

USG Board of Trustees Agenda / Minutes

Aug 28, 2018

Attendees: Jenn Leiby, Eva Finney, Michael Campbell, Debbie Ward, Jessica Slivak, Sam Stormont, Joanne Davis, Nancy Anderson, Kent Matthies, Gloria Guldager

Guests: Barbara Dowdall, Parvathy Menon

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1. Approve July Minutes

Decision: The July 24, 2018 USG Board minutes were approved.

2. ERC Petition

See Appendix 1 for the ERC petition.

The Ending Racism Committee is requesting that Connie Simon be compensated for her internship service to USG, given a change in the Meadville Lombard policy for intern compensation halfway through Connie’s time at USG, and especially in light of the history of people of color not being fairly compensated within the denomination. Back compensation would be about \$1006/month, totaling over \$12,000.

Decision: The Board does not concur with the ERC request to provide a compensatory stipend for Connie Simon. Moving forward, USG can consider compensation for future interns taking into account applicable guidelines. There was one dissenting vote (Nancy Anderson) and one abstention (Michael Campbell).



3. Treasurer Brainstorm

USG needs to fill the open Treasurer position. The Treasurer primarily provides oversight of whether financial policies and practices are being followed appropriately at USG. There is also a need for someone (possibly a second person) with accounting expertise to on occasion advise the Church Administrator on accounting best practices. MET recommends that someone be identified immediately to fill the oversight role and execute expenditures from the CIF family of funds. Possible candidates include Crystal Penn, Tom Smith, Vanessa Lowe, and Lee Meinicke (both Tom and Lee have held the Treasurer position previously, although the scope of the role was somewhat different at the time).

Assignment: Jenn Leiby to approach candidates for the open Treasurer position to solicit candidates' interest in the role.

4. MET Opening Approval

MET would like to approach Tom Smith or Andre Stormont to fill the open MET seat.

Decision: The Board approves MET approaching Tom Smith or Andre Stormont to fill the open MET seat.

5. Board Opening Brainstorm

Discussion of potential candidates to fill the open Board of Trustees seat will be initiated via email. The topic will be revisited at the September 2018 meeting.

6. MET Report

See Appendix 2 (MET Report) for background materials.

The Board discussed the proposed travel award for USG delegates to attend General Assembly. The Board reiterated concern regarding the current budget situation, in particular with respect to additional solicitation of funds from the congregation in light of ongoing shortfalls in the Capital and Stewardship campaigns. MET acknowledged the Board's concerns. Additional discussion will be required.

7. Elevator construction financing

The elevator contractor will need to be paid in full by the time of completion of the elevator work, targeted for early 2019. However, Capitol Campaign donors have three years to fulfil their pledges, leading to a gap in funds to pay for the elevator work. The Board discussed status of options previously identified to fill the cash flow gap.

- Debbie Ward reported back on her investigation of the UUA loan policy. The UUA loan will not be appropriate for this purpose due to its relatively high interest rate; we could likely get a lower interest loan elsewhere.
- A mortgage to fill the gap would require congregational approval.
- Kent is continuing to look into a Uninvest loan.
- Capital campaign donors will be asked to pay pledges in full immediately, if possible.
- **Assignment: Jenn Leiby to investigate additional potential loan organizations to fill the elevator project cash flow gap.**

8. President's Report

- Susan Bockius is forming an Archives Committee.
- The Board is responsible for approving deposits into and withdrawals from the Edna Jones fund. Building and Grounds (B&G) intends to withdraw \$3550 from the Edna Jones fund for repair of the Mother and Child window. If at the end of the fiscal year there are excess B&G funds, the Board may need to authorize transfer of up to \$3550 back into the Edna Jones fund to avoid drawing down the Edna Jones fund unnecessarily.
 - **Decision: With the understanding that Building and Grounds (B&G) is taking \$3550 from the Edna Jones Memorial Fund to pay for repairs for the Mother and Child window, the Board authorizes the option of replacing the withdrawn funds if there are excess B&G funds at the end of the 2018-2019 fiscal year.**

9. White Audit Discussion – Oct 6, 2018

As communicated in the MET report: “The Anti-racism Task Force, which is now under MET, is planning a retreat for committee chairs/leaders. The event, Building Beloved Community Retreat, will occur on Saturday, October 6, 2018 ... at USG. Kent will present his ideas for Strategic Planning during the first hour of the retreat. The rest of the time will be devoted to presenting, discussing, processing the White Audit.”

Appendix 1: ERC Petition

USG Ending Racism Committee Petition regarding Intern Compensation for Constance Simon

June 26, 2018

Although the intern arrangement for Constance (Connie) Simon incorporated traditional and agreed-upon arrangements that did not **at that time** require pay and,

Although a nearby minister was available to serve as mentor for Connie in Kent's absence, and

Although Connie was working halftime rather than full time,

We, members of the Ending Racism Committee, voted unanimously at our

June 3rd meeting to make such a request for the following reasons:

The supervising minister's sabbatical during Connie's first year created a situation where she was perceived by many congregants as capable of being called upon to function in the role of established pastor, and

The unique confluence of events in our denomination, in Kent's absence, around the issues of racism and white supremacy created the need for unanticipated time for increased pastoral demands and special Sunday service planning even as Connie, as a person of color, could not easily ignore nor have sufficient time to grapple with the personal anguish brought on by roiling issues emanating from Boston and from our congregation, and

The fact that internships, by establishment of **a new Meadville Lombard policy*** promulgated during Connie Simon's second year of internship, should indeed be required to be compensated.

Therefore we, the members of the Ending Racism Committee request that, in recognition of these factors, the USG Board of Directors provide a compensatory stipend for Connie Simon at an equitable rate for hours served in accordance with Meadville Lombard's revised policy and in combination with the established precedent for USG's previous 2-year intern.

