

USG DECEMBER 2014 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT - Dennis Strain, Linda O'Gwynn, Craig Miller, Marina Patrice Nolan, Scott Wolkenburg, Linda Brunn, Judy Rodes, Robert Williford, Ann Schoonmaker

VISITING - Kent Matthies, Gloria Smith, Daniel Gregoire

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MINUTES

No discussion. Minutes approved.

President's report

Discussion postponed.

MET Report

Board questions about the MET report.

When reporting average attendance and total attendance at each service the percentage didn't make sense because it applied to one service and should apply to each service.

Can we get comparison numbers for the previous year or the last 2 years?

Kent highlighted 3 points.

We're working on communicating information about the line items of the financial report. The numbers say that the church is doing well regarding pledges. The report with explanations will be sent quarterly.

Dave Bruton will join the Finance Council. He will assist with communications.

TV screens on the side of the chancel

This has become a big issue because of poor communication between the Board, B & G, and MET. The process of disseminating information was not good. The push to have two screens put up on the Chancel has met with much disagreement. Some of the choir wanted it and some don't. There was lots of lobbying from B&G to install the screens and the process became very frustrating. In the end the upgrade was not discussed fully with all the stake holders. Kent felt that the process was bad. MET should be empowered to have the two groups, B&G and MPIC, come to a consensus. So far they have not been able to.

The new governance system creates a good opportunity for this work to be completed. Kent feels that the Master Plan is on life support in part because governance is not following the Master Plan. Scott feels that MET should be empowered to encourage this process. This issue is a case

study for the new governance system. The Board needs to think about what will be the process on how MET would guide and support committees as they work through the details that would support making a good decision.

Linda Brunn recently visited Ann Arbor church and learned that its Board has two meetings a month. One meeting is formal and the other is informal. Linda proposes that USG try this process because she feels that the Board doesn't do enough during the time it has once a month.

There was discussion on Daniel's title. It was agreed that his title is Assistant Minister.

Discussion on Statement of Conscience for Ferguson and Staten Island.

It was clarified that there is a 'master' signature page and an individual statement that can be signed.

SHORT ITEMS

Budget Schedule is in draft form and needs to be finalized. Changes can be made hopefully sooner rather than later.

The big issue is deficits. The Board needs to develop a plan about the level of deficit and what is the limit of it. The Board also needs to figure out what it's going to say about the deficit. There needs to be conversation with MET about limits and guidelines.

find that email and incorporate in the minutes.

LOAN TO REINVESTMENT FUND

The question is to renew or not to renew. The loan was to invest in a small startup nonprofit that would help rebuild the community. Now it's a huge organization with an \$800 million portfolio. Can the church find something that agrees with its values? The 10k could be used to reduce the endowment deficit. The board decided to end the investment and return it to the CIF. The vote was 8-1-0.

Edna Jones Memorial

How does the church go about renaming a room when we don't have a policy on how to do it. There was also a question about how will this be done in the future and by which group. There was discussion on how this was done in the past but there seems to be no record of the process.

Proposal to Recognize Edna Jones Bequest to USG

Whereas on February 15, 2012, Edna Jones, a member of USG, died and left a large unrestricted bequest (\$295,621) to USG, it is proposed that this generous gift and Edna's considerable contributions to USG be recognized as follows:

- The Assembly Room of USG will be formally designated "The Edna Jones Assembly Room".
- A plaque will be created and prominently displayed in the The Edna Jones Assembly Room with the following inscription: "This room is designated "The Edna Jones Assembly Room" in recognition of the generous unrestricted bequest by Edna Jones (June 6, 1938- February 15, 2012) and her considerable contributions to the Unitarian Society of Germantown".
- On a convenient Sunday morning in April or May, 2015 (to be designated by the Worship Arts Committee), formal recognition of the Edna Jones bequest, Edna's contributions to USG and the renaming of "The Edna Jones Assembly Room" will be incorporated into a suitable Sunday Worship Service.

