

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert
Board of Directors Regular Meeting, Dec 15, 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, and Director-at-Large Mack Rogers, Director-at-Large Bob Rancourt, and Minister Reverend Barbara Fast.

BOD Absent: <none>

Congregational Members by Zoom Meeting:

Fred Bloss (during Google Drive discussion)

Hiroshi Yamaguchi (during Covid protocol discussion)

Business Between Board Meetings:

1. Special Business Meeting:

On December 13 the Congregation met for a Special Business Meeting with one agenda item, the AV Proposal for Streaming and sanctuary screens. 52 members attended (plus a few Friends). The Congregation approved a motion to authorize the Board to spend up to \$40,000 for the AV Proposal by a vote of 61 yes, 3 no (combined results of Voting Buddy and absentee ballots).

Meeting minutes:

1. Opening and Chalice Lighting:

Jane called the regular Board Meeting to order at 5:00 pm PST by Zoom Meeting and shared a reading from Ben Soule from the Worship Web.

2. Check-in:

3. Approval of the Minutes:

The Board approved a motion to accept the minutes as written for the November 17, 2020 regular meeting of the Board.

The Board approved a motion to accept the minutes as written for the December 13, 2020 Special Business Meeting of the Board.

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

5. Voices of the Congregation:

<none>

6. Reports:

a. President Jane Zaun:

Jane submitted a written report. In the meeting, there was no further discussion.

b. 1st Vice President Carol Lavoie:

Carol submitted a written report. In the meeting, she briefly summarized the Pledge Drive kick-off.

Carol clarified that Build Your Own Theology 2 is a second session, available to anyone who has completed the first session, regardless of where and when.

c. 2nd Vice President Linda Savard:

Linda submitted a written report. In the meeting, there was no further discussion.

d. Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu:

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

Discussion included updating the Working Budget forecast, which may now show no projected deficit.

Finance is busily working on the Pledge Drive, letter is ready, Stewards are ready. Discussion reinforced that the Pledge Drive is an opportunity to sustain community, so hopefully conducting the Pledge Drive electronically does not reduce this. Discussion included communication details and timing.

e. Director-at-Large Mack Rogers:

Mack reviewed specific goals from the Social Justice Committee which have been expanded to include elements from the Strategic Goals.

f. Director-at-Large Bob Rancourt:

<no report submitted due to illness>

g. Minister Reverend Barbara Fast:

Reverend Barbara submitted a written report.

h. Assistant Minister Reverend Ian Riddell: *(attends quarterly: Nov, Feb, May, Aug)*

Rev Ian submitted a written report.

7. Old Business:

a. Attitude of Gratitude, Mack

- Gene Kain – Gratitude for donating his beautiful statues to UUCOD
- Evelyn Kain – Gratitude for starting and continuing the Zoom Art Class
- Glenn Yamaguchi, Diana Leslie, Steve Kerr – Gratitude for researching and formulating our Covid Protocols
- Jack Fitzsimmons – for his auction graphics displayed in the newsletters and zoom live auction
- Peter Mathews – Auctioneer Extraordinaire
- Glenn Yamaguchi – Auction bid tabulator
- Barbara Storms – Auction Assistant Extraordinaire--Helped solicit items to bid, proofread and put together the catalog, entered winning bids in the computer and more.
- Fran Hoag – Tech advisor for the live auction
- Rob DuWors – "Spotter" during the live auction
- Walter Gendell – "Spotter" during the live auction
- Mel Wilkinson – Assisting in Silent Auction giving out directories and cookies as folks left the building

b. Pledge Drive Kick-off Activity expense

The expense for the Pledge Drive Kick-off activity is covered in the existing budget.

c. Debrief AV Congregational Business Meeting

The December 13 meeting was well run, and the vote authorized the Board to spend up to \$40,000.

More contributions were offered during the meeting, so that as of today we have \$18,617.05 current balance in contributions.

d. January Church Council

The Church Council has been rescheduled Jan 23, 2:00-4:00pm. Linda, Carol and Jane will determine the agenda. It will include an opportunity for Committees to present alignment with Strategic Goals. Other suggestions (TBD) include introduce Google Drive, ask each Committee to have a point person in charge of communication, start revising the vision, provide an update on transforming the Nominating process into Leadership Development.

8. New Business

a. COVID Protocols exception approvals, Hiroshi Yamaguchi

Lifespan Growth Tai Chi class (outdoors) protocols were approved as written. The Instructor will be the Safety Monitor.

