

**USR Board of Trustees Meeting  
Minutes  
November 2, 2015**

**Attendance:**

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

Guest: Jean Short, Johanna Seale on the phone

Process Observer: Kevin Smith

Chalice lighting at 7:01 pm  
Check-in

**I Housekeeping**

A) Approval of Minutes

- Board Resolution on changing signatures on accounts needs to be completed in the October minutes.
- Helen Matusow-Ayres moved to approve the October minutes pending the inclusion of the complete resolution, Rob Willis seconded the motion. Minutes approved pending the one change.

B) Dawning Future

- Suzanne will send the link for the Dawning Future Conference to Board and to the Program Council
- Outreach Auction same date as service auction offering concert. To avoid this from happening next year, the Board President should give the service auction chairs the important dates before they schedule offerings.

C) BOT Holiday Party

- Suzanne sent a meeting maker request to schedule the Board Holiday Party. Please respond.

D) Our congregation has received certification as a sexually safer congregation.

- We will publicize this on website and other locations
- Training for teachers and lay leaders. The Board is invited to participate.
- Suzanne or Rev. Tony will find out how long the certification period is.
- We will announce it at the Town Hall Meeting and in the Newsletter

E) ADE/CPR training coming up on Jan 9, 2016

- Subsidized by safe congregations and the is Board picking up the difference in the cost.

**II Ministers Report**

Rev. Tony

A) Summary

- Attended two workshops in the Berkshires
  - (a) Fund Raising in Difficult Times
  - (b) Lay leadership in the Interim process- multi-denominational
- There have been a large numbers of cottage meetings. The Board Cottage Meeting went well. People who have participated in the meetings are encouraging others to attend. They will continue through November. Getting different information from different combinations of people. December 15<sup>th</sup> sermon will be what was said back to the congregation. Will have a summary available for the December Board Meeting. People are willing to talk and listen openly and honestly.

B) Discussion

- Peter- How do you capture the feelings of the congregants who are not attending the cottage meetings? Looks like a third will attend and a pretty good cross section. If people feel that they are being heard that should serve as a leavening.
- What is the next step after the cottage meetings for the transition team? The next step will be addressing what comes up in the meetings.

III **DRE Report**

Johanna Seale

A) Summary

- Only three people on the CYRE Committee. It is difficult for her as a new DRE. Not sure who should work on that. Ideally have 6-8. One of the 3 is a liaison for the SRC. Spoke with the DRE Advisory group who advised her to speak with the Board. Prefer larger demographic than just parents. Currently there are two parents, Stephanie Brennan and Susan Fink. Parents overwhelmed and would like to build the idea that it belongs to the congregation as a whole, not just families.
- Johanna suggested having the second adult in the classroom a series of volunteers with one time commitments and have the teaching team rotate days of being present. This would reduce the burden on teachers. We would still need to background checks for the volunteers. Logistics still need to be worked out.

B) Discussion

- Background checks for people working with children every three years
- Senior youth who are interested could help. If they really want to do it
- Having 2 committees, the CYRE and the DREAD stretching resources.
- DRE Advisory was created to support LB during a difficult time for her.

- Could the two committees collapse into one?
- Rev. Tony indicated that the Committee on Ministry often serves the DRE.
- Can the CYRE be both critical and supportive of the DRE at the same time?
- Need people to staff the CYRE
- Also we need to decide about Advisory Board.
- Laura Krag suggested that the Committee on Ministry does need to move toward committee on ministries in the future. That is not how they have been function but when we reconstitute it, when we have a settled minister, it should be more general to all ministering, including DRE.
- Laura and Helen will help recruit for more members. One meeting a month, one Sunday a month- 5 hours a month expected time commitment.
- Helen will send Johanna the roles for the CYRE committee members
- Jean Short expressed that we still need the DREAD right now to support the new DRE, who is overwhelmed. She does not have enough support yet.

#### C) Action

- Helen and Laura will help recruit for the CYRE
- We will explore evolving the COM to Committee on Ministries- Minister, RE, Lay Leaders, the Board and the congregation at large.
- Rob will discuss this with the Program Council

### IV Treasurers Report

#### A) Peter Duran

#### B) Summary

- Staffing
  - (a) Peter and Bill Belknap reviewed job descriptions with the staff.
  - (b) The staff are often asked do things related to Nell's job description and they sometimes don't feel empowered to say no.
  - (c) They don't always get the finished product and there is more work to do for completion than appropriate. That causes a lot of back and forth.
  - (d) Ann is not able to focus on membership.
  - (e) Need to educate the committee leaders and the congregation and inform people what the job descriptions are.
- Plate Collections
  - (a) Bob Schoemaker requested that in Jan-March we not hold the plate collections. He feels that it will be too much competition for the budget drive.
- Helen gave the history from prior minutes about the increase in the number of plate collections. They were intended to provide

congregants more opportunities to give money to social action causes outside the congregation.

