



First Unitarian Church of Rochester
Board of Trustees Meeting
Monday, December 13, 2021
6:00 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, Paul Suwijn, Kyle Williams, Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan.

Guests:

Absent:

1. Establish a Quorum and Call Meeting to Order at 6:35 pm — Gregory North
2. Chalice lighting – Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan
Centering – Barbara Gawinski did a guided meditation.
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 November 15, 2021 Board minutesApproved
4. Building for our Future
 - a. Next steps – The team will meet in early January to begin work.
 - b. Board appointment update – The team has two Board members EJ Santos and Kyle Williams, two congregants appointed by the Board Kyrill Gill and Barbara de Leeuw (with this motion), and two congregants appointed by Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan.

MOTION: To appoint Barbara de Leeuw to the Building for our Future Team.
Moved: Barbara Gawinski Seconded: Cathy Reda-Cheplowitz
Motion passed.
5. Staff Survey Update – Gregory North
 - a. Survey has been completed by all who wished to participate. Results will be reported to the Board at the January meeting.
6. Linkage – Re-engagement Strategy
 - a. Concern that folks have drifted away during the pandemic. ~ 30 RE families not registered; ~ 100 fewer at services (combination of in person and online)
 - b. Board would take responsibility for involvement in a re-engagement process. We should do some reaching out. May be more of a challenge with younger folks and families.
 - i. Identify people who have drifted.
 - ii. Engage with them. Message:

1. We miss you. We'd love to have you back. This is impactful.
 2. What do we need to hear from people? What are the barriers to participation? What do they need?
 3. Not a consumer satisfaction survey! Gather information we need to pursue the future.
 4. What does it mean to be the church of the future?
- c. Board has been missing opportunity to connect with people whom we don't know or don't know well.
 - d. Demographics shifting more toward the older age groups than pre-pandemic.
 - e. We're still doing better than many UU churches.
 - f. When possible, let's host some dinners.
 - g. Barbara Gawinski volunteered to draft a script for outreach calls first to young families who have not signed up for RE. Gregory North will collaborate on this script. A second script for other identified absent members will then be drafted.

7. Linkage – Survey Planning

- a. Timing of the congregational survey does not conflict with calls to congregants.

BREAK

8. Minister's Report.

- a. State of Emergency in Monroe County – COVID. Still Delta but Omicron is coming
- b. As previously pointed out, a website refresh is needed with rebranding and upgrade. A serious problem with the Go Daddy platform has raised the urgency level.
- c. Time to review Policy III. C:

Context: As a congregation, we have a set of policies and best practices to provide for the inclusion of people with a history of sexual offenses in our congregation. Notification of this history is often, but not always, legally mandated, and when we become aware of these circumstances, we activate a protocol that strengthens the safety of our community, and especially our children and other vulnerable persons. Spiritual and community support of people with a history of sexual offenses makes our broader community safer, and limitations are often placed on how a person engages in the congregation as a means of support for that person and safety for others. Alongside this, we recognize that the vast majority of people with a history of sexual offenses are not known by the criminal justice system, and we maintain a high level of safety standards for our children regardless of individual circumstances.

Update: Currently, I am not in compliance with the BOT's limitations on the executive, and our internal operational policies regarding community safety. Relevant portion of this policy:

"The Senior Minister shall not . . .

2. Fail to maintain and enforce procedures to ensure the safety of members, friends, visitors and children while at the church or at church functions which at least include:

- a. Provisions to prevent the sexual abuse or sexual harassment of children, youth and others.”

This notification is **not prompted by an incident** of concern for the safety of our children but having failed to revisit our relevant child safety policies in the last year and having failed to renew any existing agreements with people with a history of sexual offenses, we are out of alignment with best practices and our own operational policies. Members of our child safety response team – Sheila Schuh, Rev. AJ van Tine, Barbara Gawinski, EJ Santos, and Tom Mancarella – will meet in mid-January to review our policies, and Barbara Gawinski and I will draft relevant limited access agreements.

- d. Intern:
 - i. In conjunction with First Universalist, we have been awarded \$7500 from the UUA toward funding joint ministerial internship for the 2022-2023 church year, with Rev. Lane Campbell of First Universalist as supervising minister. It was noted that both Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan and Rev. AJ van Tine are still in the fellowship process with the UU Minister’s Association and, therefore, do not have the credential to supervise an intern. While returning to being a teaching congregation is in line with our Ends, Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan asks that the Board explicitly vote to affirm this choice to seek and host a ministerial intern. The benefits to our congregation lie primarily in having another ministerial voice and presence and it is also an opportunity to support Unitarian Universalism by training future leaders.

MOTION: To accept the \$7,500 award in conjunction with First Universalist toward funding a joint ministerial intern for the 2022-2023 church year.

Moved: Anne J. Perry Second: Kyle Williams

Motion approved.

9. Treasurer’s Report.

Note: Full reports are quarterly (Board meetings in November, February and May). Other reports are highlights.

- a. Balance sheet is in good condition.
- b. Income and Expense – at end of October >\$50K behind in Pledging and Other Income.
 - i. Pledging Income: Office has done a **great job** of looking at engagement and encouraging pledge fulfillment. At November month end, pledge payments have caught up to year over year figures. Keeping an eye on December.
 - ii. Other Income (Contribution, Building Usage Fees, Plate Collection): Good news as well - in November, Other Income is now in line with Full Year expectations due to “settling of all outstanding Building Usage Fees” by a key tenant.

10. Policy Governance Committee.

- a. Date set for first policy governance forum – January 27, 7-8:30 on Zoom. Brief overview of policy governance. Committee is meeting in early January to finalize plans.
- b. Embarking on review of policies looking for any issues that the Board should attend to.

11. The UUA sponsored the COMPASS event that was basically a 2-day conference on Zoom. A couple of Board members attended. The conference focused on the topics of interdependence, referencing Widening the Circle of Concern, movement toward community and de-emphasizing individualism. Article II commission talked about their work to revise the UUA Bylaws Article II that currently has the 7 principles (the 8th principle that our congregation adopted has not been voted on by the UUA) and 6 sources, explained the wide purview of their charter and sought input from the workshop participants. Kudos to the worship leaders.
12. Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan shared that Leadership Nominating Committee member Danette Johnson had died suddenly last week. Board members expressed shock and concern. Cards can be sent to her sons Marshall and Morgan at her address. Paul Suwijn offered to send a card on behalf of the Board.
13. Board Self-Evaluation and Check-In.
Good meeting. Still thinking about how to keep people connected during COVID. Very productive discussion. Crisply run meeting. On task and on time. Lot of content. Liked the centering exercise at the beginning of the meeting. Everyone spoke on re-engagement.
14. Adjourn. With no objection, meeting adjourned at 8:49 pm.

Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan extinguished the chalice with meaningful closing words.