

USG Board Meeting April 28, 2015

Board Members Present: Dennis Strain, Linda O’Gwynn, Marina Patrice Nolan, Scott Wolkenberg, Linda Brunn, Judy Rodes, Bob Williford (arrived late, after the vote on the March minutes). This meeting is Judy Rodes final meeting as a Board member.

Others Present: Rev. Daniel Gregoire, Rev. Kent Matthias, Gloria Guldager

March Minutes: No changes.

Motion to approve Marina Patrice; Second Linda O’Gwynn

Passed 6-0

Proposed Budget:

Two changes from MET since last Board discussion

\$2000 added for publicity

\$1640 added to comply with fair compensation guidelines, which have only become available in the last month

Discussion:

Communication of budget passage. The Board would like a statement to the congregation on the extent to which FY1516 budget decreased the deficit versus FY1415. It is worth highlighting the budget deficit reduction from FY1415 to FY1516 (>30%) versus the Board approved measure directing MET to decrease the budget deficit by at least 10% per year over FY1516, FY1617, and FY1718. This is a success worth showcasing. A suggestion is to do this at the upcoming annual meeting and/or via the weekly CommUUnicator.

Communication of budget actuals. There is a desire to communicate to the congregation, once FY1415 ends, the actuals versus the FY1415 budget. The rationale is that as of this April 28 meeting the actual income is above budget and there is an opportunity to correct perceptions of FY1415. During the year there has been a focus on the FY1415 budget deficit and actuals may in fact show a significantly smaller deficit.

Discussion on \$2000 publicity addition. What is the basis for this request? It is an estimate of “seed” funds to assess how to increase effectiveness of communications and/or create communications. It is not based on a specific set of plans but could be directed toward: tracking and capitalizing on evolving e-communications media (part time staff to investigate?), banners for visibility on Lincoln Drive, advertising in local periodicals, etc. Desire to support publicity comes from the Board’s directive to MET on this (earlier this year) as well as the discussion at the March congregational meeting on

the budget to support efforts to attract new visitors/members and increase income. There is a perception that the \$2000 may be insufficient for a major impact, and it is recognized as a seed.

Discussion on including Building Maintenance Reserve Fund earnings in the total return income line on the budget: There is strong agreement that a Board decision is worthwhile on whether to include this fund in the total return. There is support for adopting this change at the present meeting, April 28, so that the change can be reflected in the FY1516 budget. At the same time it is recognized that voting tonight does not allow time for expansive discussion with the Buildings and Grounds Committee and the Finance Council.

Motion to approve the proposed budget: Judy Rodes. Second: Linda O’Gwynn. Vote 6 0, Marina Patrice abstains. Budget passes [note this includes the \$2000 publicity increase as well as fair compensation increase]

Motion to include the Building Maintenance Reserve Fund earnings in the total return income line on the budget for FY1516 and future budgets. Vote: 5-1-1. Scott Wolkenberg votes against. Linda O’Gwynn abstains.

Congregational awards [names in brackets describe which Board members will introduce the awardees at the annual congregational meeting]:

Lifetime Achievement Award: Mark and Liz Kaufki [introduced by Linda Brunn]

Congregational Award: Treva Berger [introduced by Marina Patrice] and Andrea Parry [introduced by Linda O’Gwynn]

Under 5 Year Award: Gerald Whelan [introduced by Dennis] and Cynthia ByronWilliford [introduced by Bob]

Logistical arrangements were made for the congregational Annual Meeting

Meeting adjourned 9:42p.

President’s Report: April 2015

Parking Lot Contributions

Church Counsel David Dearden has sent a letter to our neighbors, inviting them to a meeting on May 31 to discuss appropriate contributions to the maintenance of our driveway. Tom Schoonmaker and Bill Blasdel will accompany David at the meeting. Widening and repairing the driveway would logically be done in conjunction with the resurfacing and drainage of the parking lot. These are big ticket items that may be components of a capital campaign.

Meeting with JPD's Mark Bernstein

Mark is retiring from the JPD to work for a nonprofit. We will be meeting with him at noon in the Sullivan Chapel on Thursday, May 28, to discuss our progress with the new governance structure and the trends in growth of membership.

Bookkeeper Issues

Brennan and Associates, our bookkeeper, has been slow to correct errors in the monthly reports. Last year the Board considered eliminating the bookkeeper, but deferred to Rudy Sprinkle's concern that an independent bookkeeper is an important protection against fraud and Gloria Guldager's concern that the payroll tax calculations of the bookkeeper could not easily be performed by staff or volunteers. Brennan provides accounting services but they cost more than the \$1100/month we pay for bookkeeping. For now, we hope that meetings with Brennan will resolve the error issues.

