

Minutes – UUSJ Board Meeting – November 22, 2014 Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington

Attendees:

Church/Congregational Members and Alternates

Ed Kringer, member, Accotink UU Church (left at approximately 12:00 PM)
Jim Alcauskas, member, Bull Run UUs Church
Kay Scott, member, Cedar Lane UU Church (left at approximately 12:00 PM)
Liz Echols, member, Davies Memorial UU Church
Steve Buckingham, member, Goodloe Memorial UU Congregation
Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, member, Mount Vernon Unitarian Church
Clarke Herbert, alternate, Mount Vernon Unitarian Church
Frank Corsoro, member, UU Church of Arlington
Nancy Boardman, member, Paint Branch UU Church
Carmelita Carter-Sykes, alternate, Paint Branch UU Church
Sheila Malenski, member, Towson UU Church
Al Carlson, member, UU Church in Reston
Bob Schurter, member, UU Congregation of Columbia
Martha Ades, member, UU Congregation of Fairfax
Ethel Gilbert, member, UU Congregation of Rockville
Catherine Higgins-Bisnett, alternate, UU Congregation of Rockville (absent)
Nancy Sorden, member, Washington Ethical Society (absent)
Patti Absher, alternate, Washington Ethical Society
Ed Butterworth, alternate, UUCF

At-Large Members

John Gubbings, member, at large, Cedar Lane UU Church
Pat Karlsen, member, at large, Cedar Lane UU Church
Lavona Grow, member, at large, UU Church of Arlington

Other Participants

Pete Fontneau, Accotink UU Church
Cyn Snavely, UUSJ Administrator

Welcome, Chalice Lighting, Reading

Call to Order and Introductions - Lavona Grow, Board Chair

Quorum Count - met; 16 Board members were present.

Approval of October 4, 2014 Minutes- Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, Secretary

The minutes were approved with a couple of minor changes.

New Policy: UUSJ has a yearly calendar with the important activities, such as sending out fair share letters, listed on it but we don't review it frequently enough so this year we failed to send out the fair share statements until the beginning of November.

Henceforward in addition to approving minutes we will review the calendar for upcoming activities at each and every Board meeting.

We need to make sure regularly occurring events, such as programs, preparation for the Gala, etc. are on the calendar.

Treasurer's Report - John Gubbings, Treasurer

(Attached October 4, 2014 report)

Everything is well except that we don't have an Executive Director and we are using the monies allocated for that position to pay the consultants we have had recently.

Our biggest challenge is to grow our income so that we can afford more hours of an Executive Director than we have in the past.

Congregational Fair Share follow-up

Both congregational and individual giving has continued to decrease.

Letters were sent out November 6th. Finance committee is asked to review the appropriate dates to send out fair share reminders.

Development and Finance Committees merged. Jim Alcauskas is co-chair for the finance portion of that joint committee and Bob Schurter is the co-chair for the development portion of the combined committee.

Possibly send out two notices to congregations, one in March asking congregations to include and budget for UUSJ and with a record of what they've given to date, and a second notice after July as an actual request.

We need to address how we handle membership renewals. Did we, are we, going to send individual membership renewal requests?

We will do Giving Tuesday next year. Giving Tuesday is the first Tuesday in December and it was created as a response to the commercialization of seasonal giving with "Black Friday" and "Cyber Monday."

Jim Alcauskas spoke of asking Board members to make a financial commitment.

As a result of the governance work done in October we sent out a sample engagement plan for Board members talking about commitments of time, talent and treasure.

Board members should acquaint themselves with how their church funds UUSJ. If it is a special collection they should get on the committee that chooses those collections. If it is a budget line item they should familiarize themselves with their congregation's budgeting process. Al Carlson mentioned that his congregation puts its UUSJ allocation in its budget because it is a member congregation of UUSJ and for that reason they budget their fair share.

All Board members should review the sample engagement plan given to us by Michela Perrone at the governance retreat.

Governance Discussion

After the June 22nd meeting with Steve Schaff we formed a Core Group of Al Carlson, Lavona Grow, Jim Alcauskas, Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, and John Gubbings to look at governance of UUSJ and at by-laws. The Core Group is operating as the expanded Executive Committee.

