

First Unitarian Church of Oakland Board of Trustees
Minutes of December 20, 2011 Board Meeting
Approved on January 7, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 7:15pm, in the Starr King Room, by Rinda Bartley, Vice-President of the Board. In attendance were: Bob Crowe, Jon Greer, Andy Lee, Margaret Woodside, Beverly Smrha. Also in attendance: Rev. Kathy Huff and Lucia Haet.

Opening, Chalice Lighting and Reading of the Board Covenant

- Reading was presented by Margaret Woodside.

Consent Agenda

- The receipt of the 2/11/11 Senior Ministers Report was acknowledged.
- The DRAFT of the 11/22/11 Board Meeting Minutes was pulled for corrections.

Minutes of November 22, 2011 Board Meeting

- After corrections noted, the Minutes were approved.

Connecting with the Minister

- Journey Towards Wholeness, a committee established by the Board, is due for a review of its appointment process and criteria; it's 2012 work will include a focus on our associate ministerial position.
- The Congregational Survey results will be a topic for considerable reflection at our January retreat.
- At the January retreat, Rev. Kathy will present a review of the Sole Executive organizational practice that had been designed by the Board last year.
- There has been some of a push-back from the congregation to individual board members regarding transparency.
- A heightened awareness of the treatment of the staff by some congregants is raised.
- The December Winter Holiday Concert was acclaimed to be truly amazing.

Connecting with the Stewardship Committee

- We are in the midst of a culture change with all that requires from the Board and the congregation.
- The new Giving Tree is quite a delightful communication tool.
- The reality is coming very close to the established goal markers; the design of the Stewardship Committee is on track.
- The letter that went out to all the congregation used humor and that tone was a hit.
- The next event will be a Fireside Gathering on January 28, 2012.

Connecting with the Executive and Coordinating Team

- A comprehensive review of the proposed budget was led by Lucia Haet.
- The budget is now structured to be directly tied to the chart of accounts.

- We still need leadership for special and ongoing fund-raisers.
- Because of the increase in cost of medical insurance, the take home pay for our staff has been reduced. The California Choice plan had a 27% increase; 80% of which is covered by the church; 20% covered by the individual staff.
- The Board recognized that the Budget is the guide, and only a guide, to financial decisions made during the calendar year.
- The Budget, which is proposed by the Executive and the Coordinating Team after broad high-level discussion with the Board, was accepted unanimously.

Connecting with the Nominating Committee

- The recent LEAD weekend training netted some income which can be used for further leadership training programs.
- The Board turnover will be high this year with 4 members continuing and 5 new board members needed.
- Consideration was given to how the Board role appears to the congregation and more current information is appropriate.
- The Nominating Committee requests advice from the Board regarding the skills and background useful for serving on the Board.

Process Observations

- Jon Greer and Beverly Smrha presented their observations of the Board Process.
- The Board was reminded that part of the Process Observation requires a Power Analysis.

2011-2012 Board Annual Priority #3: Conversation about Continuum on becoming an anti-racist multi-cultural organization

- The Board conducted an exercise that focused on the personal understanding of the roadblocks to change.

Annual Congregational Meeting planning

- Because of lack of time, the planning for the Annual Congregational Meeting of Sunday, March 18, 2012, was postponed.

2011-2012 Board Annual Priority #1: Ends monitoring or linkage with congregation reports

- Board members shared stories of monitoring or linkage with congregation.
- Written reports are filed with the Vice-President.
- The Congregational Survey answers will be analyzed by the Board at the January retreat.

Discussion highlights and decisions for institutional memory: reminders of issues raised and ideas for the future

- Mentoring new Board members; always important and particularly so with 5 new members elected in March.

- How essential the Board's Continuum work is to the long term health of the congregation.
- We have achieved 80%, to-date, on the fund drive.
- The Journey Towards Wholeness Team's focus.
- Understanding the Budget Process, with Lucia's leadership.
- \$8,400 to be raised.
- The realities of the Executive role.

Next Steps: Assignments and Next Meeting Agenda

- The calendar of events was distributed. Please note the 5pm and 10pm Christmas Eve Services and the one service on January 1 at 11:25am.
- Reviewed the Draft Agenda items for the January 7, 2012 Retreat (hosted by Bev), 9am-1pm. Specific assignments and facilitators of discussions determined.
- The date for Staff Appreciation Brunch will have an Easter time-frame.
- Reviewed the Monthly Board Meeting Tasks for January 2012:
 1. Snacks: Bev Smrha;
 2. Sower and Web Article: Margaret Woodside;
 3. Thank You Notes: Bob Crowe;
 4. Opening and Closing: Andy Lee

Process Observations

- Margaret Woodside and Andy Lee presented their observations of the Board Process.

Closing Circle

- Reading was presented by Margaret Woodside.
- Meeting was adjourned at 9:50pm.