

**Minutes of Meeting of Board of Trustees of
Westside Unitarian Universalist Congregation**

Dec 17, 2014

The meeting was held at the congregation's building on 7141 California Ave SW, Seattle, WA, and was called to order by Board President Joe Rettenmaier at 6:35 pm. With chalice lighting, Board members shared things they feel grateful for this season.

Present were President Joe Rettenmaier, VP Matt Aspin, Secretary Lisa Maynard, Treasurer Michael Matz, and Trustee John Britt, as well as Rev. Peg Morgan and ministerial intern Kevin Lawson. Trustees Shannon Day and Glenn Phillips were away.

Minutes

Moved, seconded, voted to approve the Nov minutes as drafted.

Treasurer's Report

Michael had sent his report by email on Dec 16 and distributed printed versions at the meeting [appended]. Joe had asked for a report about how the plate collection goes, wondering (in light of our budget gap) whether we should consider not continuing to give half of money to other organizations (keeping all collection plate for the general fund). Michael distributed a sheet showing that when we started giving half to other organizations, we continued to get as much or more money for the congregation. Board agrees we should continue to share the plate.

Peg asks if we should split the plate on Christmas Eve (vs. giving all to Westside Baby) and Board agrees that we should split the plate. Kevin asks what to do on the Burning Bowl service on Dec 31. Agreement to split plate with Westside Baby (keeping holiday theme).

Income looks good this month, likely due to Joe R's email to congregation at end of Nov and a week later Stewardship Chair Jill Fleming's letter sent with end-of-year statements.

Merchant income reflects everything that occurred in Nov. Amazon income comes in every month but it lags by two months (that is, we receive the money from purchases made two months prior); we are at 25% of budgeted YTD for Amazon (\$1,237 of \$5,000). PCC payment comes twice a year (Dec and June) so is still at 0. Merchant income last year was ~\$900 and this year we are above \$1200 already so good news there.

Concern raised about whether the Board's encouragement of people to purchase from Amazon through our website is an endorsement of Amazon and its employee policies and competitive policies.

On March 28, Bert and Jerry will offer another theater evening fundraiser. Bert would like to have that go into the Music Fund GF Income (indicating where it has come from).

Any expenses of concern? We reviewed the 'Over Budget' column Michael has added to the spreadsheet. Kudos to Michael for his awesomely clear presentation about all of this. Request that Michael train the next Treasurer and document as they go.

How can we start putting some money into our building capital expense reserve (budget is ~\$7000, around \$611 a month). Board would like to make a half year payment of \$3600 into the building reserve. Michael agrees it is prudent and we can afford it at this time.

ACTION: Peg will tell the bookkeeper about transferring the money into the building reserve.

Suggestion that we designate an automatic amount (maybe \$500) to go into 'operating cash reserve' every month. We are still thinking about our known shortfall of \$33K (from projected pledges that didn't come in as planned, not having a rummage sale plan, etc.) although that number is a little lower now due to unexpected income. When we get the income strategy task force rolling, we need to be able to give them a clear number of the fundraising target they are aiming for.

Last year our income was down \$20K and expenses were underspent by \$5K leading to the \$15K gap. Previous year was a similar gap.

Finance Committee (FC) had reviewed 'Dedicated Fund Balances' (FBs), which are dedicated pieces of our checking account. Some FBs are out of date or unneeded, and FC suggested some changes. Board reviewed all FBs with suggested changes and Michael and Peg made good notes about what to do with unneeded FBs.

ACTION: Peg will tell the bookkeeper what to change, and then Peg will show Michael the result.

Explanation of 'Directories Fund Balance' (negative \$212) – this is money we need to recover from selling next version of photo directory (so need to consider ways to produce the photo directory much more cheaply).

Discussion that we need our funds to match our adopted policy of designated vs. undesignated gifts (under a certain amount cannot be designated toward a certain thing).

Discussion that we need to keep 'Miscellaneous Grants' fund as a place to receive grants. Maybe we should have a policy that (aside from multi-year funds) we zero them out at the end of the fiscal year?

Question raised about what happens if 'Raise the Paddle' fund has more money than is needed for a particular project. RE Raise the Paddle has a balance of \$2501 at the moment, but Shannon pointed out that this is paying the stipend of the Storytime teacher.

ACTION: Lisa to research cheaper ways to print photo directory (color copies in church office cost 6 cents).

