

# BUC Board of Trustees

## Board of Trustees Minutes for January 20, 2014

**Present:** Lisa Demian, Dave Graham, Marilyn Kelly, John Hammer, Dick Cantley, Bruce Webber, Kathy Hurt, Marilyn Mast, Barbara Woolf, Eric Sargent

**Absent:** Ian Arnold

**Guests:** none

**Call to Order**

**Centering:** "For a New Beginning", poem by John O'Donahue

**30 second check-in**

**Recitation of Board covenant:**

Listen to each other with respect

Support each other's leadership

Speak honestly for mutual understanding

Respect confidentiality of the Board and Minister

**Consent Agenda**

1. **Minutes** from December 18 corrected as to date of Annual Meeting: May 18. Minutes approved as corrected - Eric/Dave
2. **Youth CON** will be held here the second weekend in March, with the Executive's permission
3. **New Member Gathering** to be Saturday March 1, potluck style, honoring all new members who joined in 2013 (33 in all). Board participation is encouraged.

**Monthly Reports**

1. **Treasurer's Report** - Dick Cantley - Preliminary year-end number indicate a much lower loss than anticipated (\$25-30K vs a budgeted loss of \$123K). This is due to strong December pledge income and the yearly endowment distribution. Cash on hand at end of 2013 = \$90,000.

The 2014/15 budget is balanced at \$803K because late pledges brought that total to \$506K and rental income was increased by \$7K. No staff salary rate

increases are budgeted, but a 5% contribution to a retirement account for eligible staff is budgeted to bring us into compliance with UUA and government guidelines. In addition, the Minister's retirement contribution has been restored. A 6% raise, equivalent to 2% per year for the past three years, is budgeted for the Minister, who has had no raise for the past three years. We are still not budgeted for UUA contributions, which total \$18,000

2. **Senior Minister Report** – Kathy's written report, as e-mailed, reflects developments in areas of worship, service, learning and fellowship. Her report included, and will continue to include, updates from the Program Council. In their January meeting, the Program Council debriefed on the experience of doing the town halls. In spite of poor attendance at these, program leaders are willing to do further presentations at small gatherings in homes, should the Board decide to try that route to encourage further discussion of capital projects. The group will prepare project plans to present next month, as part of the continuing process of fleshing out the strategic plan
3. **Monitoring: Ends Policy #1 – Service** – As part of the Board's cyclical responsibility to monitor areas of church life, we assess the program area of Service and Social Justice. We (BUC) seem to be fulfilling this well with two new efforts in 2013: the Baldwin House summer camp experience and the strong support fund for BUCers in need at Christmas. New leadership in this area is very able and responsive. The water damage at WHRC (Whitmer Human Resource Center) in Pontiac is dire; it is hard to know what to do. Kathy will talk with Mary Jo Ebert about Service and Social Justice focusing on how we can help.

**Generative/Reflective:** Is our house the right size for our congregation and its needs? This question can be applied to physical space and programmatic needs. In spite of recent gains in new members, our total membership numbers are falling rapidly. This indicates we do not do a good job of retention.

The Stewardship Drive uncovered confusion in how we count people and the executive is working for clarification (Bruce Webber offered his help). If we apply our criteria for membership, it is possible the total number is even lower, which would re-categorize us as a mid-size, rather than large, church. This would have implications for staffing, salaries and other items. Eric commented that "accurate self-assessment is crucial".

One factor for engaging new members is to find ways they can be involved, where people to people connections are key. One path is joining a small group

fellowship. The program is currently in some disarray, but will be addressed soon.

Another factor is high expectations from younger folks regarding anything done with non-work time. This would speak to upgraded RE classrooms, for instance.

And a third help would be a very clear “message” or “brand” to focus on what we and UUism uniquely have to offer. Polls indicate that more people are identifying as “spiritual but not religious”, which would seem to fit with us very well.

## **Board Business**

- 1. Scheduling of BOT meetings** will remain the same: the third Monday of each month at 7pm.
- 2. Campus Development and Prioritization Committee** – Dick presented a written report of this group’s work. Church member architects met recently with Dick to outline the process of what steps are taken and when in a building project, which means coming up with some money for architectural drawings before the official launch.

Most of the inputs from the program areas are complete. The committee anticipates being ready in Feb. to create some footprint of the church if all the program needs are met. Now what? At what point do we ask for fund-raising expertise? Dick will ask the UUA. Kathy suggested using parts of four Sunday morning services in April to help the congregation imagine what is being proposed. This would be preparation for the Annual Meeting May 18.

- 3. Reviewing and Revising the BUC Constitution** to make it congruent with policy/governance. Eric Sargent, Mary Cay Dietz, Donna Cunningham and Ruth Lyons are working diligently on this, exchanging drafts, but have not yet come to agreement as to scope. They will continue to work, and anticipate having something for congregational approval in late fall.
- 4. Attendance Trends** – down, as is membership, as discussed above. Kathy and the membership committee will be reaching out to some of our recently missing folks.

**5. Congregational Meeting** – officially scheduled for Sunday, May 18, 2014.  
Time to be determined.

**6. Volunteer of the Month** – Steve Lorey

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm (Dick/John)