

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert
Board of Directors Regular Meeting, July 21, 2020
Minutes

Attending:

BOD Attending by Zoom Meeting: President Jane Zaun, 1st Vice President Carol Lavoie, 2nd Vice President Linda Savard, Treasurer Jerry L’Hommedieu, Secretary Rod Belshee, Director-at-Large Mack Rogers, and Director-at-Large Robert Rancourt.

BOD Absent: <none>

Congregational Members by Zoom Meeting: Carolyn Etheridge, Barb Ketay, Glenn Yamaguchi, Barbara Storms, Mel Wilkinson, and Marion Ellson.

Meeting minutes:

1. Opening and Chalice Lighting:

Jane called the regular Board Meeting to order at 5:00 pm by Zoom Meeting, led a reading borrowed from UUA Leadership Council and lit the Chalice.

2. Check-in:

3. Approval of the Minutes: The Board approved a motion to accept the minutes as written for the June 16, 2020 regular meeting of the Board.

4. Time-keeper and Process-observer: Carol Lavoie

5. Voices of the Congregation:

<No topics were brought up: the Congregational Members all reported that they were here either to just observe or for the scheduled discussion of the Assistant Minister.>

6. Reports:

a. President Jane Zaun:

Jane submitted a written report. In the meeting, there were no questions.

b. 1st Vice President Carol LaVoie:

Carol submitted a written report. There was no further discussion in the meeting.

Carol reported a small change in her reports: Peter Matthews Coffee and Conversation will retain its current format rather than follow current events.

c. 2nd Vice President Linda Savard:

Linda submitted a written report.

In the meeting she reported a change from the report. Stewardship proposed that once a month Congregants contribute a testimonial to the Sunday worship service. That needs further thought since it is now a public forum.

Linda relayed a suggestion that the Board of Directors set up a Task Force on Internal Communications. *<The topic was discussed at the end of New Business.>*

d. Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu:

Jerry submitted a written report regarding our financial position and notable financial events.

In the meeting, Jerry detailed a few year-end adjustments, such as moving pledges for this year that were received last year from reserves to revenue, and incurring the solar expense in last year. Jerry also reported that he has applied for a Care Act grant in the amount of \$8,000, with a notification expected in mid-August.

e. Minister Reverend Barbara Fast:

Reverend Barbara is on vacation!

f. Director-at-Large Mack Rogers:

Mack submitted a written report. In the meeting he expressed joy in being the Board liaison to the Social Justice Committee. He reported success with the UUA The Vote phone bank, which is being followed by writing 2,000 postcards.

f. Director-at-Large Bob Rancourt:

Bob submitted a written report and had no further comments in the meeting.

7. Old Business:

a. Attitude of Gratitude, Mack

The Board sent a card of gratitude to Roger Beaman for years of service as Chair of Finance Committee.

b. COVID-19 Response Team, Jerry.

Jerry explained the history and role of the Covid-19 Response Team for new Board members.

c. Facilities Update. Rod

Rod submitted a written report. In the meeting he added a couple of comments.

- Solar approval by IID is progressing.
- The Covid-19 Response Team decided not to pursue misters on the patio (to allow small groups to meet safely).
- Cathedral City High School has a Digital Arts and Technology Academy. Rod is in conversation about potential linkage with our UUCOD Production team.
- The Production team has once again stepped up, this time adding captions to the service
- Rob DuWors and Rod are leading an effort to define live-streaming and front-of-house screens once we resume in-person services. Initial discussions will start with the Worship and Production teams, and develop slowly and progressively.
- Rod mentioned that the office router is failing and if needed, might just need to be power cycled.

9. New Business

a. Approve Minister Housing Allowance per IRS regulations, Jane

The IRS allows Ministers to take part of their compensation as a housing allowance.

The Board approved a motion to allow Rev Barbara to take part of her compensation as a housing allowance.

b. Approve Assistant Minister Position Description, Jane

Jane explained the background on this proposal. In January, Reverend Barbara asked for a small reduction in her hours, and a subset of the Board worked with her to define what that might mean and how to meet the needs of the congregation. Her hours will drop slightly, from $\frac{3}{4}$ time to $\frac{2}{3}$ (an 8% reduction, and 3 fewer sermons annually).

