

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert
Board of Directors Regular Meeting, December 17, 2019
Minutes

Attending:

Present: President Jane Zaun, 1st Vice President Vikki Porter, 2nd Vice President Barbara Storms, Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu, Secretary Rod Belshee, Director at Large Carol Lavoie, Director at Large Larry Rogers, Reverend Barbara Fast.

Absent: none

Congregational Members: Glenn Yamaguchi, Fran Hoag

Process checker and timekeeper: Barbara Storms

1. Opening and Chalice Lighting:

Jane called the meeting to order at 4:58 pm and Vikki read an inspirational message while the Chalice was being lit.

2. Check-in:

3. Approval of the Minutes: The minutes for the November 19th regular Board Meeting were approved as written.

4. Voices of the Congregation:

a. Environmental Justice Theme, Fran Hoag:

Fran Hoag updated the Board on the direction that the Social Justice Committee will be taking. Denise had talked at the Church Council about the idea of focusing our Social Justice on one theme with monthly educational and engagement activities, and how that concept is energizing the committee.

Fran shared that the focus this year will be Environmental Justice. In response to a question, she clarified that Share-the-Plate, Socks-on-the-Second, toy drives, Pride Parade and our other local actions will continue as our service within our local community, but that the Environmental Justice theme will be our global focus. Fran also shared that the committee will be changing the method of selecting Share-the-Plate recipients, starting with asking our congregants to nominate local organizations and then selecting recipients through a congregational voting process.

b. UUA PWR Leadership Experience, Glenn Yamaguchi:

Glenn Yamaguchi updated the Board regarding his participation in the upcoming UUA Pacific Western Region Leadership Experience on January 24-26 (along with Kevin Brandt). There is considerable pre-work, multiple home meetings, and six follow-up Zoom meetings. It is an intense program and Glenn thanked the Board for their support and expressed his excitement. Glenn asked the Board members to complete an Assessment Tool of the State of the Congregation.

Glenn also shared the Congregation Size Comparison Chart, which shows the attributes of various church sizes. The dovetails wonderfully with the training and discussion the Board has been undertaking for the past year, and which has been presented to the Church Council. Glenn shared that his readings so far emphasize that while typically lay leadership focuses on attendance, facilities and money far more important is the culture and the palpable energy with a sense of belonging, and that lay leadership should focus on a strong sense of vision and identity, communication, and practices to recruit and train leaders, and connections to other community groups and UU churches.

5. Leader Lab, Jane:

Jane led a brief discussion motivated by the UUA Leader Lab website on understanding Vision and Mission. We have a very clear Mission here at UUCOD, which is a statement of our values, but we do not have a Vision statement, which is who and what we want to become. The Leader Lab talks of leading from Mission to Action, such as a mission-based budget, and leading with a prophetic voice even when it is uncomfortable.

Note added post-meeting: refer to <https://www.uua.org/leadership/library/what-are-vision-mission-and-covenant> .

Last month we emailed Draft copies of the Board Minutes to a number of Committee Chairs. In response to a question Rod reported that he heard back from just one recipient that it was appreciated. We will try it a second time and see if it is worth continuing.

6. Reports:

a. President Jane Zaun:

Jane submitted a written report thanking people for helping on the Roy Zimmerman concert, highlighting an opportunity for the UUA General Assembly, and reflecting her activity with the Safety and Stewardship Committees and planning for a future Board and Committee Chair retreat.

b. 1st Vice President Vikki Porter:

Vikki submitted a written report regarding the Church Council, Safety Committee, Women's Retreat, Strategic Planning, Communications, the Women's Retreat, and the Labyrinth.

In the Board meeting, Vikki added her thanks to the Church Council attendees, and reported it was a great Church Council with buy-in, interactivity and movement. One attendee called her afterward to thank her.

c. 2nd Vice President Barbara Storms:

Barbara submitted a written report regarding the Stewardship Committee, the Social BUUterflies, and the Membership Committee.

In the Board meeting, Barbara highlighted that new members were very touched by receiving cards with notes from the Board and they very much liked the new follow-up session for new members, and provided some feedback for Membership and Stewardship. The new member mentoring has not worked yet, but will try again in the Spring. The emphasis is to connect people based on their interests.

d. Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu:

Jerry submitted a written report regarding our financial position, the solar project and indebtedness, and preparations for the Pledge Drive and next year's budget.

e. Minister Reverend Barbara Fast:

Rev. Barbara submitted a written report regarding the Worship schedule, Worship Associate duties and Music; Lifespan Spiritual Growth and Chalice Circles; Pastoral Care; Developmental Goals, the Church Council and Communications; Social Justice, and the Suzanne Sheridan fundraiser.