ACTION: Michael will investigate where we could move the \$11,697 'Memorial Donations FB' into a CD where we could earn a return.

No other reports this month.

Raise the Paddle Ideas

Auction Committee has been discussing window shades on the south side of the sanctuary and also a new podium. Staff had a discussion about how this year 'Raise the Paddle' money should go for the general fund instead: play off everyone's tiredness with fundraising this year, no rummage sale, no more emails about shopping at Amazon, buy some peace of mind, 'virtual rummage sale.' *Make the rummage sale magically disappear!* Another idea is the building reserve fund: we personify the building – "I take care of you, but who takes care of me?" Can we roll the window shades into the elevator/ADA project? We should at least cost the window shades and then we could publicize it in a kind of wish list form.

Board agrees that it prefers the 'Make the rummage sale magically disappear' angle. Matt will take it back to the Auction Committee.

World Café on Congregational Engagement and Vitality

Matt had sent out a compilation of the notes/actions from World Café grouped into themes [appended]. Board reviewed together.

Theme buckets that emerged: communication/connection, diversity, family/friendship, financial security, leadership, ministry, safety, spiritual growth.

Ownership that emerged: Administration, Board, Common Quest, Congregation, Finance/Stewardship, Membership, Welcoming Newcomers, Worship Council, Social Justice.

Leadership Assembly (LA) is a good place to start having some of these conversations about actions. Suggestion that we provide a version of these notes to the LA (and also provide a synopsis in e-news) ahead of time and let them grapple with some next steps at the LA. This becomes a vehicle for infusing congregational vitality into LA. See what generates enthusiasm at LA. Could be really small steps but see if they will take some leadership.

Present the themes but not the owners to LA; let LA determine the owners. Ask LA what is realistic to accomplish this year and what will get us the most bang for the buck.

Income Strategy Task Force next steps

John had sent some ideas for next steps in email on Dec 17. Small group will meet in first week of Jan to vet the results of the recent brainstorm event and determine what we can do this year. Small group meet again in early April to determine what we can do next year.

Present these vetted fundraising ideas in to LA in January and ask for feedback and other ideas.

ACTION: Michael will convene a meeting sometime Jan 5–9 with Alice, Steve Burrows, Lisa, and other folks who have been involved in planning fundraisers in the past. Suggestion to add Kimball and Scott because they have expressed interest in fundraising auction.

ACTION: John and Matt will work together on the agenda/plan for Jan 18 LA, which will be a split session between congregational engagement and fundraising/income strategy. NOTE: LA was rescheduled to Feb 8 due to Seahawks playoff game.

Thank You Notes

No thank you notes this month...

Capital Campaign Chair

Glenn reached out to Peggy Abby about her interest and she agreed to be Capital Campaign Chair with a lot of support from the Board. Hooray!

Moved, seconded, and approved to install Peggy Abby as CC Chair.

Bring a Bulb for Easter Campaign

This is a simple fundraiser idea in which we would ask congregants to donate light bulbs to the building.

ACTION: Michael will check with Building Committee about what types of bulbs we would want.

Bulletin Board in Social Hall

Peg and Rose agree that a good location is the wall outside the women's room. Board agrees that Rose and staff can move forward. Labeling should make clear that it is for posting about WSUU activities only.

Geotech Bids for Determining the Problem with the Parking Lot Erosion

Chris reviewed the bids and sent her feedback to Rose, Lisa, and Peg.

ACTION: Peg will forward to the Board.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Michael Matz (Dec 16, 2014)

Board of Trustees and Finance Committee -

This has been a good month, a real turn-around from the direction we were headed even just a short month ago. Our income exceeded our expenditures by about \$3,000, keeping our cash flow for the year in the black. Thank you, everyone, for watching the pennies and for the goodwill you are generating as evidenced by additional, new pledges and pledges being paid in full early (more will be seen in December's report).

Items I would like to point out and discuss, if we have time:

1) Fund Balances - see tab 9 in "Budget to Actuals NOV2014" file

As the BOT, we need to manage these funds and keep the quantity of them to a minimum, so that they support projects and programs that are active and in line with our mission. Ellen met with Peg to discuss, and the Finance Committee has some specific recommendations what we would like the BOT to follow through on. As Treasurer, when we come to agreement, I will work with Peg and the bookkeeper to consolidate these funds as directed.