As an outgrowth of the October meeting with Michela Perrone, we formed three task groups to look at the following areas:

Vision – Members: Al Carlson, Ed Butterworth, Patti Absher

Mission – Members: Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, Bob Schurter, Sheila Malenski

Board Member Duties — Members: Jim Alcauskas, Nancy Sorden, Frank Corsoro

The existing UUSJ Roles and Responsibilities need to be reviewed and repackaged around legal requirements and other personal obligations of Board members. It will also include a Board member engagement plan. The document may also eventually include the responsibilities of congregations.

Steve Buckingham mentioned that the document should be separated by “personal” and “legal” obligations. One with the legal obligations of the Board members as a whole and the other with the legal obligations of each Board member. This discussion brought up the need to resolve the roles and responsibilities of alternate Board members. When they are standing in for the regular Board member do they then assume any legal obligations of the regular Board member? Or should they always conform to the requirement of a regular Board member?

We also mentioned that a proxy can only be given to a Board member, not to a guest from the same congregation. Can a proxy be given to an alternate?

There is a legal question as to whether alternates are Board members. If they sit in for Board members then it is possible that they should have the same responsibilities, have the same obligations of loyalties, etc., as Board members. Lavona mentioned that we pay insurance for alternates as Trustees.

We also mentioned the need to determine roles for individual members.

Steve explained the difference in the Board and organization structure between the Maryland Legislative Ministry and UUSJ.

We reviewed the draft version of the policies, procedures, and duties manual being prepared by Jim Alcauskas and his task group. This will be useful for all of us but especially for the Executive Director we will eventually hire.

October 19, 2014 Governance Retreat Review

We reviewed personal impressions and remembrances of the October governance meeting. We discussed at length the concept of loyalty that was introduced at the retreat.

We reviewed the discussion at the October governance meeting on what type of board the UUSJ Board is, whether it is a liaison or working board. And whether we need an advisory council in addition to the Board.

Al Carlson distributed a handout with all our various versions of UUSJ Vision and Mission statements and the drafts of a new Vision and Mission. We summarized the elements on Vision as well as Mission taken from the flip charts from the governance meeting. Lavona reviewed the idea of having a values statement.

We then reviewed the current draft of the Mission statements. We began discussing the various ideas contained in them such as whether we serve our immediate region or whether we want to eventually serve nationally. Bob Schurter suggested that with the immediate feedback we'd just received, the Mission task group could meet soon (we met immediately after the meeting) to come up with a provisional Mission statement.

Announcements

The Program Committee announced the briefing on the Congregational Study Action Issue on Escalating Inequality to be held on December 6th.

Lavona spoke of the exciting development of having the UUA turn to UUSJ more to seek our support in programing. The UUA invited her to meet with the African Rights Activists group.

The Washington Ethical Society holds a weekly candlelight vigil of remembrance on their grounds on 16th Street for the Ferguson Missouri shooting

Lavona announced that the Unitarian Universalists Service Committee (UUSC) is letting go of their paid lobbyist effective in December. Steve Buckingham announced that there will be a young adult skills based training program, sponsored by Friends Committee on National Legislation, that combines learning and hands on advocacy opportunities. The first session will be March 14th through the 17th in Washington DC. There will be people from all over the country coming. It is spring lobby weekend and will be done in conjunction with the Friends Committee as well as the Franciscan Network on Climate Change. There will be a limited number of slots available. Steve suggested, at the meeting he attended where this event was announced, that local UU congregations will be happy to help find home hospitality for attendees.

Carmelita mentioned that someone (she was unsure who) was arranging a train trip to Selma in conjunction with the program in March around the 50th anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery march.

Clarke Herbert mentioned a group that will and has taken direct action against the Cove Point gas liquefaction facility including civil disobedience. Lavona suggested taking this to our environmental task force.

Steve Buckingham announced that the usual program, at General Assembly, put on by legislative ministries on how to connect with those ministries, will instead focus on how to connect advocacy groups in an individual's state on environmental issues. The program will feature speakers who've connected with environmental advocacy organizations who will speak on strategies they used, what organization they've connected with, how the process is working in their particular state, to give attendees concrete examples of effective ways to mobilize advocacy. It will also be a great opportunity to show case UUSJ as an organization that can work with people and legislative ministries on the national level.