In the Board meeting, she clarified some year-end details. Jerry is working hard on items required to be done by Dec 31, the January newsletter submission date will be Dec 23 (Monday), and Andrea's work days will be Dec 23, 24, and 27 (Monday, Tuesday, Friday) and then Dec 30 and January 3 (Monday and Friday). Hours are 10-2 except 10-3 on Fridays.

6. Current Business:

a. Attitude of Gratitude The Board sent a card of gratitude to Steve Kerr for enabling stage lighting, and to the volunteers who helped on the Zimmerman event: Margaret Manson, Sandy Sladen, Linda Savard, Ginger Hemingway, Larry Rogers, and Mel Wilkinson. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

b. Solar Update Rod, Kevin and Jerry met to discuss the solar bids. Rod had secured a third bid to include. One bid stood out as the best fit regarding the contract language, the equipment and the price. Contract negotiations will continue in January. While the approved Solar Proposal estimated a cost of \$66,000 the selected bid is just over \$50,000. Jim Brown, a new member, has offered to oversee the installation phase.

CommandOne In November we experienced a CommandOne intrusion alarm to which Vikki responded. The event raised questions about whether the system was working properly and how we are supposed to respond. Rod had a CommandOne technician onsite to review the equipment; we chose to move the siren from the Sanctuary closet to the kitchen so the sound will penetrate the entire building. Rod reports that he now has a full understanding of the system and how we need to respond to an alarm event. He will schedule live training in January or February with an active alarm event for everyone on the responder list, and Jim from CommandOne will be onsite to answer any questions.

Stage Lighting There is an unused light switch and circuit in the sanctuary that can be used to light the stage. Steve Kerr was (amazingly) able to fish the wire through to bring that over the current stage. Shirley LeMaster arranged an onsite meeting with Phil Murphy (also amazingly), the premier lighting designer in the Coachella Valley, to discuss possibilities for stage lighting. Phil also had access to used lighting equipment which can save us considerable expense. There are several technical issues to test out (convert to LED, ability to dim, condition due to outside storage) but Rod and crew are working to make a proposal based on his recommendations.

The potential cost could be up to \$1,000 which the Board agreed to by consensus.

c. Pledge Drive Update, Jerry

Jerry reports that the theme for the 2020 pledge drive will be Gratitude and Generosity. The kickoff will be February 2 with the Chili cookoff. The Pledge Drive will run one month, with weekly speakers. The Pledge Letter and Pledge Sheet are ready, and a one-page Financial Overview is available to help improve the overall financial literacy of the membership. Jerry reported that surprisingly 24% of all pledges, whether measured by dollars or number of contributors, is from Friends as opposed to Members. Given that, we will reach out to a larger groups of Friends by email during the Pledge Drive. The Pledge Drive Stewards are also being given more flexibility on how to meet with their assignees, and will have a one-page fact sheet to help them.

d. Suzanne Sheridan Concert, Fran Hoag

Fran reported that the Constant Contact email is schedule to go out February 18 for the January 24th concert. The invitation, with Jack Fitzsimmons imagery, will lead to a landing page with a link to video Suzanne produced just for this promotion. Ahead of that, the Facebook announcement has produced considerable interest and registrations. Bryna is printing a poster. In response to a

question, Vikki clarified that the fundraiser aspect is emphasized to different degrees in dependence upon the audience. Fran talked about a vision for the stage – a ‘60’s-’70’s coffee house atmosphere for folk musicians – and asked for help in finding décor such as posters to create that vibe.

7. New Business:

a. Policy and Procedure for Art and Decor

Rod reports that we have several opportunities regarding art and décor, including refurbishing out foyer and an offer to donate amazing outdoor metal sculptures. We need a policy and procedure to handle these opportunities. Rod wrote up a basic proposal (not a full Policy and Procedure ready for a first reading) but an attempt to get a consensus on how to respond to the immediate items at hand. Barbara agreed to take that draft and develop a Policy and Procedure with Jerry and Jane that the Board can consider as a first reading in January. In the meantime, the Board agreed to use this draft as an interim guide and established an ad hoc task force of Carol, Rod and Jerry to evaluate Gene’s offer and make a recommendation to the Board. Because time may be of the essence, the ad hoc task force may seek Board approval by email before the next Board Meeting.

8. Board Visioning:

a. 2020 Strategic Goal Planning:

Vikki led a discussion of Strategic Planning Proposal 2020- Setting all of the Boats.

The Board discussed having a Board member at every committee meeting in January 2020.