- Energy Audit-
  - (a) There were 5 recommendations totaling \$5,000.
  - (b) We decided on Saturday that the more expensive items will be separate in long term capital planning.
    1. Boiler repair = \$14,500 instead of previous estimate of \$4500. We only have \$18,000 for the whole year. Peter recommends that we complete the two or three less expensive items and hold off on the last 2 more expensive items
- Should we approve the \$500 to build a rental sign?

#### C) Discussion

- Plate collections- disagreement- not competition. People are really interested in what the special collections are. Nothing is changed it is not just one pot
  - (a) Don't need to revisit this
  - (b) The length of the pitch was also raised. This is a legitimate concern.
  - (c) Need to coordinate the SRC pleas with the budget drive pleas. Give dates to Bob.
- Energy Audit
  - (a) Is it more cost effective to replace the boiler? Should we use the long term capital fund? (Rob)
  - (b) If we use the capital fund we will have the money to take care of items 2, 3 and 4
  - (c) We need clarification of what is in the capital fund
  - (d) Joe Peiser will recommend whether to repair or replace the boiler
  - (e) If we have the money in the capital budget for the boiler we should go ahead with the items from the energy audit
- Rental Sign- Place in front Reeb. Vet where it will go with Buildings and Grounds.

#### D) Action

- Suzanne will call Bob and follow-up in an email to both chairs that we want to continue the plate collections but we will reemphasize and crack down on the time limit.
- We should use capital fund for the boiler replacement or repair, depending upon Joe's recommendation.
- Suzanne moved and Rob seconded a motion that we fund all four (2,3,4 and 5= \$1942) of the recommended initiatives in the energy audit
  - (a) Motion passed.
- If we receive a permit we will build the sign and place it in front of the society,
- Moving forward with the next step on the rental sign. We need a proposal as to where it is going to go and more specifics on art work

- We will approve that Joe go ahead with exploring the creation of the \$625 sign
- Suzanne will complete the next steps and report back

## V Program Council Report

Rob Willis

### A) Summary

- Trying to fill certain positions, Living the Welcome Committee, Peace and Justice, Ministry Council and Coffee Hour
  - (a) Rob will work with Carolyn to review what is required for Coffee Hour. It may be too complicated.
- Black Lives Matter- Several groups are programming around the theme. Lots of activity
  - (a) There needs to be more education amongst the congregation about the Black Lives Matter movement
- Discussion about putting a : Black Lives Matter” banner outside the society- Board approval or congregational approval- Hopefully vote in January in advance of MLK Day.

### B) Discussion

- We need to inform the congregation of the total collected from the plate collection- recent and year to date- When we do the collection

### C) Action

- Rob will get the plate collection amounts in the Newsletter and announcements

## VI Policy Review

A) Suzanne

### B) Summary

- Alcohol Policy
  - (a) Moth radio hour was not compliant with the alcohol policy across a range of areas:
    1. Four bottles of unattended alcohol,
    2. Insufficient non alcoholic beverages
    3. Comments by moderator to drink up
    4. Alcohol not removed 45 minutes before the end of the event.
  - (b) Carol Loscalzo was concerned that there is no intent to follow the policy now and in the future.
  - (c) We must follow for insurance reasons so that we will not be held liable for an activity.
  - (d) Need to designate someone on the Board who is keeping an eye on how the policy is being enforced.

- (e) Ann is responsible for making sure that hosts sign the policy when they reserve the facility
- (f) Fellowship Feast is challenging as a BYOB with wine at each table and pouring all through the Feast. We need to have more of our conversation about table hosts being responsible. Everyone read the policy and we will discuss it at the next meeting.
- Community Center Survey of Ridgewood Residents over 55+. Approached all houses of worship asking if we would survey congregants who are 55 and older
- Gift policy and Trustee other commitments check them out in dropbox and we will discuss at a later meeting. Raise any questions with Suzanne.

#### C) Discussion

- Alcohol Policy
  - (a) Need clarity around the difference between renters and USR events for all policies.
  - (b) Late in the game when hosts became aware of the policy for the Moth Radio Hour. They signed off on it, but it was not enforced. Person who chairs the event is responsible to make sure that it is enforced.
  - (c) Board members attending events should take responsibility for enforcing the policy at events that they are attending.
- Survey
  - (a) Why not?
  - (b) Just putting it on-line and make it available- e blast and put it on a table.
  - (c) Another way that we can say yes to our community and be visible in that effort

#### D) Action

- Helen Matusow Ayres moved that Rob will be the designee to oversee and be the liaison with Safe Congregation for the Alcohol Policy
- Robert seconded it .
- Motion passed.

### **VII Upcoming Town Hall**

Discussion taken off line, over e-mail

### **VIII Communicating about Governance**

#### A) Summary

- Review in Dropbox. Rob and Suzanne will bring it to us in the Winter.

### **IX Executive Session**

Helen moved to adjourn, Peter seconded. Motion Passed. Adjourned at 9:51