Motion carried 6-3.

Definition of Policy

The following definition is presented for the Board's approval:

At USG, a policy is a statement of principles that will be utilized to guide decisions and behavior and help achieve USG's goals. Policies will be only as specific as required to ensure that any reasonable implementation by USG's leaders will be acceptable. Policies may include a requirement that there be procedures on specified subjects. The Board must approve policies with the exception of any administrative policies it may delegate.

Procedures should be reviewed by either Governance (the Board or its delegate) or Ministry (the Ministry Executive Team or its delegate), as applicable, depending on which function has responsibility for that area.

Motion carried 8-1 to accept the definition as written.

Right Relations Policy

Do we want a short policy or more detailed? We don't have a formalized structure to govern those who disrupt meetings for example. The church has a process to remove a minister but not to remove members of the congregation. There is no consequence for regularly disrupting a

meeting or using unkind or unfair language toward other members on the same committee. There was Board discussion about the need for this. An idea proposed was a dispute resolution policy. There are two committees on ministry. One committee provides feedback to Reverend Daniel on his work as a minister. The other committee is for Kent. The question in front of the Board was who should be on it and what is the process for providing guidelines for helping church members deal with other members of the church who are disruptive or use unfair language. The document should be a proactive rather than a reactive document. On the task force will be 2 board members (Judy & Craig), one person from each or either committee on ministry, one from membership, and Daniel.

The vote was for a detailed versus a general document with a summary statement or covenant. The task force should recommend how to involve the congregation in the process.

MINISTERS GOALS

There should be two sets of goals as part of the evaluation - one set for MET and one set for Reverend Kent. The Board agreed that data matters and so does feedback. The Board decided that they are happy with the set of goals from Kent and will decide in January about the process for his evaluation.

Bill Morrow will attend the January Board meeting to talk about committee on ministry and Tom Ott will also be coming to talk to the Board about Stewardship.

Kent is working with Jen Leiby on a letter that will be sent to the congregation in January on participation and membership covenant.

The Town Hall meeting date is 2/28/15 from 9 to 1 to avoid conflict with other church activities. It will be a follow up to the November 16th Congregational meeting.

President's Report December 23, 2014

Approval of Minutes

The September and October minutes were approved by e-mail vote.

Copyright Infringement Claim

The claim has been settled for \$500, a mere fraction of the cost of disputing the claim. The funds will come initially from the Board's budget.

Governance and Ministry Task Force

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Procedures should be reviewed by either Governance (the Board or its delegate) or Ministry (the Ministry Executive Team or its delegate), as applicable, depending on which function has responsibility for that area.

Communication: The task force identified the need for greater communication from the Board to the congregation on what MET is doing. A regular President's report and/or Vice President's leadership report were suggested as appropriate vehicles. At this time it would be appropriate for a mid-year report from the Board.

Board Meetings: Linda Brunn suggested we consider a model used by the Ann Arbor church where the Board meets twice a month. Once for an operational meeting and once for a big issues meeting that might include spiritual development/ leadership development, speakers and check ins with various committees and councils. Marina Patrice suggested that perhaps the Board and MET could do the second meeting as a collaboration.

Town Hall Meeting: The group discussed a Town Hall, perhaps on Saturday February 28th. Scott offered the following five topics as the most important: 1. Membership growth, 2. Finance Transparency, 3. Governance Structure Check-in, 4. Budget Process, 5. Fundraising.

Planning for Growth: Our plan for growth was identified as an area where our messaging could be stronger. We identified the following areas that have a strong influence on our plan for growth and are well underway: 2 services, full-time Minister responsible for religious education, very strong office staff, appropriate on-going building expenses.

Finance Council

Dave Bruton joined the council. The November showed revenues and income as expected. Cyrstal Penn suggested exploring grants and corporate contributions to help support social action projects. Al Martin obtained internal audit procedures from the UUA that can provide the basis for a USG policy.