Currently Board members on committees are:

- Barbara – Membership and Stewardship
- Jerry – Finance
- Rod – Facilities

In January Larry and Jane will participate in Worship

Vikki and Carol will participate in Social Justice.

b. Role of Director At Large:

The Board began a discussion of the role of Director-at-Large. This is largely undefined and has varied historically with some Directors asking for a more meaningful definition of their role. Originally the intent was to be a liaison between the congregation and the Board.

Discussion varied from adopting a meaningful description to allowing the Director's at Large to pursue their own passion. Carol and Larry agreed to put forward a proposal for further discussion.

7. Adjourned

Jane adjourned the meeting at 7:04 pm .

Respectfully Submitted,

Rod Belshee

_____, 2019
Date Approved

Addendum to Board of Directors Meeting Written Reports of Board Members and Committee Chairs

Attachments

- a) President Jane Zaun's written report
- b) 1st Vice President Vikki Porter's written report
- c) 2nd Vice President Barbara Storm's written report
- d) Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu's written report
- e) Minister Reverend Barbara Fast's written report

a. President Jane Zaun's written report:

I am grateful to those members and friends (Mel Wilkinson, Larry Rogers, Margaret Manson, Sandy Sladen, Ginger Hemmingway, and Linda Savard) who assisted with the Roy Zimmerman Concert. Even though the attendance was slim, reportedly those who did come had a good time.

The 2020 UUA General Assembly (GA) is being held in Providence, Rhode Island. Last year even with the GA on the West Coast, we had only one member attend as our delegate. Two of our long time members live, during the summer months, in Delaware. I have asked them to consider being our delegates to the 2020 General Assembly in Rhode Island. They will discuss and advise. Registration is \$400 before March 15, 2020.

I have attended the Safety and Stewardship Committee Meetings this month. Plus both Vice President's and I met with Rev. Barbara in long range planning for a hopeful Board/Committee Chair Retreat this spring .

b. 1st Vice President Vikki Porter's written report:

Church Council. The Dec. 7 Church Council meeting format focused on several key themes: Greater understanding of the concepts of Shared Ministry and Stewardship; encouraging committees to collaborate and to align their missions with that of UUCOD. We told the six standing committees who were represented that 2020 represents a great opportunity for UUCOD to strategically plan for its 2021-2024 long range goals and their voices and ideas would be actively sought. We asked that the topic of strategic planning be discussed in their January committee meetings with a board member visiting. Next Church Council meeting will be Feb 29, 2020.

Safety Committee. Focus of Dec. 11 meeting was on developing scenarios for responding to key emergencies most likely to occur at the UUCOD Campus: A person medical emergency involving one or more congregants; a fire in the building; an intruder/active shooter; an earthquake during

service. Each member assumed responsibility for developing protocols for responding to one of the emergencies.

Two members, Jane Zaun and Jerry L'Hommendieu, were recently certified in Rancho Mirage's CERT training program.

Strategic Planning. Met with President Jane Zaun and Rev. Barbara Fast to discuss proposal for 2020 Strategic Planning process that would include Church Council committee chairs, board members and selected stakeholders. The process will be designed to be inclusive and collaborative as well as ensure greater transparency of decision-making. In addition, the process provides a platform for surfacing potential new church leadership. Proposal to be discussed at board meeting.

Communications. With Fran Hoag's development of a Constant Contact landing page and Jack Fitzsimmons's fantastic graphics, Diane Carmony created a Facebook event page for Suzanne Sheridan's Jan. 24, 2020 concert at UUCOD – Dylan, Joni, Leonard & Me. In less than 24 hours, eight people say they are going and 31 are interested after I shared with my local FB friends list (189 invited). If others go to invitation, indicate whether they are going and then "share" local FB friends, we vastly expand the reach (I can demonstrate how this works). We will expand reach by posting to local news FB pages (ie. Rancho Mirage News, Palm Springs Entertainment, What's Happening Coachella Valley etc.) Promotion with intensive after Jan. 1 and hopefully include radio interview with Anita Rufus and others. CC email will be sent to congregation members by Fran on Wednesday.

Women's Retreat. Registration was completed with final payments Dec. 15 and a pre-retreat meeting. A total of 27 participants will attend the Jan. 10-12, 2020 retreat at the Borrego Springs Resort. The over-reaching theme is "Celebrating the Crone."

Labyrinth. We will recognize the Winter Solstice from 4-5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21, on the Labyrinth with a ceremonial walk that celebrates the longest night and coming of the Sun. A MeetUp invitation has been sent as well as event invitation sent locally.

c. 2nd Vice President Barbara Storms:

Stewardship Committee efforts this month focused on the following areas:

- Reviewing our efforts to support the induction of new members: new member discussion, survey of new member interests, and materials for new members.
- New members commended the Board for the personal cards that were sent. Some even framed the notes.
- Support for the upcoming pledge drive especially around publicity and events. Stewardship will take a lead on the kick-off chili cook-off.
- Update on our participation tracking efforts to
 - support the Membership and Pledge committees to identify friends who should be approached about becoming members and/or pledging,

- identifying for the Membership Committee members who are not attending or participating and may need to be contacted and referred to the Care committee
- identifying for the Board, Nominating Committee and Minister member and friend participation levels
- Need to increase participation in the committee. Developed a list of members and friends to contact about joining the stewardship committee.

