

**UUSJ Board Meeting Minutes**  
for April 4, 2015  
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

## **Those Present, Those Absent and Guests**

Bruce Griffin, member, Accotink UU Church  
Ed Kringer, alternate, Accotink UU Church (absent)  
Jim Alcauskas, member, Bull Run UU Church  
Kay Scott, member, Cedar Lane UU Church  
Liz Echols, member, Davies Memorial UU Church  
Steve Buckingham, member, Goodloe Memorial UU Congregation (absent)  
Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, member, Mount Vernon Unitarian Church  
Clarke Herbert, alternate, Mount Vernon Unitarian Church (absent)  
Nancy Boardman, member, Paint Branch UU Church  
Carmelita Carter-Sykes, alternate, Paint Branch UU Church  
Marti Mackenzie, alternate, Towson UU Church  
Al Carlson, member, UU Church in Reston  
Bob Schurter, member, UU Congregation of Columbia  
Martha Ades, member, UU Congregation of Fairfax  
Ed Butterworth, alternate, UU Congregation of Fairfax  
Ethel Gilbert, member, UU Congregation of Rockville (absent, Nancy Sorden holds proxy)  
Catherine Higgins-Bisnett, alternate, UU Congregation of Rockville (absent)  
Nancy Sorden, member, Washington Ethical Society  
Patti Absher, alternate, Washington Ethical Society (absent)

### 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

### Guests, Staff, Committee Leaders

Pete Fontneau, Governance Task Group Leader  
Cyn Snavelly, Administrator  
Armele Vilceus, guest, All Souls  
Liz Alcauskas, guest, Bull Run UU Church  
Susan Westenbarger, guest, UU Church of Silver Spring

## **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Opening remarks were given by Rev. Greg Stewart, Minister of Lifespan Religious Education, Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church.

**UUSJ Board Meeting Minutes**  
for April 4, 2015  
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

## **Call to Order and Introductions**

Lavona Grow, Board Chair

## **Approval of November 23, 2014 Board Minutes**

Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, Secretary

## **UUSJ Activity Calendar**

Not reviewed.

## **Quorum**

Out of a total of 23 board members and alternates 17 were present. One member held a proxy for one of those absent. Two congregations had both their board member and alternate present. With 14 board members present and one proxy out of a total of 13 congregational board members and 3 at large board members a quorum was met. Only one member congregation was not represented. Also present were a UUSJ task force leader, a staff member and 2 guests. Lavona reported that the Denominational Affairs Committee at All Souls Church, Unitarian recently contacted her about participation in UUSJ and we had Armele Vilceus from All Souls join us as a guest and observer. Susan Westenbarger of UU Silver Spring was also present as a guest. Neither All Souls nor Silver Spring is currently an active UUSJ member, we would welcome their future participation.

## **Treasurer's Report**

John Gubbings, Treasurer, presented his report which covered the period through the end of February. His report is attached.

### **Highlights:**

Our current expenses are below that budgeted primarily because the money budgeted for an Executive Director is not being spent because that position is vacant.

We had an unbudgeted item for consulting services.

Current fiscal situation vs. previous fiscal year at same point is disappointing.

The special appeal to board members at the November board meeting brought in \$830 and the year-end appeal brought in \$1340.

The new direction for UUSJ will require more hours for an Executive Director, meaning that we will need to grow our income from congregations, individual and other sources.

**UUSJ Board Meeting Minutes**  
for April 4, 2015  
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

John praised Linda Collyer, a licensed Certified Public Accountant who volunteers her time, for providing us monthly accounting reports and services. Lavona - indicated that we need to consider succession planning because Linda has been doing the job pro-bono for many years. We should be proactive in planning for a time when Linda steps away from being the UUSJ accountant.

Lavona spoke of the grant we received from the Fund for Unitarian Universalist Social Responsibility for hiring a consultant to help us develop the plan for implementing our strategic vision. The grant was \$5000. The Fund for Unitarian Universalist Social Responsibility challenged us to raise at least an additional \$5000 which they then agree to match up to \$5000. They suggested that we use Faithify.org to raise the money.

Lavona mentioned that there was a funder in Maryland who gave \$8000 toward buses to the September 21, 2014 People's Climate March in New York City. UUSJ and Interfaith Power and Light worked on this project. \$4,000 was used on the bus costs, \$3000 went to Interfaith Power and Light for their work on the project and \$1000 to UUSJ.