The team proposed soliciting a part-time Assistant Minister (20%), particularly focused on Pastoral Care. The Assistant Minister will provide 8-10 sermons. The combination will slightly increase the ministerial support for the congregation.

Congregants had questions regarding the salary, reporting structure, and candidates. The salary range was set in consultation with the regional UUA and is a bit below the mid-point but still within the guidelines. The Assistant will report to Reverend Barbara, though hiring and firing remains with the Board. The contract is an annual contract. Regional UU has identified candidates within the valley, but interestingly with physical distancing there is potentially a huge pool of candidates.

The Board approved a motion to approve the Assistant Minister Job Description.

Marion requested that we publish the hours that the minister is available for calls (aka office hours).

c. August Board Meeting, Jane

Typically we skip the August Board Meeting. In October last year we did an all-day in-person planning session, but since an all-day Zoom meeting would be exhausting, Jane proposed we use August 18 at 5:00 pm for informal visioning, followed by a Board Retreat in September. We need to work on the Strategic Goals, and Widening the Circle. Board members concurred.

At Carol's suggestion, we will include ten minutes on the August informal agenda for the Auction.

d. Board Retreat, Jane

Jane requested that Board Members save September 19 for a Board Retreat.

e. Internal Communication, Linda

The Board has long desired more structured internal communication, and Linda proposed we create an Internal Communications Task Force. While we have a good newsletter and healthy Facebook Community group, the communication between Committees, or between Committees and

the Board, or with the membership, is haphazard. We would like a comprehensive look at what is working, what isn't and what we want to do. The scope could extend from communication strategy to style guides and editing. A subcommittee of Linda, Jerry and Jane will draft a few paragraphs to define a roadmap for an Internal Communications Task Force, for consideration by the Board.

Separately, the External Communication team provides outreach with internet activity and groups, press articles, postings, and our public UUCOD Facebook site.

10 Extinguish Chalice and Adjournment

Jane adjourned the meeting at 6:16 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rod Belshee

_____, 2020
Date Approved

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

Attachments

Written Reports of Board Members and Minister

- a) President Jane Zaun's written report
- b) 1st Vice President Carol Lavoie's written report
- c) 2nd Vice President Linda Savard's written report
- d) Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu's written report
- e) Director at Large Bob Rancourt's written report
- f) Director at Large Mack Roger's written report
- g) Minister Reverend Barbara Fast is on vacation

Written reports of Committee Chairs

- a) Facilities Committees

a. President Jane Zaun's written report:

General Assembly: I attended the all virtual UUA General Assembly June 24-28.

I participated in business meetings, listened to featured speakers, joined several workshops including "Creating a Community of Communities", "Visioning and Governance", and the Report from the Commission on Institutional Change which Rev. Stouder is introducing to us in his sermon series. General Assembly is a stimulating time to join with thousands of other UU's throughout the United States.

Stewardship Committee: I joined the Stewardship Committee Meeting earlier this month and shared in their excited energy to explore methods of sustaining and building community even while we are "virtual".

I met with the COVID19 Response Team, chaired by our Treasurer, now meeting once/week to have an overview of effectiveness within all Church functioning.

Position Description for Assistant Minister: A task team of Board members has been working with Rev. Barbara to define the role and responsibilities of an Assistant Minister. The position description is now brought before the entire Board for consideration.

Since the onset of our COVID-19 adjustments, I have continued to work at sustaining our community with articles in the Newsletter, telephone and email contact with congregants, and contact with Committee Chairs.

b. 1st Vice President Carol Lavoie's written report:

Helped develop church calendar for 2020-21

Important dates:

- Board Retreat-9/19,
- Church Councils-10/10 & 4/24,
- Live Auction-11/14,
- Variety Show (kick off to Pledge Drive)-1/30,
- Garage Sale-4/3

Worked on Spiritual Education Committee

Explored possible relationship with ICD for shared 'classes'

6 opportunities for fall semester (Sept.-Dec.):

1. Continuation of Mediation with RB
2. Coffee and Conversation with Peter to focus on current events
3. Poetry Writing (6 sessions)
4. Building Your Own Theology (6 sessions)
5. History of UUCOD (1 session)
6. Possibility of coordinating with ICD for discussion group focusing on racism

Schedule will be finalized and sent out to congregation in late Aug.