Leaf Party

Over 50 people showed up to rake leaves from our grounds. The many hands completed the work by 11:00 AM.

Minister's Contract

The contract approved by the Board in September was signed on December 14, 2014.

Legacy Group

A group interested in developing a legacy program is meeting on January 6, 2015.

Minister's Report
Rev. Kent Matthies
To USG Board of Trustees
November 21, 2014

A large chunk of my activities are related in the MET report. In addition to that document please pay special attention to the notes from the November 16th, congregational meeting on finances. Thanks to Beth Lazer and many other leaders who worked hard to facilitate a solid meeting with lots of helpful information.

Also please make sure to read the memo from Governance Task Force Chair Andrea Parry on suggested next steps following up this meeting. All of the topics brought up at the meeting are legitimate and important for how we navigate our future. It is important that the board take the lead on the bulk of these conversations at the congregational level.

I also want to encourage all leadership to advocate strongly to the USG community about the need for members of the church to address one another with kindness and respect at all times. Of course, we don't all always agree about important issues. But one of the most basic and essential spiritual practices of USG life is to show care and respect in our interactions.

In **Worship Arts** we continue working to create both worship services with distinctiveness and excellence. In conversations and work over the last month we realize that we have more clarity on vision for 9:15 Center service than we do for 11:15 Celebrate Life. Worship Arts feels we have done a very fine job of achieving our objectives.

The following objectives for Celebrate Life seem more malleable in our minds. We often tend to return to doing things “the way we always have” for our worship services in general when we are creating and running the Celebrate Life service.

This is not necessarily a bad outcome in terms of a quality community/spiritual experience. We have highlighted the need to take more time in getting community feedback – a formal questionnaire will be given to specific leaders and available in general. We also have committed that with Debbie Ward and my leadership the entirety of Worship Arts will have more thorough discussions about what we are trying to achieve at 11:15.

The installation of the screen a projector in the sanctuary is a major accomplishment done by a combined team of Master Plan Implementation Committee and the Buildings and Grounds. We used the screen for our Diwali Celebration on November 1st. We began using the screen for Sunday morning worship services on November 16th. Sarah Spath, Gloria Smith, Kin Sims and I have worked to prepare the image presentations, including words and music to hymns. We are in a learning curve, experimental mode. We invite feedback from the congregation on how to make the best use of these resources with the ultimate goal always being excellence in worship. We also installed new speakers on the chancel so that people on the stage can hear better. An important remaining project involves purchasing two 29’ inch screens to mount on the sides of the chancel for people sitting up to view the images. Currently people on the stage are “in the blind.”

I am also attaching the current draft of my Minister work goals for 2014-15. Italicized sentences indicate where work remains for establishing specific, measurable, achievable goals. If you have any input or feedback on what we are doing please let me know.

Kent Matthies Goals for 2014-15
DRAFT (Nov. 21, 2014)

Sunday Morning Excellence

Ensure overall excellent spiritual experience and programmatic coherence on Sunday mornings.
Preach 28 times; participate in worship leadership on eight other Sundays.

-Ensure Center and Celebrate Life worship services are planned and executed with intention and excellence

I am working to figure out how this will be measured. Are there objective indicators of intention and excellence?

-Realistic assessment of volunteer needs and filling of said positions (worship associates, musicians, ushers, sound and audio/visual)

This goal is shared with worship committee. We will work to clarify how it will be measured. How far ahead of time all spots are full? How many total people involved?

-Develop and implement resources for new video screen (images, hymn words, short videos)

How often? What are the goals? I am doing some of this work, but primarily leading collaborative brainstorming and encouraging others?

- Increase overall Sunday morning attendance as a measure of the success of the worship services. *By how much? By when?*

MET Leadership

Clarify and implement division of labor amongst Ministry Executive Team

This was done in August. Going forward I will lead assessment of how MET members are doing with their portfolios on an ongoing basis to determine if adjustments need to be made.

