

Birmingham Unitarian Church
Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
March 8, 2021

Present: Rev. Mandy Beal, Brad Corteville (Youth Rep), Neb Duric, Mary Gawel-Ensroth, David Greer, Andrew Schreck, Cheryl Shettel, Donna Larkin Mohr, Diane Slon, Craig Stroup, Paul Vachon

In response to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic crisis, this board meeting was held virtually on the Zoom internet platform.

The meeting was called to order by Donna at 7:02 PM. Rev. Mandy led the chalice lighting and check-in.

Minutes

- Cheryl moved that the minutes of the February 22, 2021 board meeting be accepted. The motion was carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports

- Monthly reports will be presented at the March 22, 2021 meeting.

Unfinished Business

1. Ministerial Fellowship Committee – Rev. Mandy
 - a. This item was added to the agenda.
 - b. Rev. Mandy reviewed the process by which she will be granted full fellowship in the UUA. This process involves annual evaluations conducted by Rev. Mandy's mentor, the Committee on Ministry, and a team of board members.
 - c. The team of board members include Craig, Diane, and Andrew.
 - d. The evaluation should be completed in June.
 - e. The Committee on Ministry will meet on Thursday, March 11; and the three board members are encouraged to attend.
2. Strategic Plan – General Discussion
 - a. The strategic plan will be developed some time from June through August.
 - b. Congregants' answers to the three questions from the Town Hall that took place in November 2019 will be considered. The questions included: How does BUC feed you emotionally or

spiritually? What will keep you here during the next five years?
What are your aspirations for BUC?

- c. Work toward adopting the 8th UU Principle will also be included. The Black Lives of UU (BLUU) is encouraging all UUs “to advocate for the formal adoption of an 8th principle, articulating a commitment to the dismantling of white supremacy, within the stated principles of our faith”. <https://www.8thprincipleuu.org/> The principle states: “We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.”
3. Supporting Rev. Mandy’s Parental Leave
- a. Board members were encouraged to share their positive feelings and support of Rev. Mandy and Jesse Beal’s upcoming adoption.
 - b. Issues concerning Rev. Mandy can be referred to the Committee on Ministry. Financial questions can be directed to Diane. Stewardship matters can be addressed by the Stewardship Committee.

New Business

1. Guiding Principles for BUC Budgeting
- a. The Budget and Finance Committee recommended the following:
 - i. The church shall maintain an unrestricted cash balance equal to three (3) months of average monthly operating expenses.
 - ii. The budget shall save funds for unforeseen physical plant needs.
 - iii. The budget will align with the vision and mission determined by the Board and Minister.
 - iv. The budget will maintain salaries and benefits within UUA guidelines.
 - v. The budget will be balanced.
 - vi. The budget will conform to the constitutional specifications of the endowment.
 - b. There were questions whether a specific percentage of the budget should be specified to meet unforeseen physical plant needs with the general guideline being 10 percent.

- c. The issue of what to do should there be a need to deviate from what is stated in the policy arose. Rev. Mandy suggested a separate policy that addressed the need to suspend a policy with support from 75 percent of the board.
 - d. Diane, along with Cheryl, will take these concerns to the Budget and Finance Committee.
 - e. The proposed principles will be considered again at the next board meeting.
2. Reopening of In-Person Meetings and Worship
 - a. Tom Raffel is the chair of the COVID-19 Response Task Force.
 - b. Donna will begin attending the task force meetings as an observer.
 - c. Donna has registered for the March 26 MidAmerica Region meeting about reopening decisions. More sessions are available during the month of March should others want to attend.
3. Request to LDC
 - a. Donna reported that she had a phone conversation with Kathy DuHame. Donna conveyed what she had learned from her meetings with other congregations in the MidAmerica Region related to leadership development.
 - b. Donna provided Kathy with a list of issues for the LDC to consider.
4. Planned Giving Chairperson
 - a. This item was added to the agenda.
 - b. Neb reported that he had spoken with Rich Schreck concerning the search for a congregant to replace Rich as chairperson of the Planned Giving Committee. Rich is recommending Steve Wright and will train him in the role.
 - c. Neb will contact Rich to have Steve join the Planned Giving Committee this year and then assume the role of chairperson next year.

Issues Arising for the Good of the Church

- Rev. Mandy asked that a board member be present when Beth Singer signs the membership book to join BUC. Cheryl volunteered.

Craig moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Gawel-Ensroth, Secretary