Social BUUterflies events:

- December 12 Jarabe-Mexicano Holiday Celebration--free concert at the Rancho Mirage Amphitheatre and had X people from the church attend
- New Event: A Chef's Table event is being arranged for January 9 (2-3 in the afternoon).

The December **Membership Committee** meeting focused on:

- Reviewing comments by new members on the orientation classes and planning the classes to be held February 16 & 23. The welcoming ceremony is March 3.
- Began a discussion about the critical role that Membership representatives in the lobby on Sundays have in safety of the congregation. Discussion will continue at the next meeting.
- Continued drafting by-law revision of the Membership Committee description and anticipate sending that to the Board in January.
- Developing a committee budget to submit to the Finance Committee.
- Reviewed another draft of the Member maps project which will show members other members who live close to them

d. Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu:

As of November 30th, the church had \$227,252.02 in its bank accounts. Reserved and restricted funds totaled \$47,903.43, leaving a balance of \$179,348.59 in unrestricted funds. Our auction was the big success for November. At month end, gross revenues were \$24,612.30 and expenses were \$561.41. New members pledged approximately \$5,000 for the remainder of this fiscal year, bringing the total gross pledge amount to \$171,406.

The board and the congregation approved a proposal to incur indebtedness at a 3.5% interest rate to fund solar panel installation. Initial cost is estimated to be approximately \$66,000 although that amount will change based on which vendor is selected. The Facilities' team is reviewing final proposals and will decide upon a vendor shortly. The installation will be paid for through a loan provided to the church by an anonymous donor.

Preparations for the upcoming pledge drive have begun and the Treasurer will be asking for help from Finance Committee members to assist with development of next year's budget.

e. Minister Reverend Barbara Fast:

WORSHIP

November 24	Rev Barbara – Eating as if the World Mattered, “ Cornbread Communion”
December 1	Shirley LeMaster – preaching a Rev Ken Sermon
December 8	Rev Barbara Gifts
December 15	Rev Barbara Look for the Stars with Choir and Christmas Tree “Star Communion”
December 21	Labyrinth Solstice Josette Pacino
December 22	Ian Challis Solstice
December 24	Rev Barbara Christmas Eve with Choir
December 29	Rev Don – Here If You Need Me :Community Ministry
January 5	Peter Mathews
January 12	Rev Carolyn Price (Rev. Barbara leading program at Women’s Retreat)
January 19	Rev Barbara Love and Justice With Kurt & Michelle Fiore

Worship team duties were clarified and acknowledged. We began the BOD “Why I Serve”/ ‘Why I do what I do” moment in Worship. Thank you President Jane and 2nd VP Barbara and those who have shared their story.

Music – The choir sounded beautiful. The paid singers are of the essence. 5 children are singing with the choir Christmas Eve as is a youth. The Christmas Eve Service is at 5PM.

LIFESPAN SPIRITUAL GROWTH: Five Chalice Circles are running. I am hoping that another will begin in January. I am hosting the monthly Super Senior Lunch Bunch.

Rev Carolyn is planning to offer one or two single meeting Programs. TBD.

CRE Team Development is next.

PASTORAL CARE Team –Rev Don is on board with the Pastoral Visitors.

Developmental Goals & Common Council: Shared Ministry and moving towards a Program Church: Thanks to our 1st VP- Vikki for leading the Common Council.

Communications- Ken Mills is moving away so there is a need for a third member of the team. It is under discussion.

JUSTICE: The Committee is planning to devote a year to a congregation wide focus - Environmental Justice -Fran Hoag is organizing this.

MID VALLEY INTERFAITH: We hosted the Mid Valley Interfaith Lunch on Tuesday Dec 3 with help from Carol Scanny, Karen Yanney and Maxine Zeibarth.

January 24 2020. **FUNDRAISER** Suzanne Sheridan : Dylan, Joni, Leonard and ME ! She will also share her music gifts at worship in Worship on Jan 26th. There is a team in place coordinated by Fran Hoag and Diane Carmony. Art work by Jack Fitzsimmons. Roll out is this Wednesday.

Personal: I am "off" this weekend and I will be on standby between 12/25- Jan 1 if there is a pastoral need. I am on Silent Retreat Jan 2-8.