2) Additional Income Sources - Related to Income Strategy Task Force, see "Treasurer's Report as of November" file

In general, we have specific people and committees that are responsible to generate our budgeted income and manage specific expenses. However, for these items here, no one is accountable... meaning that the BOT is by default. Can we find someone who will take these items on, to manage and shepherd them through the end of the FY? I will be glad to assist this person or people.

Account #	Account Name	Annual Budget	Budget Remaining
4.100.250	Rummage & Book Sale Income	\$ 6,500	\$ 5,967
4.100.257	Misc. Fundraising Income	\$ 1,300	\$ 674
4.100.200	PCC Scrip GF Income	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,800
4.100.210	E Scrip GF Income	\$ 750	\$ 546
4.100.211	Amazon Rebate Income	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,763
			\$ 12,751

3) Items of note:

Account 5.100.169 RE Summer Coordinator

- Budget was \$1000, yet this has generated \$1,500 in expense. I recommend paying any overage from the "Religious Ed Misc Fund Balance" 3.380.100 which has a balance of \$3,857.51

Account 5.100.171 RE Program Support Exp

- Budget is \$0. Should this have been paid from the "Religious Ed Misc Fund Balance" 3.380.100?

Account 5.100.182 Employee Assistance Program Expense

- Budget was for \$360, or \$30 per month. The rate has gone up to \$45 and we have already spent \$270, thus we will go over budget by at least \$180. Savings from hiring our bookkeeper vs. having her as a contractor should more than cover this overage

Account 5.100.453 Electricity (SCL)

- Budget is \$6000, but at the 1/2 year, we have already spent \$4,500. We most likely will go over budget by \$1500...

Account 5.100.461 Building Capital Reserve Expense

- Budget is \$7326, we have not paid any of this. I hope we can continue positive monthly cash flows so that at least some of this can be paid by May 2015. We need to add a line in next year's budget, Operating Cash Reserve Expense.

4) Additional Idea for the Income Strategy Task Force

Have a "Bring a Bulb Sunday." Help us reduce our electricity expense by converting to energy-efficient bulbs. Have the building committee make an inventory of every type of bulb we use, prioritize them as to which ones we need the most, and then let congregants pick one or two energy efficient versions to buy and bring in. Maybe for Easter?

THEMES that Emerged from the Nov 2014 World Café on Congregational Engagement and Vitality

Row Labels

Administration

BETTER/MORE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION: E News not effective, Uniclarian (x4), Order Of Service –
Bring back Uniclarian
Bulletin Board in Social Hall (3)
Gather feedback in different ways
How about three-point questions in bulletin about what's important that we take one minute to fill out and put in collection
More channels for two-way dialogue

Board

Needs: elevator, parking, rides

Common Quest

I'd like to be involved in getting in-depth conversations after service
Places/ways/organizations for people to connect
Post-sermon talk back either in the sanctuary or corner of the social hall
Start a writers/discussion group around the sermon topic
CELEBRATIONS: Regularly –i.e., Friday/Sunday potlucks/socials, teas, movie nights. Be a place for people to go for celebrations
Meaningful structured dialogue (x4)

Congregation

Ask for help
Go to the middle of the pews!! To open up more seating!!
Make personal connections
More soup lunches/potlucks to maintain our connections around what's transpired at services
Sponsorship for activity where some member prepays for another member

Finance Committee/Stewardship Committee

Need finance committee and pledge drive to work together
Need more input (inclusion forum) on budget participation. Appreciate the quarterly financial report

Membership

Expand ride sharing with UU Uber
HOW to connect people to find their OWN similar (like me) people

More gatherings like Thanksgiving – e.g., pancake breakfasts

Need to make sure volunteerism is embraced to be just as valuable as monetary pledges (x3)

Welcoming Newcomers

Be ambassadors

Don't issue nametags too soon so newcomers can be identified

Expand welcoming-orientation functions for newcomers

Have services for new members including committee chairs attend -- with information

invite newcomers to specific functions – don't wait for them to join those activities

Make it easier to start conversation with newcomers during social hour

Make personal connection to new member

Move welcome table away from RE table (3)

Name tag identification

Staffed hospitality table at coffee hour

Training for greeters to walk newbies to the social hall

Ushers spend five minutes talking with someone new // Bring newbies to a table filled with talkers

We need extroverted volunteer recruiters! You have to ask someone personally to take on a role, and to approach the members

Worship Council

Bring the outsiders to pulpit to challenge us

Social Justice

Cross-pollination with other groups in West Seattle; more interaction with others

Grand Total
