

## USG Board of Trustees Meeting, November 26, 2013

**Members present:** Tom Ott, Marina Patrice Van Gossen, Craig Miller, Treva Burger, Bob Williford, Leni Windle, Ann Schoonmaker, Dennis Strain, Andrea Parry

**Non-members present:** Rev. Kent Matthies, Daniel Gregoire, Gloria Smith

**Motion:** to approve the October Minutes

**Motion approved:** 7-0-0 (two members were a few minutes late)

**Minister's Report** (attached)

**President's Report:** There is a cash flow issue. The Buildings and Grounds Committee spent their money early this year. Gifts have not come in yet. Question about whether there is a regular monthly transfer from the CIF to Operating. We will plan to do a full look at the financials in December with Charles Gabriel, chair of Budget and Finance. We are clearly not budgeting well enough to meet our needs and we probably also need a capital budget. Tom Ott would like a Board resolution to approve the transfer of \$5000 from the CIF to the Operating Budget with the intention that the money be paid back by the end of the fiscal year.

**Motion:** Board authorizes Michael Campbell to transfer \$5000 from the endowment to the operating budget with the intention of paying it back by the end of the fiscal year.

**Motion approved:** 9-0-0

Please sign up be the designated Board member during Fellowship Hour.

**Safe Congregation Policy:** Church counsel's feedback is that he recommends that background checks be done every year instead of every three years. Board members did believe this would be an effective way to ensure the safety of the congregation. There are many staff members and long time volunteers where annual checks would not seem productive. Additionally, there is cost involved (about \$180 per year) and administrative burden, and it is time consuming to get the forms signed. Discussion about whether there would be a way to do annual checks without having to have the forms be filled out each year. Decided that a more effective approach would be to publicize that we have the right to and may background check every volunteer and staff member every year, which would discourage people with records from applying. Additionally, we will do background checks for every new volunteer or staff member in applicable positions and do additional checks at other intervals. We believe that would be the most effective approach to help keep our program safe.

**Motion:** That the Safe Congregation Policy will be changed so that the background screening of workers and staff is consistent. It will say staff and workers "will have background screens annually or at such other interval that USG, in its sole discretion, may deem necessary."

**Motion approved:** 8-0-1

Safe Congregation Policy will be condensed into 2 page summary by February 1. The President, Minister and DFD will communicate to the congregation through newsletters. Area in italics below needs to be changed to reflect the Board motion.

III. Prevention

B.

3. All Workers must complete the application forms included in this policy and must consent to such reference and *background screening as the Unitarian Society of*

*Germantown deems necessary*, and must agree in writing to be bound by the Code of Ethics set forth in this policy.

C.

2. All Religious Professionals and Staff members must agree to *participate in criminal and child abuse screening every three years or at such other intervals as USG deems necessary* and each must agree to be bound by the Code of Ethics set forth in this policy.

**Governance Task Force:** Tasked with streamlining the running of the church to make it more effective and satisfying. Please review the minutes of their meetings to get a sense of the work that is being done. The group will return to the Board in December with more details. Board members are welcome to read the book if they would like to have more details about this process. The book is *Governance and Ministry* by Dan Hotchkiss.

### **Feasibility Study for a Capital Campaign**

There were two capital campaign consultant presentations. There are notes from them in the dropbox, November folder. It would be \$12,000 to \$15,000 for the study plus an additional \$10,000 to \$15,000 for architect's drawings. Many Board members had thought that we could do the feasibility study and then decide, but that is not recommended. If you do the feasibility study, you need to be planning to do a capital campaign. There is concern among some Board members that we are not ready to do a capital campaign because we recently added a second service and have trouble meeting our pledge goals. A few don't see the need for additional space or an elevator, but others pointed out that RE does not have enough classrooms, or storage, the classrooms we have are small and Gloria Smith reported that many people call to find out where an event is before deciding whether to go because of mobility issues. One of the consultants said there is never a good time. Consensus was that it probably makes sense to do, but not right now.

**Motion:** Authorize \$30,000 in the 2014-15 budget from the Edna Jone's bequest for a feasibility study and architectural drawings. The next Board will need to decide by September 2014 whether and when to spend it. If and when the money is released, MPIC may choose the architect and consultant.

**Motion approved :** 9-0-0

**Motion to adjourn.** Meeting adjourned at 9:29pm

Respectfully submitted,

Treva Burger, Board Secretary

Minister's Report to Board of Directors  
November 22, 2013  
From Rev. Kent Matthies  
Unitarian Society of Germantown

Dear Friends,

I apologize for the tardiness of this written board report. I was quite ill from Thursday until today. Yesterday may have been the only time I had to call in sick for a Sunday morning service when I was in leadership. I actually can't remember for sure if it has happened once before. I was very grateful that Jenn Leiby, Linda Brunn and Daniel Gregoire could do such a generous and helpful job in covering. I was sad to miss the service for many reasons. Jenn and I had collaborated on the idea and collecting stories for over a month. We did collect quite a bit of material that can go into the process of writing our history for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

I continue to work closely with Daniel in his leadership of RE, Adult Spiritual Development and Caring. Daniel and I just began the formal process of his 90 day review, which I will complete by December 6<sup>th</sup>. We have a clear job description with highlighted priorities. After a significant amount of time in RE leadership Susan Doering needs to step down from the Chair position. Currently there is no heir apparent within the committee. Daniel and I will confer and reach out for assistance in finding a suitable leader for this important position. Once we have that person in place we will create a mini-version of a start up with RE committee and Daniel. In past conversations we thought this meeting would not be needed this year. Of late, however, it has become evident that such a meeting would be helpful in clarifying roles.

From Sunday afternoon November 17-20 I went to my annual UU Minister's Study conference in Berkley Springs, West Virginia. We studied how we can incline our faith movement away from individualism, anti-authoritarianism and exceptionalism. We worshipped around how we can more fully embrace pluralism, generosity and imagination. These studies helped me appreciate ever-more many of the strengths in our USG community. I look forward to bringing some of these resource to bear in our work around Governance, Worship, Ministries and Programs.

In Worship Arts we continue to work hard to create the most excellence possible in both worship services. We are still working to find the best place for the Ushers to spend their leadership energies. Their efforts are integral to the Worship Arts and Welcoming Teams. Conversations with the ushers reminded me to state more clearly and often how essential the Ushers have been in USG creating an overall warm and welcoming environment with a strong culture of excellence in worship services. If you agree with me I encourage you to let them know!

I have worked with Joan Javier Duval to transfer background information on MLK Day of Service to our two new, excellent co-chairs Mel Streib and Anne Gwynn. Anne and Mel have graciously jumped into leadership along with Nancy Dearden and Carolyn Scott. The dedication from these four and others has allowed me to accomplish the goal I set with Andrea Parry and Tom Ott to move myself out of MLK leadership entirely this year. Thanks to Anne, Mel, Nancy and Carolyn.

I had the pleasure of joining both interviews with the potential Capital Campaign consultants. I was positively impressed with and learned from both professionals. I look forward to reflecting with you all on these conversations and different potential approaches we might take in our future.