to convert existing Policies to that format so they can be shared and posted online.

c. Clarify Rules for Use of Alcohol at the Church

California law prohibits serving of alcohol, whether free or paid, without a license. The law does apply to churches. A single day license costs \$25.

d. Desert Outreach Synagogue Agreement

Sarah proposed that we modify the current agreement with DOS, which provides weekly facilities for the DOS Choir rehearsals in exchanged for Rabbi Jules preaching occasionally. She suggested and the Board agreed to pursue an agreement that has a fixed cost for the DOS choir (substantially discounted) and a fixed payment for preaching services.

9. Adjournment. The Chalice was extinguished and the Board Meeting was adjourned by Sarah at 8:33 PM.

10. Executive Session. The Board did not met in Executive Session after the regular meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rod Belshee, Secretary

Date

Approved: _____, 2019