Survey sent out in coordination with Stewardship & Care Team asking for input on possible offerings

Handed over Attitude of Gratitude to Mack Rogers.

AUCTION

Live Auction: Explored on-line auction sites, spoke with UU in MA about their on-line auction.

Discussed with Rod and Fran about doing an 'in house' live zoom auction format similar to our Congregational Meeting in May. Seems workable. Advantages: no additional fees, process would be familiar (hold up paddles, etc.), allows for bidding on individual seats for dinners (no other sites have this option), 'face time' on zoom would make more social.

Disadvantage: Might not allow for those who are uncomfortable with technology to participate. Working to remedy that issue.

Silent Auction: Am working to figure out a process to do safely. Possibility of outdoor auction on church patio on Friday prior to Live Auction. Staggered bidders can view items

and put their 'best bid' in box. Winning 'best bids' could be listed on a constant contact on following Sat. a.m.

Working with Jack F. on how to advertise.

Billing not unlike our usual procedures.

c. 2nd Vice President Linda Savard' written report:

Stewardship Committee

We met once in July and plan to meet every first Tuesday of the month. We reviewed our goals and continued the conversations from the previous month. We agreed our current goals are still relevant for the coming year with an emphasis on keeping the community together and engaged.

To that end:

1. We reviewed what information we have on numbers of people participating in Zoom activities. We have 8-15 people participating at any one time in each of our current zoom offerings.
2. We discussed ways to find out who is actually participating in church programs.
3. We discussed other possible new fun activities to offer members and friends.
4. We talked about possible outdoor, socially distanced activities that could happen at the church when the weather is cooler. That still needs to be explored.
5. We are working with the Care Committee and the Lifespan Spiritual Growth Committee to put together a survey of interests and needs in the church community.
6. We did an outreach to new members to see if there is any interest in a new member zoom group. So far, no interest.

To "strengthen messaging about a larger concept of stewardship" we will put a paragraph or two in the newsletter each month about various aspects of stewardship. We are also collaborating with Worship to have a community member, once a month during service, talk about what they are doing during this time of Covid-19 to be part of the church; how they are contributing and how the church is supporting them. Some of our members will assist with the Pledge Drive.

One of our other goals is to work with committees and individuals to strengthen internal church communication. We would like to see some procedures developed for communication between committees and between committees and the church as a whole. One suggestion is for the board to set up a task force to look at communication. We have also asked the Worship committee if we could have a member from a committee or program give a short description during worship about what their group is doing.

d. Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu's written report: (as of July 9)

As of June 30th, the church had cash assets of \$202,916.70 in its bank accounts. Reserve and restricted funds totaled \$182,020.89, leaving a balance of \$20,895.81 in unrestricted funds. For the year, UUCOD had total revenues of \$335,153. This amount includes a \$100,000 gift. Excluding that amount, total revenue exceeded projections by more than \$5,000. Total revenues were significantly impacted by the church closure due to the COVID 19 virus. We lost income from plate collections and rentals for nearly a third of the fiscal year.

Total expenses of \$297,298 were only slightly higher than the final approved expense budget of \$295,504. Almost 25% of total expenses are for purchase and installation of our solar panels which will result in long term savings for the church. Excluding the solar expense, total expenses were \$224,518 which is \$5,986 below projected expenses. The net expenses include \$11,600 in costs for repaving the parking lot and completing the flooring installation in the foyer so we are continuing to invest in maintaining our property.

The congregation approved a FY2020-21 revenue budget in the amount of \$222,354 but the Board is currently projecting revenues of only \$184,195; a decrease of \$38,159. The approved expense budget of \$221,410 was reduced to \$197,646; a decrease of \$23,764. This results in deficit spending for the year of \$11,395 which will be funded from reserves. We have received requests for additional funding for new initiatives which will be considered by the Board.

