

USG BOARD MEETING: OCTOBER 28, 2014

Call to order 7:35p

BOARD MEMBERS:

Linda Brunn., Marina-Patrice Nolan, Dennis Strain, Scott Wolkenberg, Craig Miller, Ann Schoonmaker, Judy Rodes, Linda O’Gwynn, Bob Williford

Visitors

Gloria Smith, Kent Matthies,

President’s Report

- 1. Significant concern and discussion at the annual meeting over USG finances.**
- 2. To align with CCNY on Daniel’s ordination, a congregational vote will be taken. This is neither a requirement of the UUA nor a standard practice at USG (for instance, was not done for Joan’s ordination), but is a compromise to provide a unified process across USG and CCNY. The Board discussed logistics on how to handle the vote and decided upon: a vote will be taken after the second service. This is in accord with USG bylaws.**
- 3. USG has been accused of copyright infringement for the use of an image on the USG website. Contact was made by a agent claiming to represent the copyright holder. USG counsel Dave Dearden is investigating to verify the authenticity of the agent and the claim, and to arrange resolution of the matter, if needed. Initial communications with the agent indicates that settlement of the matter, if authentic, may cost \$500-\$1350.**
- 4. A tenant for the apartment above the youth lodge has been identified and signed a sublet lease through 2017. Rent is \$1100/month with increase to \$1200/month next year.**

MET Report

- 1. MET requests help communicating Board support for the new governance model, and rationale for the new model. Requests Board members to actively message this in conversations with USG committee leaders and members in general.**

- a. **USG Board strongly supports the new governance model**
 - b. **New model enables**
 - i. **Ensuring committee leads are capable and fully supported to achieve committee goals**
 - ii. **Ensuring new committees and initiatives are consistent with USG values and goals**
 - iii. **Management of USG's limited resources to maximize impact on the community's activities**
 - iv. **Reduced inefficiency in getting decisions made and support for programs**
 - c. **New model does not stifle good ideas or good action in our community**
 - d. **USG Board is vocal about successes of new model**
2. **A special congregational meeting to discuss CIF and USG finances generally has been scheduled for November 16. MET is preparing information for discussion and seeks Board input for items/analyses to present. In addition, MET plans to brief the Board on what will be presented at the November 16 meeting beforehand so Board members in attendance can be prepared to speak to these issues.**
 3. **MET supports an elevator for USG and requests further Board discussion on this topic.**

Resolution to Honor Edna Jones:

Move – Judy; Second – Marina Patrice. Vote 9-0.

Board Liaisons

- **Discussion around whether Board liaisons are worthwhile – would they create confusion in the new governance model, since many committees are under MET and not Board oversight? Decision was made to have liaisons only for those committees which report only to Board or jointly to Board and MET, but not those committee that report to MET only. That way, the liaisons relationship exists only for those committee where it is consistent with the governance model.**
- **Expectations of Board liaisons are**

- o **Not to attend every meeting of the committees**
- o **Be in touch with the committee regularly (no less than quarterly) – discussion offline from meetings is okay**
- o **Provide an avenue for the committee to elevate issues to the Board**
- o **Provide a Board perspective on issues**
- o **Advocate for the new governance model**
- **Board liaison assignments**
 - o **Budget and Finance Council – Dennis and Craig**
 - o **Buildings and Grounds – Bob and Scott**
 - o **Personnel - Ann**
 - o **Transformation Team – Linda B. and Bob**
 - o **Master Plan Implementation Committee – Linda O.**
 - o **Governance and Ministry Task Force – Marina Patrice, Dennis, Linda B.**
 - o **Nominating Committee – Dennis**
 - o **Committee on Ministry – no Board liaison**

Budget Restrictions and Guidelines

These are the parameters with which MET and the Budget and Finance Council will develop the 2015-2016 budget

- **Board agrees we are committed to fair compensation.**
- **Board agrees we should pay UUA and JPD dues**
- **Defer decision on Buildings and Grounds budget restriction until MET and Buildings and Grounds gather more information on potential items (30-60 days)**
- **Board agrees we should not pursue a paid intern minister; will pursue an unpaid student minister**
- **Board endorses vigorous pursuit of increasing income in order to reduce the deficit. Aggressive reduction of expenses has been pursued in previous and current budget**

years, and the Board agrees that to significantly impact the deficit income increases are needed.

