

First Unitarian Church of Oakland
Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting
September 22, 2015

Present:

Board Members: B Avalon, Laurel Egenberger, Dan Goss, Micheas Herman, Claudia Morgan, Kenji Oshima, Lisa Rosene, Emily Stoper, Chris Sutherland, Kris Wedding Crowell (Chair).

(Absent: Jaki Lee)

Visitors: Rev. Jacqueline Duhart, Linda Hodges, Judith Hunt, Dennis Rowcliffe, Tom Smith, Bev Smrha, Rev. Abbey Tennis.

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m. After the chalice lighting and a reading offered by Laurel, it was announced that Kris and Chris would be timekeepers.

Claudia moved and Lisa seconded the approval of the consent agenda (with one item, the minutes of the previous meeting). That passed unanimously.

Change to the agenda: Since Molly Hermes could not be present to give a full financial report, for which 20 minutes had been allotted, Chris suggested that the last 10 minutes of that time allotment be used to deal with the issue of creation of a Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM). Kris moved, Claudia seconded and everyone voted for this proposal. Molly will give a full report at the October Board meeting.

Report of Committee on Sponsorship of Ministerial Candidates: Bev Smrha stated that the committee, having interviewed Michelle Ma and carefully examined her credentials, was pleased to recommend that the Board approve church sponsorship of her candidacy. On a motion made by Kris and seconded by B, the Board did so unanimously.

Interim Financial Report (in Molly's absence): Chris presented figures showing that the church was doing well financially. Pledges are coming in at a higher rate than expected and the church has paid down over \$400,000 of the mortgage. All procedures have been streamlined. About \$30,000 has been saved by postponing the hiring of a church bookkeeper (which is now in progress). This was partly enabled by the data entry work done by a number of volunteers, including Board members Dan, Kenji and Kris.

Creation of a Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM): It was moved by Emily and seconded by Micheas that Claudia and Dan will work with the ministers to do the groundwork for creation and filling of a new COSM and to present a status report at the October Board meeting. The motion specified that Claudia and Dan are to create

- a list of desirable skills for members of the committee,

- a charge to the committee, and
- a plan for recruiting the committee that will cast a wide net, seeking to include a diversity of cultural, sexual and gender identities, generations, disabilities, and family constellations, as well as variety in length of membership in the congregation.

The motion passed unanimously.

Stewardship Update: Kris reported that plans are moving along for the annual Stewardship Campaign. There will not be house parties this year but instead an all-church pizza party on Oct. 16. More volunteers are needed.

Financing the Start Up: Church Administrator Linda Hodges reported that additional funds are needed for the Start Up events on Oct. 30 and 31 and Nov. 1 that will launch Rev. Abbey Tennis' and Rev. Sheri Prud'homme's ministries. The church will need \$800-1000 to finance living expenses for the two facilitators from the Unitarian Universalist Association, Rev. Jonipher Kwong and Rev. Cheryl Walker, and to provide food at the events themselves. Chris moved and Dan seconded a motion to raise this money by sharing the plate from a Sunday service where it will be announced as dedicated to this purpose and also to pass the hat among Board members – and if that does not raise sufficient funds that the matter be brought to the November Board meeting so that the Board may decide how to find additional funds. The motion passed unanimously.

Plan for the Work of the Board: Chris introduced a new version of the Board's work plan that she had created. The Board went through it item by item.

- Chris is working on a revision of the Bylaws, which is targeted for completion in January 2016.
- Kris moved and Kenji seconded a motion requesting that the Board's Nominating Committee (consisting of Dan, B and Laurel) report back at the October Board meeting on its progress in seeking two members new members for the Executive Team. This passed unanimously.
- Lisa moved and Laurel seconded a motion requesting that Molly Hermes (as the Executive Team's financial officer) and Chris Sutherland (as the Treasurer) report back at the October Board meeting with recommendations on the frequency with which a full audit of the church's finances should occur and when the first such audit should take place. This passed unanimously.
- Chris moved and Claudia seconded a motion requesting that Chris report back at the October Board meeting on a date scheduled for an annual bookkeeping check of the church's finances by the Finance Committee. The motion specified that Chris inform the Board at that time of the identity of the members of the Finance Committee. It passed with 8 votes and one abstention.

- Kris moved and Emily seconded a motion creating a working group, consisting of the four members of the Board's steering committee (Claudia, Kris, Chris and Emily), who will work with the Executive Team (ET) to thoroughly review the draft organizational chart developed by the ET, probe any issues and then lead the Board through a lengthy, well-facilitated discussion of the implications of the draft and the next steps in creating a workable church structure, to take place at its retreat on Oct. 4. This passed unanimously.
- B moved and Dan seconded a motion to create a working group consisting of Lisa and Laurel which will be tasked with recommending at the November meeting a plan and a schedule for the Board's communications with the congregation and the staff. The plan should including recommendations on whether to issue regular Board Bulletins, have regular meetings with the congregation and/or report on the Board's activities during Sunday morning services (and in all three cases, how often). This passed unanimously.
- Kris moved and Lisa seconded that the Board establish a working group, consisting of Emily and Laurel, to report back to the October meeting with a recommended slate of committees and a plan for monitoring them, giving due consideration to the list of committees discussed at the August meeting. This passed unanimously.
- Laurel moved and Kenji seconded that the Board request from the ET a plan to share draft budget information with the congregation and solicit input from them prior to congregational approval of the budget at the annual meeting. This passed unanimously.

Other issues listed on the work plan will be discussing during October, at either the retreat or the Board meeting.

There were two process monitoring reports by Dennis Rowcliffe, a multicultural exercise led by B, and closing words offered by Laurel.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Stoper