



**First Unitarian Church of Rochester
Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, January 14, 2020
6:30 pm in Gilbert Hall**

Attendance: Ken Buckle, Tim Farnum, Terri Goldstein, Mary Hammele, Robert Lyubomirsky, Courtney Miller, Paul Minor, Gregory North, Anne Perry, Paul Suwijn, Kyle Williams, Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan.

Guests:

Absent: Scott Stamper

1. Establish a Quorum and Call Meeting to Order at 6:36 pm — Tim Farnum
2. Chalice Lighting, Centering, and Cultural Spiritual Development — Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan
What do we appreciate about Mary – it's her birthday.
3. Consent Agenda.
 - a. Approval of December Board Minutes
 - b. Confirm email approval of November Board MinutesAPPROVED unanimously
4. Routine business
 - a. Cards of gratitude and concern
Shari, Thommy & Sheila for Solstice - Gregory
Shannan for New Member weekend - Mary
Cynthia Looney – Paul S
Get Well card for Robin Suwijn – Anne
(Someone to attend installation in Cortland – Feb 9, 10:30 am)
5. Minister's Report (See Appendix A):
 - a. Senior Minister working too many hours. The Board is concerned about this and is paying attention.
 - b. Ends Interpretations – Rev. Shari has scheduled a meeting with Robert Lyubomirsky and Anne Perry to review the Governing Policies, III. Senior Minister Limitations, Policy F. Financial Condition and interpretations that had been written by Rev. Joel Miller.
 - c. Second minister search and role
 - d. Update on catwalk falls-prevention system in the sanctuary. The catwalk surrounds the sanctuary and has a relatively low barrier between the catwalk and the edge of the sanctuary walls. Following roof work, Virginia Searl recommended preservation and safety work on the

building, organized by 'urgency'. This project was one of her top items. The Board has been supportive of getting this done to ensure the safety of paid and volunteer staff who must access the catwalk.

MOTION: To approve spending \$7,030 for the catwalk falls-prevention system.

Moved: Anne, Second: Paul S

Approved unanimously

6. Board Reports

- a. Treasurer's report — Robert Lyubomirsky
 - i. Year-end plan is looking good (see Rev. Shari's report, Appendix A).
 - ii. Reconciling investments at Alesco with church accounts. Endowment went up ~\$400K in fourth quarter primarily due to Market Index Performance. Total is up over \$1 million in the first half of the current church year (July 1-December 31). As we go into 20-21 budget year, Annie McQuilken, Chair, Investment Committee, will calculate the expected 5% draw from the Income Endowment.
 - iii. Looking forward to having procedures updated prior to upcoming Audit Review.
- b. Congregational Survey Outcomes — Tim Farnum
138 responses. Solid agreement that we are moving forward on our Ends. Highest was End 2 valuing our youth. Highest area of concern is in racial justice – we have a lot of work to do. Wordles for what we are doing well and areas for improvement. Quick summary of comments people made. There will be a formal report, expected for discussion at the February Board meeting. Mary will organize follow up focus groups.
- c. Board Policy Governance Committee – Gregory North
Policy Governance Committee has begun meeting. Members are Gregory North, Scott Stamper, Terri Goldstein and Robert Lyubomirsky. The Governing Policies define the committee structure (one member from each Board year to ensure continuity) and charges the committee to
 - i. systematically review existing policies
 - ii. bring policy changes to the Board that arise from the committee's review or brought to their attention by the senior minister or coming from grievances
 - iii. administer the policies
 - iv. hold congregational forums, preferably at least twice a year.
 - v. in the near term, review Financial policy

7. New business

- a. Would it be possible to move the Board meeting to the second Monday of the month, starting in February or March? It was agreed to start this in March 2020. The reason for this is that Gregory North is the likely nominee for President and his work schedule makes Tuesday meetings problematic.
- b. Audit Committee – Several people have been asked. It is expected that the names will be