Adjourn: 9:50p

RESOLUTION HONORING EDNA JONES

Whereas, The Unitarian Society of Germantown wishes to express its appreciation to Edna Jones for her generous bequest; and,

Whereas, The Unitarian Society of Germantown wishes to remember Edna Jones' dedicated service to the congregation; and,

Whereas, The Unitarian Society of Germantown wishes to appropriately honor Edna Jones in a public manner;

The Unitarian Society of Germantown Board of Trustees resolves to authorize the recognition of Edna Jones' service and bequest and delegates to the Ministry Executive Team the development and implementation of this recognition on behalf of the congregation.

MET report to Board October 21, 2014

We had told Dennis and Marina Patrice that MET's reports would be subdivided into the Strategic Initiative categories, but as we began the goal setting process, we realized that MET isn't really working on the SIs directly, but supporting the committees on working toward the SIs, so organizing the report by SI would be pretty challenging. Once we have our goals set, we could organize it in terms of our goals. This month it is organized alphabetically.

What MET has done this month:

Adult Spiritual Development

ASD co-chairs Susan Bockius and Mary Lee Keane resigned on October 10. Kent, Beth and Treva met with them on October 16 during which we listened to and acknowledged their concerns and thanked them for the launch of a wonderful series of fall programs. One reason they cited for their resignation was their lack of knowledge about the implications of the new governance structure when they agreed to co-chair the committee. They were asked to be co-chairs by Delores Hill and Susan Smith when ASD was under MPC (Ministries and Program Council) and, by the time they began serving, the management of ASD had been moved to be under MET, with Daniel as having primary responsibility for the work of ASD. The implications of this change were not communicated to them in a timely manner. We have taken responsibility and apologized for this. Treva attended ASD's monthly meeting to help process the sudden loss of their chairs and explain and answer questions about the governance structure. ASD has had a successful fall program launch and Daniel and the committee will work together to identify a new chair in November.

ASD's concern about the second Strategic Initiative

ASD feels quite strongly that the language in the second SI, that spiritual development opportunities should “assist participants in discovering, articulating, and sharing their values, beliefs, and faith”, does not leave room for spiritual practices that are not intellectual in nature. It was pointed out that spiritual practices are mentioned in the Mission Statement several times and the two documents should be considered together, but they felt strongly that the language in the SI should explicitly encourage spiritual practices. They pointed out the Unitarianism has a long history of being very, perhaps overly, intellectual about religion and that they would like the SI to more accurately reflect a less intellectual approach.

Aesthetics

A group would like to improve the “face” the church presents to new visitors and the community. B&G would like them under B&G. We have asked aesthetics to create a charter for themselves, which we will look at to see where we think they would function best. We think they will likely need to work with B&G on building issues, but also likely with Welcoming, Transformation and Communications on things like art work, promotional materials, etc.

CIF Update to the Congregation The presentation on the CIF at the Annual Meeting did not go well partly because the information given was felt to be incomplete and there was no one with full knowledge of the situation present. Beth has been working hard to try to gather all the pertinent information. She hopes to schedule a meeting for the first half of November to address these concerns.

Committee Chair Selection Process

ASD asked for clarity on the process for selecting their next chair, and asked that there be one process by which all chair people be selected. MET recommends that committees work with their staff, MET member or MPC chair (whoever is their primary) to come to mutual agreement on the best fit for a new chair person and that they ask for help of MET if they are having difficulty finding someone.

Daniel's Ordination USG will ordain Daniel with NY church. MPC asked Bill Dowdall to chair a committee. He is working on a bus trip and a stole and we will help pay for refreshments out of the funds raised for Joan's ordination.

Finance Charter MET reviewed the new Finance Charter prepared by the Governance Financial task Force and asked for a minor rewording on the first duty, which was agreed to. This goes next to the Finance Council.

Finance Council Michael Campbell, new chair of Finance, has asked for a co-chair, we are working on finding one.

