



First Unitarian Church of Rochester
Board of Trustees Meeting
Monday, April 11, 2022
6:30 pm Via Zoom

Attendance: Ken Buckle, Barbara Gawinski, Jon Horne, Lynn Kinsman, Robert Lyubomirsky, Courtney Miller, Gregory North, Anne Perry, Cathy Reda-Cheplowitz, EJ Santos, Kyle Williams, Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan.

Guests:

Absent: Paul Suwijn

1. Establish a Quorum and Call Meeting to Order at 6:32 pm — Gregory North
2. Chalice lighting – Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan
Centering Reading by Cathy Reda-Cheplowitz
“Earth Day Prayer: In the Spirit of Indigenous Traditions”
By Vern Barnet
3. Consent Agenda [*Note: consent agenda includes items that are distributed before the Board meeting and are voted on without discussion. Any Board member can request that an item be removed so that it can be discussed.*]
 - o March 14, 2022, Board minutesApproved
4. Proposed Bylaws Update

MOTION: To add language to bylaws Section 7.1.B. Leadership Nominating Committee to clarify the number and terms of open board of trustees positions and to Section 6.5. Clerk to clarify the Clerk’s duty to inform the Leadership Nominating Committee of the number and terms of open positions and the number of years each current board member and officer has served.

Moved: Anne J. Perry Second: Cathy Reda-Cheplowitz

Motion tabled so that some additional suggestions can be incorporated.

5. Linkage – Survey Results. Linkage Team: Kyle Williams, Jon Horne and Barbara Gawinski
 - a. Survey is finished. Linkage team is in the beginning of analyzing results and looked initially at answers regarding End 1.
 - b. Have good year over year comparison and some comparisons with 2-year-old survey. This year’s survey is very similar to last year’s.
 - c. 169 respondents, close to last year’s numbers.
 - d. Apart from the Ends monitoring, we will be presenting the demographics of the respondents.
 - e. Questions pertaining to End 1

- i. The team share a graphic image of the first 12 questions. Vast majority were Agree or Strongly Agree.
- ii. Very small numbers disagree or strongly disagree; accompanying narrative comments, if there, would be helpful to understand. The team is in the process of analyzing the narrative responses.
- iii. Does the survey tell us where we want to go? Not enough data to draw conclusions.
- iv. Talents and treasure are welcome – directed at the current church demographics.
- v. Discussion of final question on linking gratitude and generosity. Results inconclusive.

6. Ends Monitoring End 1

a. BOT reflective KEY questions on Measures:

- i. Have we articulated our intent as a Board?
- ii. Have we articulated our boundaries and expectations?
- iii. Have we articulated at what cost do we want to pursue these ends?
- iv. Have we articulated how much conflict can we tolerate on how we pursue them?
- v. Have we made progress in the last two years?

b. Do we have the right measures?

- i. *Currently available information and measures available:* Congregational Survey results and trends in membership, stewardship, RE and worship attendance.
- ii. *Additional Questions/observations:* Are we satisfied that we're doing better than other churches? We have some data and some knowledge but it's hard to know what's progress made and what are we striving toward?
- iii. *Additional Questions/Discussions:*
 - 1. We looked at anti-racism a year ago. Have we captured information related to that? The anti-racism advisory team has continued to meet and they don't think we've made progress.
 - 2. We've looked at our demographics versus surrounding town school districts and we are not anywhere near on racial diversity. This was not a measure adopted by the Board last year but was open for future consideration.
 - 3. We would like to be making more progress in racial and multicultural inclusion. We did achieve Welcoming Congregation status (LGBTQIA+). It might be helpful for the UUA to have something like the Welcoming Congregation program related to racial and multicultural inclusion.
 - 4. Our End 1 says "inclusive community" not "diverse community". That puts a focus on our current community members to be inclusive and welcoming to all newcomers.
- iv. Have we sufficiently articulated how we define success for End 1? In a poll of the board members, the answers were either **NO** or "thinking about it". Need to

determine next steps on how to improve END 1 measures.

- c. Rev. Shari
 - i. Membership trends now 675. People who leave mostly just drift away and don't stay in touch.
 - ii. Stewardship trends – some loss in pledge units but not as much as feared.
 - iii. RE registration 60-70% of 2018. Other churches and other UU churches RE programs have dropped as much as 90%
 - iv. Worship attendance – in person 120-170; online 80-110 screens. Loss of about 100 people per Sunday. It may be that folks are coming to church less often.
- d. Decided to devote time in May Board meeting to continuing this conversation.

7. Minister's Report.

MOTION: Approve \$16,200 expenditure from Property Maintenance and Improvement Fund to replace flooring in nursery school classrooms.

Moved: Anne J. Perry Second: EJ Santos

Motion approved

- a. Time to update Rev. Shari's Letter of Agreement. Volunteers: Lynn Kinsman, Barbara Gawinski and Anne Perry to work with Rev. Shari on updating her contract.
- b. Stewardship update. – check the report. There were some technical difficulties for many members trying to complete their pledges. About 100 pledge units pending. Some have drifted away; some have died; some just have not responded. Inflation is a problem both for pledgers and for expenses. With the conversations about becoming a regional church, we're seeing a significant number of generous increases. We do have a fairly diverse economic base, but the largest givers are still significant. Families giving more than \$5K or \$10K have grown. We also have a significant number of pledge waivers, a sign of economic diversity. Average giving in all age groups has gone down.
- c. Music Director. Working on what pay level we can sustain over future years.

8. Treasurer's Report.

- a. *Please note: There is a more extensive report following quarter ends (next Board meeting). This brief report covers February 2022 and Year-to-Date.*
- b. Pattern of giving like prior year, i.e., pledge fulfillment has slowed down in February and March. No action is needed right now but let's keep an eye on the April results. Letters are going out to pledgers who have not fulfilled their pledge. Expenses are under control.
- c. Stock market down in January-March quarter has affected the value of the endowment and common fund.
- d. Confident that we will finish the year well. Thanks especially to staff doing a good job managing expenses.

9. General Updates

- a. Policy Governance – Have scheduled a meeting to discuss Grievance Policy related to members rather than staff. It will be on May 16.
 - b. Thom Snell celebrations planning – party June 5 at 2 pm.
 - c. Annual Meeting Planning – timing immediately following June 5 service, voting methods, appointing tellers, verifying membership on request, A/V and Zoom support, handouts and/or PowerPoint presentations.
 - d. Building for our Future Launch Process still pending.
 - e. Reminder: additional Board meeting April 28 6:30-7:30 pm to discuss budget
10. Board Self-Evaluation. Covered a lot of ground. Appreciate willingness to spend more time on End 1. Good meeting. Shout outs to Kyle for his graph of the End 1 related survey questions. Right topics and action items. Always take view of the future with a backdrop of how far we have come from the past . . . we're becoming a much more effective Board. Appreciate that Robert challenged us to take a step further. Like energy focused on getting ourselves right for the future and internally for the present. Very good discussion of survey results on End 1 . . . need more work on figuring out effectiveness. Need to make sure first year people on the Board participate in orientation. Another efficient meeting. Still thinking about metrics for End 1.
11. Adjourn. With no objection, meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.
12. Closing and Extinguishing the Chalice — Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan