

**USR Board of Trustees Meeting
Minutes
February 1, 2016**

Attendance:

Peter Duran, Robb Willis, Suzanne Samuels, Helen Matusow-Ayres, Rob Markowitz, Laura Krag, Judd Seals, Elizabeth Ames and Rev. Anthony Johnson.

Process Observer: Elizabeth Ames

Chalice lighting 7:04pm

I. Housekeeping

- Minutes and reports
 - i. Rob moved to approve the January 4, 2016 minutes. Lizbet seconded. Minutes were approved and the Board accepted all of the reports
- Events
 - i. 2/5 Reproductive Justice Panel- There will be a Board table with dignitaries
 - ii. 2/6 DRE Start-up 9:30-3
 - iii. Lead Donor event 2/6 7 p.m. evening
- Interim Ministry Appraisal
 - i. The Appraisal was completed and Rob and Suzanne met with Rev. Tony. Suzanne will put Rev. Tony's appraisal into the Dropbox. There were no different opinions but there were some different perspectives between what we wrote and what Reverend Tony wrote. There was a productive discussion.
 - ii. Rev. Tony commented "This Board works very hard and should have some time when they are together but not working, getting to know each other better". The BOT agreed and we will plan for a time.
- Staff Appraisals
 - i. All of the staff appraisals were completed and shared between Rev. Tony and Suzanne. Rev. Tony will review and Rev. Tony and Rob and Suzanne will speak with the staff members about them.
 - ii. BOT agreed that the Minister should be the chief administrative officer. Rev. Tony suggested that we keep that in mind in the search process. BOT should be aware that if we don't get a minister who is skilled in that area, we will need to find another way to cover it. BOT believes it would be best to have a minister with administrative skills and provided that input to the Minister Search Committee.

- Announcements
 - i. Five dates remaining, please sign-up. Sign-up sheet sent around. USR Treasurer eagerly signed up for two dates.

II Ministers Report Reverend Tony

A) Summary

- We need to restart cottage meetings after they were suspended for the snow storm
- Rev. Tony completed the staff evaluations. He shared Ron's and Johanna's with their respective committees. Both evaluations were good and he had good conversations with each of them about what to work on for next year. He also conveyed feedback from others to each of them.
 - (a) Johanna and Anne each need to strengthen the membership of their committees (CYRE and Membership). Staff members need more lay support. Membership Committee members need more training to conduct outreach.
- We need to recruit new members and new leaders for some of the committees.

III Ministerial Search Team Update and Discussion about Vote Process Suzanne

A) Summary

- Need to create a task team on this issue, to work outside of the Board Meetings and determine what the next steps are.
- How to run the election

B) Discussion

- We still want to reach the RE Parents
 - (a) RE Website

C) Action

- Robert will lead the effort and Kevin agreed to work on it with him.

IV Treasurers Report Peter Duran

A) Summary

- A Task Team was established to discuss set-up and breakdown for rentals and society events. Peter and Ann are looking for another member to participate on the Task Team.
- Set-up and breakdown charge from the custodial firm is \$10,000 more. The Task Team will make recommendations

- The copy machine contract is expiring in November. Peter is going to shop around to see what is out there.
 - (a) The current company is asking us to renew for 5 years
- Year end pledge statements were sent out.
 - (a) Still some problems on some statements, some errors. People should just let Donna know if there is an error on their statement.
 - (b) Donna may need some additional training on the financial software
- Tax deductions in the Service Auction catalog are higher than permitted. Peter is going to follow-up individually. For next year it will go into the form that collects the information
- In Donna's performance appraisal, Peter recommended that she receive additional ACS training.

B) Discussion

- Robert reviewed the copy machine contract and thinks that the prices are very high and he made some suggestions for shopping around.
 - (a) Never go more than 3 years. Robert recommended his Canon contact
- There was a suggestion that we put a statement in the newsletter to contact Donna if you believe that your pledge statement is incorrect.
- Staff has expressed the wish for health insurance, possible options include: do we make them full time or pro-rate health insurance?

V **Annual Budget Drive** **Suzanne/Rob**

A) Summary

- Budget requests coming in from committees and staff members.
- Rev. Tony and Suzanne will write a cover letter to accompany budget drive brochure.
- We need to be cautious about setting an unattainable goal and the consequences of falling very short. People want to be a part of a winning team. The congregation is at a critical point with trying to build positive energy. Members have concerns about our finances (the loss on the minister's house). Falling short of our goal will intensify those concerns and it is likely that we will fall short.
- A \$75,000 increase in the budget is a major challenge and very likely unattainable.
- We do have a very strong case statement. Although we have a great rationale to increase staff time by \$25,000, it is too much. The other line items are not negotiable. (\$10K)Ministers salary, capital fund(10K) search funding (20K),
- \$50,000 is a more realistic goal. Although, still not easy to attain.
- Rob spoke with Bob Shoemaker, Peter, Eileen Jarrett, and Suzanne and all agree that we should lower the goal.