Care Team Holiday Project (outdoors) protocols were approved as discussed. None of the bakers or recipients will leave their car. Only the two organizers plus one person assisting with the project will be outside of their cars with items picked up from or deposited in the trunks of cars. Delivery of cookies will be contact-less as well.

b. Lifespan Growth Class – Instructor Compensation, Carol

The fee was discussed for Lauren Nile's class Race and Racism: Going to the Core, serving up to 15 people. Motion approved to pay \$500 plus Dana.

c. Covenant between the Board and MDIB

Jane reminded the Board of our charge to the Ministry of Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging developed at the Board retreat in September: there should be a covenant between the Board and the Ministry on Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging. Following discussion where Board members emphasized the importance of this covenant, there was a suggestion that a facilitator from the Pacific Western Region of the UUA would be very helpful. Jane will contact our PWR representative to organize a time for the combined groups to work through this process.

The Treasurer reported the Finance Committee's recommendation to the Board for a \$3000 budget for MDIB for the remainder of this year to provide for consultants, training, scholarships, BIOPOC scholarships to GA, to establish a library, or as seed money for grants. The Board moved to approve the Finance Committee's recommendation.

d. Google Drive and Google Docs, Fred Bloss

Fred presented a proposal for use of Google Drive and Google Docs, The Board approved by consensus to gradually move to Google Docs, starting with the groups most interested.

9. Extinguish Chalice and Adjournment

Jane adjourned the meeting at 6:50pm.

10. The Board met in Executive Session

Respectfully Submitted,

Rod Belshee

January 19 , 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 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 written report
- h) Assistant Minister Reverend Ian W. Riddell's written report

Written reports of Committee Chairs

- a) Facilities Committees

a. President Jane Zaun's written report:

Assisted with planning and preparation for the AV Special Congregational Business meeting on 12/13.

Met with Glenn Yamaguchi to review his Pacific Western Region (PWR) 2019 Fall Leadership Development Experience and the recommendation that Nominating Committees include leadership development.

Meeting pending on 12/20/20 between Nominating Committee, Glenn Yamaguchi, and myself to discuss the recommendation of the PWR.

Met with 4 Board members who completed the PWR Board Development sessions; we discussed how we can best utilize the information from the sessions.

Participated in Meeting of Ministry of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging on December 8th.

Met with the Stewardship Committee in their December meeting.

Participated in an interim Communication planning group.

Assisting with a Care Team representative in planning for their Holiday Project

Meeting with COVID19 Team weekly.

Supervised our Administrator Weekly in developing and distributing the Newsletters and other communication.

Member of a Chalice Circle.

Participating in a Study Group for Widening the Circle of Concern.

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

Life Span Spiritual Growth Committee

Fall 2020 recap:

- 4 classes requiring pre-registration: History of UUCOD, Diversity 101, Poetry & Build Your Own Theology 1
- 80 people registered for the 4 offerings (52 different individuals)
- 2 additional on-going 'drop in' offerings: Meditation with RB & Coffee and Conversation with Peter.
- These 'drop ins' vary in attendance. Averaging 8 a week per class.

Winter/Spring 2021 offerings:

- Race & Racism: Going to the Core taught by Lauren Nile (pending approval by board of \$500 fee). Dana will also be requested.
- Perfectionism: Taught by Rev. Ian
- Thoreau & Spirituality: Taught by Peter Mathews
- Build Your Own Theology 2: (back by popular demand) taught by RB
- Poetry II: (again, back by popular demand) taught by Peter Mathews
- Tai Chi: In person on labyrinth with Covid precautions taught by Joy Medeiros (pending board approval). Limited to 5-8 people.
- Continuation of Meditation with RB & Coffee with Peter

Slate of offerings to go out before Christmas.

Discussion at next LSG meeting on a budget request.

Pledge Drive Kick Off – Zoom Bingo Bash

Last Sat. in Jan from 6-8:00. Bingo champ will be 'crowned'.

Requesting \$60 for expenses: Bingo kit, cards, markers and select mailings.

Peter Mathews will be Bingo Caller.