- approved by the Board in February.
- c. Grievance Committee appointments – Anticipate having a full slate for Board approval in February.
 - d. Info on Stewardship Team.
8. Share what's been happening around the church.
- a. Central East Region Stewardship conference on January 25th. The church has registered so that staff and others may attend. Anne Perry is on a panel representing First Unitarian (large church) along with representatives from a church with about 180 members and another with about 55 members.
 - b. UU the Vote – Feb 2, 4 pm, follow up meeting. Bob Ames going to Nogales. Who needs help? Ohio, Pennsylvania. Need shared vision. Anne Perry brought to the Board's attention that the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) sent out some questions and answers from Davis Senseman (they/them, she/her), who is providing legal counsel to the UU the Vote team regarding how congregations can engage in bold, effective electoral work fully within your rights and IRS status as 501c3 religious organizations. The full text is in Appendix B. We are anticipating having future informational updates from the UUA.
9. Adjourn at 8:30 pm
10. Closing and Extinguishing the Chalice — Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan
11. Who will bring dinner on February 11 – Robert Lyubomirsky

Appendix A: Senior Minister's Report to the Board

January 14, 2020

Staff/Volunteer Treatment

- Will Hayes is still on medical leave and is doing very well; current staffing will cover most responsibilities with additional temporary staff brought in on an as-needed basis.
- Multiple members of our administrative team are experiencing personal and medical issues that may require time away. Kim and I are not currently concerned about this, although it will slow new initiatives and portfolio shifts on this team.
- Kim Joy will be out of the office for much of February but will work remotely.
- Second minister search is at the online interview stage; we anticipate bringing in three finalists for weekend interviews.

Financial Condition With additional pledges and increased contributions, plus \$6000-10,000 related to start-up costs deferred to next year, the budget gap is within closing distance.

Ends I've been unable to complete these this past month, which likely could have predicted with December events and week of vacation. This will need to be a priority in the coming month.

Staffing and Financial Planning As I look at our ends, think about what it takes to faithfully adhere to the mandate within them, and our current staffing, I would like to add a half time position this coming year. In order to do this, I would frame it as a stretch goal in the stewardship campaign and would like the support of the board.

Membership

- We added 14 new members this past weekend.
- See attached list of members up for removal from membership roster next month. Please reach out to anyone who you might know to see if they would like to remain active members.

Building and Property Maintenance and Capital Improvements

- Hearing loops are awaiting rewiring and cabinetry, but project is advancing.
- SM requests authorization to install falls-prevention system on catwalk. Attached proposal estimates project cost to be \$7030.

Upcoming Study Leave, Vacation/Travel, or Dates to Know

- *This Sunday*: Guest preacher John Buehrens, former UUA President
- *February/March weekends* will be largely occupied by search and stewardship activities
- *February 24-28*: Senior Ministers of Large UU Congregations Study Group
- *Installation of Rev. Shari*: March 15

Appendix B: UU the Vote Q & A

January 14, 2020

Provided by Davis Senseman, legal counsel to #UUTheVote team at the UUA.

Question 1: Can we openly preach, teach, or act about being opposed to war, or supporting the Green New Deal? Have these become partisan issues?

Response: YES YOU CAN. Unless you are persuading people to vote for/against a specific candidate, you are absolutely allowed to take a definitive stance on issues, including issues regarding actions of the current administration. Opposition to war, combating climate change, resisting oppression in all forms—these are foundational UU beliefs. They can and should be at the center of sermons and congregational work.

Question 2: Can we partner with an organization if they are not a 501(c)3?

Response: YES YOU CAN. Congregations can partner with c(4) organizations or unions to carry out charitable, nonpartisan activities consistent with the church's 501(c)3 status and mission. For UU congregations, that includes activities advocating for foundational UU beliefs.

Question 3: Can Individuals from the congregation (especially the minister) publicly endorse candidates?

Response: YES, THEY CAN. So long as the individual is not speaking at an official church function, in an official church publication, or otherwise using the church's assets, and does not claim to speak as a representative of the church, they are free to endorse and speak publicly on behalf of any candidate.

Question 4: Can we ever host partisan activities in the congregation?

Response: YES YOU CAN, as long as the event is consistent with pre-existing space use policies (i.e. - you don't charge for space use and aren't charging the folks holding the partisan event, or you only allow groups invited by a member to use the building). Furthermore, your policies can include a requirement that any group using the space hold similar values to UU principles to avoid having to host groups whose partisan activities are contrary to UU beliefs.