### **Fair Share**

Lavona explained that the Fair Share amount suggested from each congregation is based on an assessment of \$4.75/member with the number of members being taken from that reported to the UUA by March of each year. The Fair Share report reflects 2014 congregational member counts from the UUA.

Fair share contributions for the current fiscal year are below our budget projections.

It was announced that the UU Church of Silver Spring will hold a special collection for UUSJ.

Contributions made via C.F.C. (Combined Federal Campaign) that can be attributed to a person in a particular congregation, are credited against that congregation's fair share contribution.

We are considering a proposal from Jim Alcauskas that we separate individual contributions, made directly to UUSJ or made through CFC, from the fair share suggested amounts for their congregation. This proposal was tabled for review and refinement at a future board meeting.

### **Proposed 2015-2016 Budget**

#### **John Gubbings, Treasurer, and Jim Alcauskas, Finance Committee Chair**

A change has been made to the format to show actual for 2014, actual for 2015 (as of 2/28/2014), and the proposed 2016 Budget.

The facilities line item represents an in kind donation of office space at Washington Ethical Society.

**UUSJ Board Meeting Minutes**  
for April 4, 2015  
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

On the report there are several notes pertaining to the proposed 2016 budget. There is a proposal to increase the number of new individual members. The proposed budget includes the following assumptions. 1: That we will obtain the matching grant funds from the Fund for Unitarian Universalist Social Responsibility. 2: That we will hire a part-time Executive Director and 3: that there is some increase for programming. The final note deals with how we are going to spend the grant.

There was a question about the proposed number of hours for the Executive Director. People with whom we have discussed and consulted on personnel matters believe we need to hire a full time Executive Director to carry out the expanded advocacy and outreach work called for in our Strategic Plan. While full time is currently above what UUSJ can consider, the proposed budget assumes a 20 hour per week position.

## **Governance**

Board Covenant – draft – presented by Frank Corsoro. This covenant should be made available to prospective board members. At the meeting we passed the covenant around and each board member read a bullet item.

Serving on the UUSJ Board is a calling to religious leadership and doing this work is a spiritual practice.

The UUSJ Trustees serve together in a covenantal relationship, and we mutually promise to:

- Offer our time, treasures and talents to carry out the mission and vision of UUSJ.
- Make every attempt to attend meetings regularly and arrive on time.
- Be prepared to participate.
- Speak openly, straightforwardly, and authentically in general as well as discuss concerns directly with those we have disagreements with.
- Listen to each other with open minds and hearts. To acknowledge that we may not always agree with the group decisions, we support and participate in decision-making processes that are collaborative and democratic.
- Work collaboratively and build bonds of mutual trust.
- Encourage and empower each other, and treat each other with genuine respect and honesty.
- Respect and honor individual and cultural differences.
- Keep in mind the effects of our social justice work on present and future stakeholders.
- Follow the written policies and procedures of the Board, as well as remain open to changing them.

**UUSJ Board Meeting Minutes**  
for April 4, 2015  
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

- Read emails/correspondence in a timely manner.
- Participate on at least one committee or task force.
- Gather and share information and insights with fellow Board members.
- Reach out to individuals and groups to support and promote the UUSJ program

## **Presentation of Governance Task Force report – Pete Fontneau**

Pete reported that based on a board meeting on 3/21 and discussions through the fall of 2014, he agreed with Lavona and Sally Petersen (a non-profit board expert) that we are not ready to restructure UUSJ yet. The restructuring we need is going to 'take years' and we are going to have to test and invent as we go. The following information and questions were sent to the Board in advance for consideration.

There are too many issues in flux - we seem to have a basically liaison-type board now; how do we get more commitment?

We need to describe and 'socialize' what it is we are doing - mission/vision work.

We need to understand how we are to do the work - job of an executive director, committed people doing advocacy.

We need to figure out how this work is to be funded - support from neither congregations nor individuals seems sufficient for FY 16 plans.

How do we 'capitalize' on other people's money?

We can start 'socializing change' with a discussion on changes in board structure as we transition to emphasizing advocacy and action with policy makers.

We can start 'socializing change' with a discussion of using strengths of congregations and/or individual members in advocacy work and what that might mean to 'levels of commitment', i.e., board member roles and responsibilities.

The agenda issues and 'questions' will help us get there. As we move towards creating an Implementation Plan (purpose of the grant), consider the following:

— How do we transform our work from congregation-centered to emphasize advocacy and action with policymakers?

— Is our greatest strength in the congregations we represent or in our individual membership? How do we maximize each of these in our advocacy work?