Comments on Proposed Budget

In response to the March 22 meeting on the proposed budget, we have received several responses. Sam Gugino commented on Reporting (not including actual figures), Income (no information on current pledge drive or other fundraising efforts), and Membership (no discussion of long term plans to increase membership). Charles Gabriel proposed eliminating the bookkeeper and the second service, and having a Fall walkathon as a fundraiser. Susan Bockius submitted recommendations for developing policies on the use of the general endowment and balancing the budget, and for having the congregation vote on the budget.

Board Orientation/Retreat

Governance and Ministry Task force recommends that the Board conduct both an orientation for new members and a retreat in the summer. The orientation should include (1) a synopsis of the new governance structure, (2) what the Board has accomplished this year, (3) what MET has done, and (4) what remains to be done next year. For the retreat, the Board should consider (1) how well it has functioned in the past year, (2) identifying big picture items, (3) how to deal with big picture items, (4) dividing the Board into three work groups to tackle big issues, and (5) meeting twice a month to provide time for considering big picture issues.

MET Report to the Board April 2015

What MET would like from the Board:

Annual Meeting MET would like to have a chunk of time at the Annual Meeting to talk about Programs and SMART goals. We would like to spend only a minimum amount of time on

Finances because we believe we need to refocus on mission and program.

What we are working on:

Buildings and Grounds needs to find a new co-chair to replace Scott Murray who wants to step down at the end of this church year. We will work with B&G to try to think of possibilities and find a suitable new co-chair

Transformation Team

The Transformation Team is charged with helping USG transform into an intentionally anti-racist, multi-cultural congregation. They have been in existence several years, but have struggled to figure out how to proceed. The group is chaired by Eli Searce who is seeking a person of color to be co-chair. One of their current foci is the Daskam room. Max Daskam was a much beloved minister from 1929-1964, but but on multiple occasions he talked with African American visitors and encouraged them to join a Black church rather than USG. Two members who he visited continue to be members of USG. There has been talk about changing the name of the Daskam Room because of this, but when Transformation and Ending Racism conferred about possible name change ideas, the Ending Racism committee (which includes some of the people whom Daskam visited) didn't want the name changed; they preferred to keep the name and use it to educate the congregation about the history so that we could learn and grow from it. They would like this education to include framed document sharing the history in the Daskam Room, likely under the plaque and picture that are there and have been thinking about wording. MET has advised them that there should be community conversation about this idea and proposal as a form of education and buy-in.

Transformation would also like to see more multi-cultural art in the church and thought Daskam would be a good place to start because of the conversation about Daskam's legacy and because it is where the youth group meets. MET has asked Transformation to work with B&G to develop parameters for the art work (eg needs to be "tasteful" and framed) so that perhaps the youth could be involved in the process.

Transformation also asked to have a representative attend worship arts meetings, which MET was fully supportive of, as part of their appreciative inquiry process looking at the church and its programs through a multi-cultural inclusiveness lens.

MET Orientation

Beth and Treva will create and facilitate an orientation for the new MET members, it will likely be June 16 from 2-5pm. Gloria and Kent will join as they are able.

Recognitions

Kin: Kent will draft a announcement offering people a way to show their appreciation for Kin's ministry with us, by donating toward a monetary gift to thank him and congratulate him (on his graduation and marriage at the end of May.) We will plan to present it at a reception for him after the May 24th worship service.

Edna Jones: Beth is checking in with group who made a proposal to honor Edna Jones.

Carla Campbell: Moving to New Mexico, has chosen a date with Kent to be recognized in the service.

Marietta Tanner: plans to move to DC the third week of September. She will be recognized in an early September service.

Welcoming

Treva will take responsibility for Welcoming as part of her new as yet not completely defined role. She met with Welcoming Team to identify all the areas that needed to be covered and who is willing to continue. The goal might be to spread the tasks over a larger group and have them report to the entity Treva chairs (currently Programs and Events, we are thinking about a name change to perhaps Community Council.) Treva is considering holding a focus group brainstorming session to work on this.

Endowment Policy

MET is working with Michael Campbell of Finance to update the Endowment Policy to be in line with the new Finance Council charter and also to be consistent with the way things are done or the way it makes sense to do them going forward.