Governance System literature New streamlined documents were created to make the new governance structure more understandable. Governance Change in 1pg is the simplest explanation, Allocation Chart with MET and Staff Primaries adds additional details. The Governance Change from PP is Andrea Parry's power point presentation adapted to a two-page handout.

Lodge Apt We have a prospective tenant for the sublet and have given Carolyn Cotton the go ahead to accept their application.

Maintenance Reserve Fund

Buildings & Grounds has developed a policy draft. MET has reviewed it and sent it back to B&G with suggested changes. The applicable section will go to the Finance Council at their October meeting. When MET, B&G and Finance Council are in agreement it will go to Board for approval. MET has asked B&G for quarterly reports on the use of the fund. MET will also ask B&G for their list of non-emergency priorities.

Membership Covenant

A meeting was held with MET, Tom Ott, Bill Dowdall and Jenn Leiby on ideas for getting people more fully engaged with the membership covenant. A number of ideas were discussed which will be followed up on by those present.

MET goals

As we have begun to formulate our goals, it seems that they will not be directly related to the Strategic Initiatives, but we will be supporting the committees as they directly address the SIs. We are thinking our goals will be around communicating and implementing the new governance structure, supporting the committees in setting SMART goals that work toward the initiatives and building collaboration among all committees that will help bring the membership covenant to life.

Shed Theft The storage shed on the property for lawn maintenance equipment has been broken into and all but the riding mower, which is now stored at Elmer Perez and Loida Zapeda's house (on Johnson, next to the driveway), was taken.

Student Minister MET believes we should look into having another student minister next year. Kin Sims is doing a great job and we are not likely to be in a financial position to have an intern. We will ask Kin for recommendations and go to Princeton's Open House to meet candidates in November. This will be for information gathering purposes only at this point.

Transformation Team is restarting under Eli Scarce's leadership. We have asked them to be involved in Daniel's Staff Person of Color start up (this is recommended to increase the odds of success of a staff member of color in a predominantly white congregation), the Mark Morrison-Reed (African American minister who has been on the forefront of integrating UUism) weekend with Restoration in Mt Airy, the Aesthetics Committee and assessment of programs.

What MET is planning to do:

- ~Complete Carolyn Cotton's contract
- ~Complete Mark Daugherty's contract
- ~Increase clarity on relationship and interaction between MET and B&G
- ~Complete MET goals
- ~Meet with more individual committees to make sure they understand the new governance system and are working on their goals

- ~Offer a finance follow up meeting to the fall Annual Meeting for anyone with concerns about the state of our finances.
- ~Identify a finance co-chair to work with Michael Campbell
- ~Gloria and Beth will continue to update financial procedures
- ~Develop a plan to increase rental income

What MET requests from the Board:

Resolution Honoring Edna Jones

MET has sent a draft resolution to the Board asking for its approval. MET can then figure out how, specifically, to honor her.

Budget Guidelines and Limitations

We would like to begin budget preparation for next year; we would like from the Board guidelines around:

Staff configuration (for example, intern vs. student minister)

Fair Compensation for staff

Fair Share with dues in the JPD and UUA

Deficit

Building Maintenance/improvement

Covenant of Right Relations We have asked for a Covenant of Right Relations, we continue to feel this document is important to have and encourage progress on it.

Elevator MET believes USG needs an elevator. We would like the Board to consider this and if they agree it's a priority, to decide where the money comes from and MET can work on the process.

Support for Governance Change

We would greatly appreciate the Boards communicating its support of the governance change.

We have received feedback recently from current and former leaders that this change in governance appears to be shifting power and authority away from project, team, and committee leaders to MET. We believe this is the result of 1) the angst change brings to any organization and 2) the need for more communication from the Board (the elected body) about the benefits of this change. The Board voted for this change and it would help to share the thinking and expectations of the Board with the congregation. It would also help to let the congregation know that MET is not a rogue body but is guided, overseen and evaluated by the Board. We would be happy to work with you on crafting Board messages to the congregation if that would help. We have created new, simplified charts to show the reasons for the change and the new governance structure.