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

Stewardship Committee – Met Dec. 1, 2020

Highlights:

- Reviewed Pledge Kick-off activity

- Discussed possible game nights
- Discussed art project using the Congregational Stars from upcoming Sunday Service
- Discussed contacting new members from the last induction
- Discussed how to reach people who want to be more involved but don't know the process for getting involved or what is available to them.
- Discussed our role within the church and whether we should talk with the board about becoming a standing committee. The consensus was that we remain as we were established.

Membership Committee

Highlights from 12/8/2020 meeting that I attended:

- A new member joined the team
- Jan. 10th membership will come to second half of Sunday Together to share about the committee
- New member classes will be held in January with an induction ceremony in mid- February
- Maps of where congregants live are being updated

Care Team

- Discussed how our phone calls are going and any people who may need follow-up calls
- Participated in worship service with other care team members
- Discussed what kind of training we would like

Additional

- Attended weekly Covid-19 response team meetings.
- Met with board members to debrief PWR Board Development training
- Met with interim communication procedure team.
- Member of a "Widening the Circle of Concern" study group.
- Participating in Beloved Conversations through Meadville Lombard Theological School.
- Continuing with Chalice Circle involvement
- Attended Congregational meeting regarding the AV proposal

d. Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu written report (December 5):

As of November 30th, the church held cash assets of \$254,672.37 in its bank accounts. Reserve and restricted funds totaled \$165,072.72, leaving a balance of \$89,589.65 in unrestricted funds. Unrestricted funds increased \$26,415.31 from October's month-end; largely as a result of auction proceeds and sale of a donated vehicle.

The auction's final gross revenues are projected to be \$20,483 and are nearly double budget projections. We also netted \$3,425 on the sale of a donated vehicle and we received \$5,572 in donations to the Audio-Visual Fund. We collected \$800 in donations for gift cards for the clients at SafeHouse of the Desert and \$877 for gift cards for the Migrant Education Center's toy drive. With reserve funds from last year's holiday drive, we were able to provide the Migrant Education Center with gift cards totaling

\$1,250 for toys. There were no exceptional expenses for the month.

The Finance Committee has nearly completed planning for next year's pledge drive. Stewards and speakers have been identified and the pledge package is nearly done. The pledge drive commences on January 31, 2021 and will end on March 14 with a pledge drive celebration.

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

<none submitted due to illness>

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

Attitude of Gratitude: Notecards sent (from "entire board")

- Gene Kain--Gratitude for donating his beautiful statues to UUCOD
- Evelyn Kain--Gratitude for starting and continuing the Zoom Art Class
- Glenn Yamaguchi, Diana Leslie, Steve Kerr--Gratitude for researching and formulating our Covid Protocols
- Jack Fitzsimmons--for his auction graphics displayed in the newsletters and zoom live auction
- Peter Mathews--Auctioneer Extraordinaire
- Glenn Yamaguchi--Auction bid tabulator
- Barbara Storms-- Auction Assistant Extraordinaire--Helped solicit items to bid, proofread and put together the catalog, entered winning bids in the computer and more.
- Fran Hoag--Tech advisor for the live auction
- Rob duWors--"Spotter" during the live auction
- Walter Gendell--"Spotter" during the live auction
- Mel Wilkinson--Assisting in Silent Auction giving out directories and cookies as folks left the building

Social Justice Committee:

This Sunday, 12/20/2020, will be another share the plate Sunday, featuring Chris Eager, who will introduce Well of the Desert and how they work to solve food insecurity. We have the entire calendar for next year slotted with organizations for future share the plate Sundays.

Denise needs a co-chair, as she feels like she is doing too much (and with Covid symptoms still hanging on, it makes sense). I have not volunteered and feel bad about not stepping forward, but I have taken on other things lately and I'm afraid of taking on too much.

We have spent an extensive time on elections and still working. While it was decided that we would not do phone banking for Georgia Senate runoffs, many of us will be receiving postcard packets and will be sending those postcards out this week.

Next month we will start our work for environmental justice and climate change. UUA would like for this to be the organization's primary focus in 2021. We began to discuss ideas around improving the Salton Sea, being aware of local businesses that put invisible methane into the atmosphere, and utilizing the wonderful educational series of films on climate change from Pacific Power and Light. It is my job to contact them and see how we can all help each other.

Follow up: I got the prices for magnetic signs (for car doors) and a 2' by 3' is \$24.95 at Staples, and \$19.95 at Paper Press online. Jane and Denise and I had a Zoom meeting and I was supposed to find the cost.