— How do these decisions change the steps we need to take, and our timeline, in our implementation plan?

**UUSJ Board Meeting Minutes**  
for April 4, 2015  
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

Much as Pete would like to bring forth a revised set of documents 'immediately', changing bylaws before 'socialization of concepts' is going to be a paper exercise only.

We'll also have to covenant to keep working with the messiness and uncertainty that not having 'firm rules' brings to 'doing something new'. We can document 'what works' and 'what seems like a good idea' as we go.

Jim – we need to build a strong individual membership base but maintain connections with our congregations. We need to find a way to better connect with our member congregation ministers.

Al – the congregation may not be interested in advocacy as part of their work but there may be individuals within the congregation who would be. How would we reach out to those people?

Pat – work with Ministers to get out/identify folks who would help identify those people.

Shelia – one on one discussion – face to face is important. How do we get more individual members.

Cyn – ministers, and perhaps others, enjoy attending activities organized by others. Say on June 20<sup>th</sup> we are going to the Hill to advocate on “X”, rather than ask if people want to come, tell them we organized it and that we will provide the talking points.

## **Communications Report**

### **Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson**

A report was presented by the Communications Chair. Also several copies of the communications calendar and communication master plan, developed by our communications consultant, was handed out at the meeting. The communications report, the calendar and master plan were sent out to the Board on the board Salsa listserv.

## **Report on Vision and Mission Statements**

The proposed vision and mission statements were circulated in a handout for consideration. The proposed Vision statement, given by Ed Butterworth, member of the Vision Statement Task Group, was revised to remove “for all”. The Vision statement was accepted. It is, “We envision a peaceful, just and environmentally sustainable world.” More work will be done on the mission statement. Board members offered suggestions.

Time ran out to discuss the mission statement. Board members were requested to provide their written comments, which were then given to Bob Schurter, chair of the Mission Statement Task Group, for later consideration.

**UUSJ Board Meeting Minutes**  
for April 4, 2015  
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

## **Actions to be taken by whom and by when**

Resend document on roles and responsibilities to all Board members – Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson or Cyn Snavelly.

Follow-up: Lavona will follow up with All Souls, Unitarian and UU Silver Spring on their future involvement.

Jim has to resubmit a revised budget reflecting the revised format.

Bob Schurter will send out the revised Mission Statement before the next Board Meeting.

## **Date, time, and place of next meeting**

May 16<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. at either the UU Congregation of Rockville or the UU Church of Arlington for annual meeting – part business, part party.

May 8, 2015

UUSJ Treasurer's Report as of February 28, 2015, reflecting two thirds of FY 2014-2015

### **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 February 28, 2015 our cash on hand totaled \$37,234 (\$10,458 in checking and \$26,776 in money market).

### **Current Situation vs. Budget Projections:**

- The 2014-15 budget set income and expenses at a level of \$35,634, close to 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 being designed and implemented will lead to a more effective organization in the future with a budget appropriate for it.

Compared to our budget our income is \$1,701 over (but this includes \$5,000 of grant that was not budgeted), while our expenses are \$7,835 under (\$9,167 budgeted for an Executive Director has not been used to-date and an unbudgeted \$2,500 was used for grant-related consulting services)

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 \$4,146 on the books for the SJ Grant Fund.

## **UUSJ Board Meeting Minutes**

for April 4, 2015

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

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

□□ Total Liabilities and Equity (includes SJ Grant Fund) at this point last year totaled \$29,242 versus \$37,606 this year.

### **Membership Renewal and CFC income from members:**

□□ Total individual memberships this year is \$480 as of the date of financials used for this report, vs \$1,540 same time last year. This does not include individual contributions to their congregation's Fair Share and individuals contributing through CFC (total of \$10,204 this year vs \$13,309 same time last year).

### **Fair Share Contributions:**

Total Fair Share contributions from congregations (includes contributions from churches, individuals **and CFC**) as of the date of the financials was \$18,909 which is 2,815 under budget. Included in this total was income from two special appeals; one to Board members received \$830 and the EOY appeal received \$1,340. Our Fair Share spread sheet has 22 possible member congregations. Nine congregations have met or exceeded their Fair Share. Two more have met more than 75% of their Fair Share. **Long term, the new mission of UUSJ will require more hours of an Executive Director which will require motivating more congregations and individuals to give more, as well as increasing individual membership.**

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.

Submitted by John Gubbings, UUSJ Treasurer, on April 4, 2015