The Greater Washington Immigration Film Festival was a great success and UUSJ was thanked for its \$500 contribution which enabled the festival to get started. The organizers of the festival are moving to become a legal organization, set up a working board, and perhaps getting their own 501c3 status.

Other

Communications Committee Report

The committee is looking for members and ministers to write entries to go into a commentary blog. At the Salsa conference in August Bill and Lavona both learned that a comprehensive communications strategy is essential for driving potential contributors to your website, to become motivated by your work, to contribute, to join in your work. Having well written thought provoking articles speaking to the issues UUSJ is addressing is vital.

The committee will be sending out an introductory letter and guidelines soon. These letters will initially be aimed towards ministers and will later be sent to social justice chairs at our members congregations to solicit lay participation.

Once we get a respectable level of participation we will switch from a twice a month events only newsletter to an issues driven newsletter once a month but with a separate events only newsletter once a month.

We can use our commentary blog to amplify ministerial and social justice leaders views on timely issues, such as the Ferguson decision or any decision in the Trayvon Martin case.

The Communications Committee is meeting with a communications consultant Monique Hannis who is developing a communications plan and calendar.

Program Committee Report

The Congregational Study Action Issue Escalating Income Inequality briefing on December 6th at the Washington Ethical Society.

Closing Words and Adjournment

Attachment

UUSJ Treasurer's Report as of October 31, 2014

□□ UUSJ acknowledges the work of Linda Collyer, a CPA who does our accounting, including our monthly financial statements, and files our tax paperwork, on a pro-bono basis. The jobs of the Treasurer, the Executive Committee, and the board would all be much more difficult without Linda's efforts. □□ Our program and fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30. The financial statement used today is dated October 31, and represents one third of our fiscal year. The fair share spreadsheet emailed to you with the meeting materials includes fair share contributions as of the date on it.

Cash on Hand (Current Assets):

□□ **Our cash on hand was \$33,183 on June 30, 2014 at the end of FY2013-2014. □□ At the end of October 2014 our cash on hand totaled \$30,045 (\$3,272 in checking and \$26,773 in money market).**

Current Situation vs. Budget Projections:

□□ The 2014-15 budget set income and expenses at a level of \$35,634, the same as the actual for the previous year. Income from congregations and new members was not projected to be substantially increased since that was done last year and the increase did not materialize. It is intended that changes to the organization and capabilities of UUSJ to be designed and implemented this year will lead to a more effective organization with a budget appropriate for it. **Compared to our budget our income is \$1,783 under, while our expenses are \$4,244 under (\$4,583 budgeted for an Executive Director has not been used to-date).** Note: 1) The budget assumes income and expenses are uniform across each. Nine twelfths (\$5,719) of an annual check from CFC last FY was restricted and then recognized in July 2014 to avoid skewing annual reports – otherwise income to-date would have been below budget. 2) We have \$4,295 in the Collaboration fund. (The Collaboration fund is provided for by the annual Gala.) 3) A new account line is being set up for consultants used in reorganization efforts.

Current Situation vs. the Previous Fiscal Year at this point:

□□ Total Liabilities and Equity (includes collaboration fund) at this point last year totaled \$26,667 versus \$30,485 this year.

Membership Renewal and CFC/UW income from members:

□□ Total individual memberships this year is \$280 as of the date of financials used for this report. This does not include individual contributions to their congregation's Fair Share or individuals contributing through CFC (total of \$6,268 last FY (see note 1 above)).

Fair Share Contributions:

Total Fair Share contributions from congregations as of the date of this report was \$2,707 vs \$6,204 this time last year. Total Fair Share contributions from individuals as of the date of this report was \$7,052 vs \$8,521 this time last year.

Last year \$20,400 was received from congregations. 10 congregations made or exceeded their suggested fair share contributions and another **6 made significant contributions**. Approximately \$19,823 additional was contributed by members to count towards their congregation's Fair share. **Congregations**

may be a rewarding place to quickly find funds to support more UUSJ Executive hours if they are given a compelling reason. Long term, involving more UUs will mean more dues paying members.

Submitted by John Gubbings, UUSJ Treasurer, on November 22, 2014