Members of the Ending Racism Committee:

Treva Burger, Barbara Dowdall, Cynthia Mea. Schiff, Devery Howerton, Gail Mershon, Jim Salom, Kay Weiser, Lois Murphy, Lucinda Lea, Nancy Anderson, Parvathy Menon, Susan E. Stout, Shohbi Kanal, Tom Grabe

****Should students be compensated for internships?***

We strongly encourage that students be paid for their internship. If that is not possible, teaching pastors must be in contact with the **Director of Contextual Ministry** to explore other options.

<http://www.meadville.edu/learning-at-mlts/teaching-pastors-and-mentors/>

Appendix 2: Ministry Executive Team Report

Ministry Executive Team Report
August 2018

MLK Day of Service- New Co-chairs

Since Connie Simon left, we have been looking for someone to replace her as MLK Day chair. We are delighted to report that Dev Howerton and Lois Murphy agreed to serve as co-chairs of the 2019 MLK Day. Dev and Lois are also co-chairs of USG's Social Justice Council. We greatly appreciate that these two capable leaders have taken on this additional responsibility.

Governance Structure Refresher Presentation

Several years ago, Andrea Parry gave an excellent power point presentation to the Board outlining USG's new governance structure. For a review and refresher, MET invited Andrea to repeat her presentation to MET. We also looked at other pages on the website and noticed that several sections needed updating. Andrea graciously volunteered to review the entire USG website and make updates as needed. Many thanks to Andrea!

New MET Member Update

We are saddened to report that Jim Salom has decided to step down from MET. After careful thought, he determined that he could not devote enough time to MET and perform the required duties adequately because of his demanding work schedule at Weavers Way. Jim will continue his involvement with the choir and ERC and hopes to be considered for MET at a future date. We wish him well and admire his integrity and courage for making his decision.

We are currently in the process of finding someone to replace Jim. We have two possible candidates in mind and have submitted their names to the Board for approval.

Rev. Kent's Study Leave

We welcome back Rev. Kent from his two-week study leave from August 8 -August 18. Kent reports that while he was able to relax, he did much productive reading.

Sarah Frazier Volunteer Work in Texas

Congratulations to Sarah who raised over \$1300 to travel to El Paso, Texas for two weeks to volunteer at the Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center to help low-income immigrants with legal issues. Sara worked in an office and ran a blog while she was there. Rev. Kent will meet with Sarah to explore ways to share her experience with the congregation.

General Assembly Travel Award

Over the years, several USG members have indicated that they would like to attend GA but do not have the financial means to do so. Conference costs, including registration fees, travel and lodging, can exceed \$1000.

Eric Foster recently met with MET to discuss the possibility of establishing a fund to cover some or all travel costs of USG members who have not been able to attend GA as delegates or participants because of their financial situation. MET supports establishing this fund and agreed to implement the following (1) include an option on the USG online payment center for contributions (2) include an option when making the annual pledge to contribute \$5 to the travel award fund and (3) provide a basket for donations during coffee hour. Details regarding the process of distribution and selection of award recipients still needs to be worked out.

Anti-racism Task Force

The Anti-racism Task Force, which is now under MET, is planning a retreat for committee chairs/leaders. The event, Building Beloved Community Retreat, will occur on Saturday, October 6, 2018 from 9:30 a.m. -3:00 p.m. at USG. Kent will present his ideas for Strategic Planning during the first hour of the retreat. The rest of the time will be devoted to presenting, discussing, processing the White Audit.

Elevator Project Update

Construction of the elevator project has begun. The goal is to have the project completed by February or March, 2019. Gloria Guldager and Carolyn Scott have provided information to the congregation about how building use will be impacted during construction. They also provided detailed information about the logistics for navigating the building during this period. Affected areas include the Daskam and Committee rooms and the Sullivan Chapel wing.

Emily Joy Goldberg Grant Application

Emily is applying for a grant from the Unitarian Universalist Funding Program to fund a musical project. Emily has asked that USG act as the sponsoring organization because these grants are only given to organizations. However, Emily affirms that she will assume responsibility for all aspects of the grant and will serve as the manager of the project. She states that her goal is to “produce a full-length album of songs that share Unitarian Universalism with the wider community of social activists and progressive faith congregations”. MET enthusiastically supports this effort and is working closely with Emily during the grant submission process.

Video Project

The purpose of this project is to promote USG through video which will include short pieces featuring Rev. Kent highlighting ways to lead a spiritually healthy and justice-centered life. The videos will be shown on the USG website and Facebook page, Kent’s Facebook page, and the church’s youtube page. Kent will recruit someone to manage this project with him, as well as other volunteers to help out.

Roadmap Planning

Roadmap planning continues. Rev. Kent will convene a strategic planning meeting with church leaders to get their input and suggestions for ministries and programs as we move forward on this important project.

Woods Project

Significant work has been done on the Woods Project, including designing the space, leveling the ground area, laying of the labyrinth, and ordering the benches. Many thanks to project leader Eva Finney, the Buildings and Grounds Committee, and Roderick Ahrens for all their extensive work in researching options for various components of the project. And a special thanks to Roderick’s scout troop for their volunteer labor.

POWER (Philadelphians Organized to Witness Empower and Rebuild)

Rev. Kent and several USG members recently attended a meeting with Yvette Davis and Jordan Ford of POWER. Ms. Davis and Ms. Ford provided information about several upcoming events for potential USG congregational involvement. In addition to the meeting, Kent plans to attend POWER'S Leadership Training event on August 28th and 29th as well as the clergy meeting in September.