Clarify authority and responsibility amongst all leaders, councils, teams and committees within USG operations.

This is a shared MET goal. How can we measure this?

Support leaders and leadership teams and committees to create SMART goals.

All MET committees have goals complete by January? MET goal?

Help assess achievements of SMART goals as year progresses. Adjust accordingly.

Goals assessed how often?

Align USG operational work with strategic initiatives.

Operational committees need SMART goals as well?

Caring Ministry

Ensure caring team delivers timely and effective pastoral care to membership families as needed.

This is a shared goal with Caring Committee.

I deliver direct pastoral care a minimum of once per week.

Small Group Ministry

Ensure excellent curriculum created in time.

Ensure small group members have a reliable, safe and caring environment to learn, explore and grow spiritually.

How is this assessed?

Ensure environment of growing spiritually healthy relationships and care.

What does this look like?

Increase overall small group ministry participating as a measure of success.

By how much? By when?

Staff leadership

Ensure establishment of SMART goals

By beginning of December

Help assess achievements of SMART goals as year progresses. *Assess bi-monthly.* Adjust accordingly.

Develop new contract for Mark Daugherty 16 hours per week.

By January 15

Ministry Executive Team December 2014 Report to the Board

Reporting to the Board

Last month the board clarified the need for MET to report regularly on key areas of the church that can indicate USG activity, health and wellbeing.

Here is what we specifically propose as areas where we will report in specific time frames”

-Finances including Pledges, quarterly

-Membership only accurate in terms of applying all criterions in February when it gets reported to the UUA. MET can report membership signings to Board quarterly as well.

-Attendance and enrollment for Children’s Spiritual Development quarterly

-ASD/SGM enrollment twice a year

-Sunday morning attendance quarterly.

In December, we will report on pledging, enrollment and attendance for ASD/CSD/SGM, and Sunday morning worship. You will also receive a report on pledging and In January we plan to have a finance report. We will have a reporting schedule to you going forward by the January meeting (we plan to report on finances each quarter, but haven’t decided what we think makes the most sense as to when to include the other items.)

For this month we report the following:

As of December 7th our average total Sunday morning attendance since the September Water Ceremony was 232. This is down from 239, which was our average attendance for the first 12 services of last fall. Last year ended up with the highest average attendance in decades. We are not sure why we are down slightly so far this year. Worship Arts, Children's Spiritual Development and the Welcoming Community Team are all trying to assess if any pattern or factors exist.

One key aspect of our attendance numbers is how we interact with the 80% rule. This widely used church guideline indicates that when more than 80% of seating is full visitors can feel unwelcomed in the community. Our comfortable, welcoming seating capacity has been estimated at 280. 80% full is 224. Hence, although we are down a bit from the same period last year we still average slightly over 80% capacity (227). This means we have room to grow as a worshipping congregation which we did not have with one service.

This fall we have 110 people registered for Small Group Ministries, 81 children and youth registered for CSD, 77 people registered for ASD and 33 members of the choir.

Most Recent Conversations about Financial Reporting

A few members have voiced continued lack of comfort that there is not a final statement with year-end numbers for 2013-14. Gloria has been working with Michael Campbell and the bookkeeper to close the year as soon as it can be done accurately. Kent, Gloria and Michael are working with the goal that the Finance Council put out the mostly completed budget statement with a few paragraphs from Michael giving context and explanations. The goal is to send this out by December 20th.

Finance Council

Dave Bruton has agreed to join the Finance Council, his primary job will be take lead in reporting to the congregation and the Board. Finance Council chair, Michael Campbell has asked for help with auditing as well. We are working on finding a person to fill this position.

Legacy Program

A group of church leaders will meet in January to discuss establishing a Legacy Program at USG. Kent will attend as MET representative, but if MET has to-dos that result from this meeting, they will be carried out by Beth or Treva.