B) Discussion

- Questions about RE staffing with a small number of children. Do we still need an assistant?
- What will we do if we don't reach even the reduced goal
 - (a) People will ask where can we cut?
 - (b) Perhaps hold additional fundraisers
- Leave the statement as is and remove the numbers and lower the goal
- ABD Committee wants the specifics of the numbers
- Give broad categories instead
- Highlight the essential items, what is necessary to run the place.
- Propose a lower goal and even though it does not meet all of our needs it will be more realistic.
- We also have a need to increase staffing hours.
- RE Staff are often unavailable to newcomers

C) Action

- Peter moved that we reduce the goal to \$455,000, Helen seconded. Motion passed.
- Rob will ask budget committee to take the specific numbers for each item out of the budget pamphlet
- Laura will update the case statement to remove the numbers

VI **Program Council Report and Action Table** **Rob Willis**

A) Summary

- We have several vacancies
 - (a) Kathy Azarra stepped down
 - (b) Still need Ministry Council Chair
 - (c) Will need a Membership Chair
 - (d) Peace and Justice Chair
- Rob attended the SRC meeting
 - (a) Action Table was discussed
 - (i) There has been no direct oversight of the table by the SRC. Rob and Suzanne asked them to develop an oversight procedure.
 - (ii) There was disagreement about this idea
 - (iii) Rob wants SRC to create their own guidelines
 - (i) Carolyn Musser offered to work with Anita to propose a solution. They are working on it.

VII **Green Sanctuary Committee** **Suzanne**

A) Summary

- They have requested to survey the congregation about their interest in installing a bike rack at the Society
- They fall under the umbrella of the SRC since they never became a formal task force
- They want to peak interest in sustainable transportation
 - (a) They would use survey monkey

B) Discussion

- How would they implement the results?
- We need to be careful of survey fatigue and we are going to have the survey for the search committee coming up soon.
- Could they ask more questions about energy efficiency, and not just a bike rack?
- They want it to be targeted and specific
- Short and quick and easy to do
- They should ask the SRC to submit a budget request for a bike rack

C) Action

- Rob moves that we approve the transportation survey, Lizbet seconded, Motion passed

VIII **Schedule for Next Town Halls**
Suzanne

A) Summary

- Topics
 - (a) Candidates
 - (b) Budget
 - (c) SRC will present Black Lives Matter

B) Discussion

- Why do a budget presentation
 - (a) Currently we present it when it is fait accompli and there is no dialogue about it
 - (b) We need dialog that will help people to understand how expensive it is to run the place. It makes our job more transparent.
 - (c) Would it backfire? If we share the numbers detailing what it takes to run the society compared with how much funding goes to external causes will that upset people?
 - (d) ABD asked that we do this so that the stewards would be informed
 - (e) What about doing a presentation just for the stewards?
 - (f) Bob and Stephanie were concerned about the 19% increase. Now that the goal is lower they may not be as interested in the presentation

- (g) We could do a more general discussion of the process and percentages instead of line items. One slide in the town hall.
- (h) Could be part of the Energy Audit Town Hall

C) Action

- Suzanne and Rob will speak with Bob and Stephanie for more clarification about the purpose of the Town Hall that they have requested and they will let them know that we are not attaching line items to the ask. They will also tell that the numbers are coming down and propose the more general slide as a part of the Town Hall Meeting.
- Rob will work with Suzanne on the schedule for the meetings.

IX Review of Alcohol Policy for Fellowship Feast
Suzanne

A) Summary

- Fellowship Feast is a separate situation than most events because the alcohol is on the tables. This makes it harder to enforce the policy.
- A host form was developed to address this challenge
 - (a) It required that the table host monitor the consumption. The trustees did not want that role
 - (b) Suzanne asked Kevin to review the form and make suggestions.
 - (c) Suzanne and Helen will be the designees at this year's fellowship feast

B) Discussion

- New form makes more sense, not as cumbersome.
- Revision to include non alcoholic beverages

C) Action

- Helen moves that we accept the revised table host form, Robert seconded. Motion passed.

X Executive Session

A) No update

Helen moved to adjourn and Judd seconded the motion
Motion Passed
Adjourned at 9:20 p.m.