Denise has given me the document of Smart Goals for Social Justice Committee that coincides with UUCOD Smart Goals (Congregational Care and Engagement, and Diversity and Inclusion). [Here it is:](#)

Social Justice Goals as they Relate to UUCOD Strategic Goals

UUCOD Church Council

October 3, 2020

Congregational Care and Engagement

- i) Our Congregation continues to care for and take care of each other and those in need in the Coachella Valley.
- j) Our Congregation continues to understand that we think of them as partners. Together we co-create meaningful short & long-term actions based on what is seen happening to those marginalized within the greater Coachella Valley.
- k) Our Congregation continues to participate in actions to the best of their individual abilities from a spiritual level that is informed by our seven principles.

Smart Goal: When able to do so on Share the Plate Sundays, Rev. Barbara & Rev. Ian will align the Worship Theme with the social justice issues of the recipient that has been voted on by the Congregation.

Diversity and Inclusion – Board Representative

- The marginalized people in the communities we work with understand that they can rely on us to assist in the ways they need us to. We are not there out of a 'savior complex' or to take over. Rather, we are mutually tied to one another.
- We create mutually beneficial relationships with other Social Justice groups that empower all concerned.

Smart Goal: Include a question on the Share the Plate nomination form that asks about service to people who are members of marginalized populations in the Coachella Valley community.

Does your nonprofit organization advocate for and serve under-served populations? List: Black, Indigenous Persons of Color, Hispanic, LGBTQ, Women, Veterans, Immigrants, Low-Income, Seniors, Homeless, Students, Persons with Disabilities

Smart Goal: Our UUCOD congregation will choose more recipients that serve members of marginalized communities per goals in the UUA Widening the Circle report.

Men's First Friday Breakfast

The virtual breakfast meeting on Dec 4th never happened. I stayed on the Zoom call for over half an hour, and no one dropped in this month to chat!

Pledge worker

Chris Eager has got me on the list to solicit the new pledges from members...we will have our first organizational meeting shortly

Chalice Circle

Met with my regular group last month on Zoom, and again on Wednesday, Dec 16th.

g. Minister Reverend Barbara Fast's written report:

Big Gratitude to Jane, Rod and Rob for leadership, achieving almost complete funding and a positive vote for the AV proposal. Big Gratitude to every member of this Board and so many here at UUCOD who devote themselves to the Stewardship of UUCOD: sustaining the connections that nourish us, building wholeness, justice and kindness within ourselves, our relationships with each other in this congregation and the larger community. Please stay safe and well in the holidays to come.

WORSHIP: We are continuing to bring the Diversity Inclusion and Belonging lens to worship planning so that we can recognize opportunities to amplify and diversify voices/ content of the worship services. Gratitude for all the time and precision given by volunteers as they support, trouble shoot and create our on line worship experience. I am concerned that they are all working very hard to achieve the kind of excellence they and UUCOD expects. It is a time consuming endeavor to navigate copyright concerns and clearances, production requirements, even lighting and aesthetics, so that the message is well conveyed. It is a delicate balance to not have the needs of the technical medium interfere with choices of content.

Much of my time since Thanksgiving has been focused on preparing and preaching/ videoing my three December worship services by today's deadline, in order for the tech team behind the scenes to enjoy a holiday too. Rev Ian's Dec 27th service is also uploaded! The complexity of execution and the competency of those working on it is amazing. What a blessing to the congregation.

MUSIC /CHOIR: I am asking the Worship Committee and the Worship Associates as well as Worship leaders to utilize our growing list of songs/hymns already produced.

The Christmas Offertory is to be divided between the UUA Disaster Fund and The UUCOD Music Fund.

December / January Worship

Dec 20 Solstice – Rev Barbara Fast, Bob Rancourt, Betty Bender

- Dec 24 ZOOM Candle Light Christmas Eve 5PM Rev Barbara, Rev Ian, Bryna and Choir. Facebook streaming of prerecorded service to follow. (time TBD)
- Dec 27 Gentle Strength: Kindness and Healing Rev Ian
- Jan 3 Rev Tom Owen Towle and Hiroshi Yamaguchi
- Jan 10 Rev Ian, Worship Associate Sarah Gonzales
- Jan 17 Where Do we Go from Here? The sermon title is an echo of Rev Dr. Martin Luther King's call to greater racial equality from 1967. Rev Barbara and the Diversity, Inclusion and belonging ministry will share with you where we hope to go from here at UUCOD.
- Jan 24 Searching for Walden's Instagram, Worship Leader: Matthew Pargeter-Villarreal, M.Div. Worship Associate: Betty Bender
- Jan 31 Pledge Drive Kick off, Rev Barbara & Sarah Gonzales and Chris Eager

Meetings Attended Worship, Tech, Committee on Ministry

Committee on Ministry Working on a Right Relations policy.