This will be a challenging fiscal year and we will undoubtedly need to rely upon some of our restricted funds. The good news is that we have the funds to do so.

e. Director at Large Bob Rancourt's written report:

Summary

- Newly elected Director at Large attends this meeting and submits this report for the first time in official capacity
- Church remains closed to the public due to the Coronavirus Pandemic
 - Summertime generally is slow
- Virtual services continue
 - This Director participated in one virtual service this month
- Committees continue to meet and act
 - This Director participated in two committee meetings and has another one scheduled this month
- This Director directly participates in the Streaming Services and Copyright Committee, the UUCOD Choir, and the Worship Committee
- Updates provided within

Monthly Director at Large Report

This Director is newly elected and attends this meeting for the first time as a Director at Large on the UUCOD Board of Directors. Although the Church remains closed to the public due to the

Coronavirus Pandemic and summertime generally is slow in the desert, Committees, members, and friends, continue to communicate, meet, and act, and, importantly, virtual services continue. This Director serves as a member of the Streaming Services and Copyright Committee, the UUCOD Choir, and the Worship Committee.

Streaming Services and Copyright Committee

- Meeting, Friday, July 3, 2020

The Committee is working on a draft online worship services and copyrighted materials use policy for the Board's consideration. I prepared and submitted to the Committee an analysis on the Fair Use legal doctrine. The proposed policy still is circulating, and the Committee plans to submit it to the Board soon.

UUCOD Choir

- Meeting, July 15, rescheduled for July 22, 2020

The Choir is meeting but is on hiatus. The Choir is working on presenting its current virtual version of *Spirit of Life* via Zoom, and it is considering production of a virtual version of *Spirit of Life* sung in the Spanish language. The Choir is also accepting suggestions and ideas for its possible virtual production of additional hymns and songs.

Worship Committee

- Meeting, Monday, July 13, 2020
- Meeting, Wednesday, July 15, 2020

The Worship Committee regularly communicates via e-mail. All summer virtual services have been assigned and scheduled. Given that the Committee presently has only three individuals who serve as virtual worship associates on a rotational basis, the Committee welcomed two additional individuals who are willing to serve and are attending production meetings as an orientation. This Director served as Worship Associate for the July 19, 2020, virtual service, participating in above production meetings.

f. Director at Large Mack Roger's written report:

As an active Social Justice committee member, this last month we conducted the phone bank for Texans (an attempt to abate voter suppression there) and UUCOD made _____ phone calls altogether. Next, we are formulating a postcard mailer and will organize another UU the Vote event on Zoom for this. Our focus is on UU the Vote, but will shift to Climate Change after the November election.

I also coordinated the July Share the Plate for Los Medicos Voladores.

I have taken over the "Board thank you notes" from Carol LaVoie while we are separated during the Covid virus. At the board meeting we will decide who needs to be thanked and for what activity they did to earn our accolades.

g. Minister Reverend Barbara Fast's written report:

<on vacation>

Written Reports of Committee Chairs:

a. Facilities Committee Chair Rod Belshee's written report:

Rooftop Solar

SolarGem completed their Engineering and submitted plans to IID for approval, with an on-site review scheduled for Thursday.

Custodial

Jane reduced the M&M Cleaning schedule by half, due to both reduced need and to cut expenses.

Misters

To create a place where congregants could meet safely in small groups, we investigated installing misters on the patio. The cost would be about \$7,500 to provide safe space for up to ten people. The Covid-19 Response Team (a subset of the Board) decided not to pursue it at this time, given the financial uncertainty and other demands, and that the installation would occur after the heat of summer has peaked.

Sunday Service

On last Sunday, we including automatic captions with the sermon, and it was well received. We refined the technology and process to improve the quality for next Sunday, and are now training volunteers to operationalize the process.

We still lack a backup for Michael on OBS programming. We are in conversation with the Digital Arts Technology Academy at nearby Cathedral City High School about a possible long-term relationship with their curriculum and students, perhaps as interns.

Sunday Service - Future

Rod is putting together an assessment of what it will take to continue live streaming when we resume services in-person, and to add large screens in the sanctuary.

Rob DuWors is leading the process of determining our desires, and Rod will lead defining the technology and operations. Initially we are working with a small group including Worship and the Production Teams, and as it takes form we will socialize and widen the circle. In particular, of course we will want Rev B to weigh in her desires when she returns from vacation.

Handyperson Tasks

The rain water leak in the sanctuary has been repaired (installed wall caps) and the water stain cleaned off.