

Minutes

First Unitarian Church of Oakland Board of Trustees

March 23, 2010

The meeting started at 7:30 P.M. in the Starr King room at church.

In attendance at the meeting were Claire Eustace, Gail Schulz, Jon Greer, Noemi de Guzman, Charles Williams, Dan Goss, Rinda Bartley, Bev Smrha, Giselle Ampuero, Reeann Dixon, Bob Crowe, Kathy Huff, Charla Weiss, Julie Baeder, Cat Ishida, Celia Reyes, Jill Miller, and Dan Wright.

Dan Goss opened the meeting with a reading and chalice lighting.

Board transition: We went through the litany of welcome/farewell for retiring/new Board members. Retiring members Claire Eustace and Gail Schulz left the meeting.

Elections:

The following Board members ran for the following officer positions:

President: Noemi de Guzman

VP: Rinda Bartley

Treas: Jon Greer

Secretary: Dan Goss

Jon moved, Rinda seconded this slate, and it passed unanimously.

Agenda: We reviewed and adjusted the agenda.

Consent agenda:

Rinda Bartley moved and Giselle Ampuero seconded a motion to accept the consent agenda. This was approved unanimously.

Debrief on Annual Meeting and Board linkage event:

What worked well:

- Lively, interested attendance
- One round within time better than two rounds going over time
- Facilitating table fun & easy
- All the report outs were connected
- Participants were specific and pinpointed things
- Business reports were succinct and interesting, and set stage well

- Focusing questions helped facilitate
- Providing lunch was great, and also fun for the servers

Could have worked better:

- Time for people to sign up for volunteer positions: no one signed up this time
- Hard time finding names for member check-in. Bev Smrha volunteers to consolidate list for next time.
- Kathy Huff would like annual meeting to be first Saturday in March, in the evening, including dinner, worship, conversation, stuff for kids. It could be a community building event as well as business meeting. An earlier date would give time for Board orientation for new members.
- A Saturday meeting would require good publicity to compete with regular Saturday entertainment.
- Ideas for Saturday meeting were shared.

Need tentative date for Annual Meeting by April 17, when calendaring will happen. Will tentatively say we will try 1st Sat. in March.

There seems to be energy for holding congregational connection discussions as in the Annual Meeting every other month.

We'll put this on our list of agenda items.

Journey Towards Wholeness (JTW) linkage:

Charles Williams reporting, along with JTW members Jill Miller, Celia Reyes, and Dan Wright:

- JTW has been a Board committee for 6 years.
- The previous robust connection between the Board and JTW is not here as much now, and we need a tighter connection.
- The JTW team would like to make sure that the Board knows what JTW, Allies for Racial Equality (ARE), and People of Color caucus (POC) are doing.

Jill Miller read a statement of purpose for linkage.

The following ideas were presented for making this happen concretely:

- JTW and Board disseminating ways to be accountable to other groups in church
- Bringing one-on-one process to other groups.
- Conversations between JTW and Board to make sure we're on the same page. Spend time together.

JTW presented a set of proposed motions to the Board, and we discussed them. JTW described what these things would look like. There was no motion made by a Board member for action on these items.

The Board decided to not act tonight, as we need time to think. Trustees should read these items and talk to each other, and begin doing some of the proposed items.

We identified a working group to figure out how to incorporate the motions into the policies as we have them structured now. The working group is: Bev Smrha (who will coordinate the meeting time and place), Dan Goss, and Dan Wright. The JTW group will identify other JTW members who will be part of this working group

Board members are welcome at JTW meetings.

Senior Minister's report:

We have added 17 new members since November.

There will be an Ingathering this Sunday.

Goal: keep new members. Kathy Huff will send new member contact information to Trustees, we should each connect with them and make a relationship.

A "Gather the Spirit" event, whose purpose is to reflect on Kathy Huff's ministry, will be held on Wednesday, 4/14, at 7:30. The Committee on Ministry (COM) will send each of us an invitation.

Stewardship: Kathy Huff has learned from the Tulsa, Oklahoma congregation, which is the largest church in our denomination, some of the characteristics of their thriving church:

1. Challenge members to lead a spiritual life.
2. It matters how you spend money. Space has to look good. (Tulsa looks great). The staff dress professionally.
3. Transparency on financial life (who gives, how its spent, etc.).
4. Not about a catchy campaign, but an enduring and consistent message.
5. No Miracle Sunday.
6. Language is about ownership and investment in the church.
7. The gift you're coming in with (hopefully 5%) is ongoing forever. A small subset of people is asked to increase. (Who?)
8. Key question: how will you deepen your commitment?
9. Thank you dinner for big givers. Financial leadership recognition is similar to leadership recognition. Say thank you 7 times before you say please.
10. Dinner underwritten and thrown by members.
11. At thank you dinner, they pitch vision for the next year.
12. Church is first in your giving (vs. other organizations).
13. Visible display of whether you've pledged yet.
14. Give away every plate. Tulsa gave away \$573,000 last year.
15. Tulsa has a diversity fund they used for music ministry.
16. 97% of giving comes from top 3% of givers.
17. Year-round pledge: it's ongoing until you say otherwise, vs. re-upping once a year. During the year (at any time) they ask new members to give and selected members to increase.

Noemi invited Trustees to attend new member luncheon this Sunday after 2nd service.

== Process Observations ==

Ends:

Dan Goss led us in a discussion of what transformation within would look like, and took separate notes on this, which he sent to the Board by email.

Dan Goss, Charles Williams, Giselle Ampuero, and Kathy Huff will meet before the next Board meeting to come up with a draft organization of the wording for updated Ends.

Discussion Highlights:

- Quality of the challenge from JTW to Board.
- Explanations of what we felt during Ends discussion was hard to articulate in words
- Election of Noemi de Guzman is historic. This is most diverse Board of Trustees we've ever had
- Approving Cathy Rion for ministry
- When JTW reached out and articulated expectations for growing intimacy, it was powerful.
- Would be good to train new Trustees before their first meeting.
- We need a scribe.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- We will have our April retreat on Saturday, April 17th from 10:30 - 2:30, after the church calendaring meeting, at Noemi de Guzman's house. This will include a potluck lunch.

- Noemi took notes on agenda items, will draft next agenda. The topics generated were:
 - (Hopefully) appointing a scribe (on consent agenda)
 - Report from the JTW policy working group
 - Annual board priorities
 - Two written reports from senior minister (on consent agenda)
 - Ends refinement
 - Congregational survey
 - Approving delegates to district and general assemblies (April 27 meeting consent agenda)
 - Manse Fund motion
 - New trustee orientation

- Steering committee will organize orientation for the April 17th meeting.

== Process observations ==