Widening the Circle

Diversity Inclusion Belonging Ministry Group continues to meet and will work on covenanting with the BOD and the congregation around process, mutual promises and goals.

UUA led- Beloved Conversations

Lifespan Spiritual Growth:

Led 6 sessions of Build Your Own Theology.

I will offer three follow up sessions in February.

I lead weekly Meditation session

Pastoral As needed.

Personal

I intend to be "off" Dec 23, and Dec. 25 – Jan 3rd. (5 days of vacation)

Rev Ian will provide pastoral coverage during that time.

g. Minister Reverend Ian W Riddell's written report:

submitted monthly, with attendance quarterly: November, February, May, and August.

Care Team

- The Care Team and I continue to meet on the first Monday of each month.
- We offered the November 22 service “Grateful for Caring”
- At our meeting this month we discuss the results of our congregational phone survey:
 - People want to continue to be involved in the congregation’s virtual offerings
 - Each had a different little story to share
 - Some shared worries about children not being at service
 - Some people are still having trouble getting on on Sunday
 - Most we talked to were doing well
 - Some staying where they are outside of town
 - Some didn't return phone messages
 - By and large people seemed to be connected to services and newsletters
 - The Care Team really enjoyed the opportunity to reach out and talk with so many congregants.
- We discussed upcoming training and learning and will focus on three areas in the coming months:
 - Listening Skills—How do we act as compassionate listeners with open hearts? How do we elicit sharing appropriately? How do we provide a loving presence?
 - Boundaries—How do we maintain proper and appropriate boundaries when providing care? Where are our limits in terms of our expertise and expectations? How do we assess the appropriateness of levels of care? How do we practice self care, so that our priorities are others’ needs?
 - End of Life Decisions—How can we learn and provide ongoing informational opportunities for congregants to make healthy and meaningful end-of-life care decisions? How can we invite these opportunities in meaningful and appropriate ways?
- I am currently exploring these areas and will present a plan early in January. I know that this is later than hoped.

Pastoral Care

- I have continued to meet with individual congregants and couples by phone and Zoom to get to know them and the congregation better and so that they can get to know me.

Worship

- I shared leadership of the November 22 service with the Care Team. The service was really well received by the congregation. I appreciated the opportunity to share multiple voices and a message of caring.
- I will share readings in the Christmas Eve service and will lead the worship service on Sunday, December 27.
- I have been working with Rev. Barbara and the Worship and Tech teams to prepare the services around Christmas ahead of time so that things go smoothly and the Production Team is not overwhelmed or burnt out.
- I worked with members of the congregation to create a montage of stars sharing our hopes and commitments for the year to come. Glenn Yamaguchi will collect these stars after Christmas and use them to create a collective work of art for the congregation.

Study and Prep

- I am continuing the online "Beloved Conversations" class and deeply appreciating the opportunity for reflection and learning. This work includes online videos and reading resources, written self-reflections, partnership with a “critical friend” who can offer support and loving questioning, and regular gathering with a “pod” of fellow participants to debrief and reflect.
- I am reading *So You Want to Talk about Race* by Ijeoma Oluo.

- I am beginning to prepare for my class on Perfectionism for January. I am revisiting old resources (Brene Brown's work) and exploring new resources drawn from communities of color: angel Kyodo Williams and Lama Rod Owens, for example.
- I meet weekly with Rev. Barbara
- After almost 3 months of work with the congregation, I continue to be appreciative of the work we are all doing together. I have been paying attention to my work hours and am finding that, while I am working at or close to my allotted hours, I've been spreading those hours out through the week more than I would like. As I'll be doing other work in my non-UUCOD hours, I'd like to start the new year aiming to do my UUCOD work on Monday, Tuesday, and Sunday. I will, of course, respond to emergency and pastoral matters at other times as needed, but I'm hoping to focus my work at the beginning of the week. I'll find ways to let people know about this focus over the next few weeks.

Written Reports of Committee Chairs:

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

<none submitted>