MET Goals as of 11/19/14

Implement the ministry organization within the new governance structure during the 2014-15 church year.

- Create clear lines of responsibility and authority in the new model through ongoing work with committees and groups. Fine tune organization and procedures as needed to ensure new system functions optimally.

- Communicate the new governance structure across all levels of leadership, with various committees and groups, and the congregation at large so the changes are transparent, easily understood, and supported utilizing email, e-news and order of service articles, the website and face-to face meetings throughout the year. Address all feedback promptly.

- Ensure that all teams (councils and committees) know the Board's strategic initiatives and use them in setting their SMART goals by January 2015. Review each committee's SMART goals when they are set and bi-annually (mid-year and end of year) to help ensure the group is successful in meeting their goals.

Facilitate a focus on the Board's Strategic Initiatives throughout the 2014-15 church year:

- Establish a healthy, functional Communications Team to develop a plan to communicate, support, and promote the new governance structure and the Board's Strategic Initiatives (team in place by February 15; plan created by April 30.)

- Build a sustained collaboration among committees to ensure Membership Covenant is known and enthusiastically embraced and there are established pathways for members to engage. Work with Programs and Events Council to improve member retention rates, thereby increasing membership numbers and increase accessible Social Action opportunities during this church year.

- Craft a budget which balances compliance with the budget guidelines established by the Board and the Board's Strategic Initiatives using an open and participative budget process with the entire congregation. Begin the budget process in January; enable input from all committees and teams; utilize the Finance Council; communicate frequently with the Board. Submit preliminary budget to Board in March and final budget to Board in April. Publish the final budget on the website within 2 weeks of its approval; notify all committees and teams of their individual budgets by year-end.

- Ensure that members are offered Sunday morning experiences, which engage them in rich spiritual encounters and offer opportunities for service and fellowship. Sunday attendance

will remain one key measure of the success of the worship services. Also narrative feedback from people talking about how worship impacts their own spiritual wellbeing will be a measure.

Maintain our spiritual health by caring for ourselves and each other through communications, support, enriching experiences, and laughter.

SMART Goals

Many of the program committees are working on their goals, ERC, ASD, Worship, SGM. Some non-program groups are not sure this is worth their time, so we are asking just for goals and we will help make sure they are SMART and tied to Initiatives.

Edna Jones Recognition

The Task Force of Susan Bockius, Linda Bernstein and Peter and Marny Walsh made recommendations for the recognition of Edna Jones very generous gift. They include renaming the Assembly Room the Edna Jones Assembly Room. Since it would be a policy precedent to name a room after a member who gave a large bequest, the group recommended, and we concur, that this should receive Board approval before they proceed. The full text of their recommendations is below.

To: Board of Trustees, Unitarian Society of Germantown

From: Linda Bernstein, Susan Bockius, Marny Walsh, Peter Walsh

Date: December 1, 2014

Subject: Proposal to Recognize Edna Jones Bequest to USG

On February 15, 2012, Edna Jones, a member of USG, died and left a large unrestricted bequest (\$295,621) to USG, a gift that has not, to date, been formally recognized by the Church. We have been asked by the Ministry Executive Team to develop a proposal, to be considered by the Board of Trustees, to recognize this generous gift and Edna's considerable contributions to the Church, including service on the Board of Trustees, the Administrative Council, the Archives Committee, the Sullivan Library Committee, and the Building and Grounds Committee. We are available to assist in the structuring of the memorial service, creation of a plaque and other planning and implementation. We respectfully request that the Board consider, revise if

necessary, and formally approve the following proposal.

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- The Assembly Room of USG will be formally designated "The Edna Jones Assembly Room".
- A plaque will be created and prominently displayed in the The Edna Jones Assembly Room with the following inscription: "This room is designated "The Edna Jones Assembly Room" in recognition of the generous unrestricted bequest by Edna Jones (June 6, 1938- February 15, 2012) and her considerable contributions to the Unitarian Society of Germantown".
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