

First Unitarian Church of Oakland Board of Trustees

Minutes of April 9, 2011 Retreat

The meeting was called to order at 9:00am, in the office of Chris Sutherland, and hosted by Jon Greer and Margaret Woodside.

In attendance were: Giselle Ampuero, Bob Crowe, Jon Greer, Andy Lee, Jill Miller, Beverly Smrha, Margaret Woodside; as well as Reverend Kathy Huff.

Opening Reading and the Chalice Lighting

- Opening reading was presented by Giselle.
- We were invited to check in with one word.

Understanding Ourselves and Each Other, and the Covenantal Relationship among Trustees

Rev. Kathy led the board through a process of Leadership Training.

Process Observation and Caucusing

Jill led us through a training session on how we can best utilize process observation as a working board.

- Process observation is used to pay attention to both power and privilege in group settings.
- The group can hear a variety of perspectives from the individuals doing the observation.
- Can pay attention to noticing and witnessing.
- Not always a polite reflection but an expression of feeling.

Nuts and Bolts

Bob led us through a discussion of how the board works as a deliberative body that includes:

1. Meeting Process such as preparation via paper and online references, keeping time, presentation, discussion, speaking in turn, and making motions.
2. Trustee tasks such as Sower articles, Board web reports, thank you notes, refreshments, opening and closing words.
3. Organizational work between meetings such as ad hoc groups, e-mail, listserv files uploaded, setting up meeting agenda.

4. Participating in church events such as membership classes and ingatherings.

Board Policies

Jon led us through a discussion on Policy Based Governance as it is practiced in First Oakland.

1. What is Policy Governance; how does it work; and a review of the past year.
2. What are the next steps for us in Policy Based Governance.

Process Observations

Jill and Bob presented their process observations.

Denominational Affairs Primer

Because we were running behind in our schedule, this was deferred to our April board meeting.

Board Annual Priorities

Giselle led us through a brainstorming of issues that we should consider for board priorities of 2011-2012.

No decisions were made at this time; that action needs to happen later and when almost all of the board members can be present.

The format used here is: named issue; (who suggested it); what area(s) of church life does this fall into.

1. By-laws to be revised (Jon); falls within Board Process
2. Evaluate language of by-laws (Bob); falls within Board Process
3. Cultural learning (Andy); falls within Board Process and Justice Ministry
4. Ways to mobilize church continuum (Jill); falls within Justice Ministry and Board Process
5. Lead greater awareness to congregation (Jon); falls within Justice Ministry
6. Year-round stewardship (Bob); falls within Institutional Support
7. Outside stewardship consultation (Margaret); falls within Institutional Support
8. Structured conversations with congregation (Bev and Kathy); falls within Linkage with Congregation

Future Agenda Items

- Further discussion of Board Annual Priorities; some of which can happen on the listserv
- April: a 5 minute Asset Management Report with Rev. Kathy.
- Executive Report with Rev. Kathy
- Board Covenant
- Interpretation of “Beyond” ends put on the Consent Calendar
- Interpretation of “Within” ends put on the Consent Calendar
- Denominational Affairs discussion
- May: Stewardship Report by Rev. Kathy

Discussion Highlights and Decisions for Institutional Memory

- What is the role of the Board’s Sower articles
- Board media communications
- Clarification of Future Agenda items

Process Observations

Andy and Margaret presented their process observations.

Check out

We were each invited to briefly list two personal goals related to our board service.