

***Unitarian Society of Ridgewood
Board of Trustees Meeting: 8/7/17
Convened at 7:00 PM***

PRESENT: Willis, Lewis, Duran, Krag, McMurray, Josefsberg, Brennan , Nolan , Rev. Sarah

1. Opening Words / Check In

Long-Haul People

by Rudy Nemser

You find them in churches
when you're lucky;
other places too, though I mostly
only know ecclesiastical varieties.

Long haul people
upon whose shoulders
(and pocketbooks and casseroles
and daylight/nighttime hours)
a church is built and maintained
after the brass is tarnished and
cushions need re-stitching.

They pay their pledges full and on time
even when the music's modern;
support each canvass though the sermons aren't always short;
mow lawns and come to suppers;
teach Sunday School when
there's no one else and they'll miss the service.

Asked what they think of the minister,
or plans for the kitchen renovation,
or the choral anthem, or Christmas pageant,
or color of the bathroom paint,
they'll reply: individuals and fashions
arrive and pass.

The church—their church—will be here, steady and hale.
For a long, long time.
It will.

For long haul people bless a church
with a very special blessing.

2. Minister's Report

Rev. Sarah continues to situate herself, referring to several meetings over the past two weeks with congregants and local ministerial colleagues. Rob noted the support available from the Welcoming Committee. A meeting with Sarah and that Committee will be held between 8/14-21.

3. DRE Search Update

A finalist candidate has been offered a contract, contingent upon suitable background checks. The anticipated start date is August 20th.

4. BOT Meeting Schedule / Retreat & Related Matters

As in the past, BOT meetings will be held on the first Monday evening of the month, excepting September and January. The September meeting will be held on September 11th and the January meeting on January 8th.

The annual retreat is scheduled for October 21st. Anticipated as an important agenda item is the Society's organizational structure.

The *Minister's Startup Meeting* with Society leadership will be held on September 23rd (between 9 -3).

5. USR Staff Titles/Employee Terms and Conditions

The BOT reiterated its high regard for current employees and referred the disposition of particular employee concerns to Rev. Sarah's supervisory judgment.

6. Leadership Position Update/USR Film Festival

The BOT discussed outreach efforts to individuals previously identified as candidates for key leadership positions. Happily, Jeff Summerville and Suzanne Willis will co-chair February's Annual Service Auction. Although certain members have agreed to join particular committees, co-chair leadership of the Annual Budget Drive has not yet been secured; nor has leadership of Building Grounds.

Led by Rob and Peter, further discussion focused upon the leadership opportunities that generational transition presents – viz., moving on plans to launch a USR Film Festival and similar initiatives.

7. 2016-17 Review & 2017-18 Goals

The BOT reviewed our most recent year in the context of our goal aspirations. We agreed that we achieved some success in "*Fostering Engagement*" for which Anne Paretti, Judy Scanlon, and Anita Knechel deserve the lion's share of the credit. As Rob noted, "more people actually signed the book."

"Leveraging Technology to Improve Communication" is a work in progress.

Through Laura's liaison work, the BOT was more effective in *Supporting our RE program*.

Through Peter's initiative, we advanced the budget process, laying the groundwork for a successful budget drive. We are satisfied with the collective effort to *Meet our Fiduciary Obligations*.

A Successful Ministerial Search brings Rev. Sarah to the USR.

Planning for our Future --- i.e., securing the USR's continued vitality --- persists as our deepest, ongoing concern. What strategies do we need to consider and adopt? Prodding BOT thinking, Rev. Sarah asked "what kind of board to you want to be?" What clarity is needed to focus BOT energies upon institutional governance? What are we planning for: more efficient operation or more effective long-term strategy?

All agreed that we can rally around "showing up" on behalf of our pronounced values – as a board and as a congregation.

8. Upcoming

September 10th: Water Ceremony to launch the congregational year.

Recommended BOT Reading: *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership*

Adjourned: 9:15 P.M.

Bernie Josefsberg