

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

March 18, 2015

The meeting was held at the congregation's building on 7141 California Ave SW, Seattle, WA, and was called to order by Joe at 6:33 pm. With the chalice lighting, Peg shared an apt Paulo Coelho quote:

When we least expect it, life sets us a challenge to test our courage and willingness to change; at such a moment, there is no point in pretending that nothing has happened or in saying that we are not yet ready. The challenge will not wait. Life does not look back.

Present were President Joe Rettenmaier, Secretary Lisa Maynard, Treasurer Michael Matz, and Trustees Shannon Day and John Britt, as well as Rev. Peg Morgan and intern minister Kevin Lawson. VP Matt Aspin and Trustee Glen Phillips were away. Paula vanHaagen (Finance Comm) joined at beginning. Mark Newton joined at 7 pm.

Minutes

Moved, seconded, voted to approve the Feb 2015 minutes as amended (clarification about Joe writing the letter to the congregation).

Thank You

John had brought printed notes for us to sign thanking the many folks who had done the lunches and other hospitality for the choir festival (Alice and company).

Treasurer's Report

Michael distributed printed treasurer's report and budget report. Discussion about that we are still \$6000 short for the year but have made progress against the gap. This includes an estimate of what we're planning to sell through quick rummage sale (May 9) and Craigslist as well as \$400 estimated from the Olio show but doesn't include what we may raise from the May 1 concert. We still need to figure out some more fundraising to close the gap.

Income and expenses were both higher this month due in part to auction. We are being really careful about spending.

Gratitude from Board to Michael for clear finance presentation, especially graphs showing income, expenses, cash flow, etc. compared to previous two years. John comments that it would be interesting to see how percentages (e.g., percentage of income that is fundraising vs. pledges) change over the years.

Interim Ministry Team

At 7 pm, Mark Newton joined the meeting with a report from the Interim Ministry Team (Mark, Matt Aspin, John Britt, Laura Pierce, Lisa Reitzes). He brought two recommendations having to do with

interim minister contract and package (document attached). Team is well on the way to pulling all the data needed to send to Boston by April 12. We will receive up to five names by May 4. Need to be ready to send them each an information packet (marketing packet) with details about the congregation. Goal is to attract top-tier candidates.

The two recommendations of the Interim Ministry Team:

1. An interim ministry of two years, beginning Aug 1, 2015.

Michael moved that we have an interim ministry of two years starting sometime after August 1, seconded, approved by the Board.

2. A financial package that mirrors Rev. Peg's current package of salary/housing/benefits, plus actual moving expenses of up to 10% of salary and housing (\$7,500 under this scenario).

Application needs from the Board: (1) What's the salary and housing, and are you paying 30–40% in additional benefits? Is our offer fixed or a range? (2) Does our package meet or exceed UUA's package? Answer is NO. Professional expenses are the main place where we are lower than recommended. Peg thinks the components should be negotiable (within the whole package).

Peg encourages us to use the sabbatical fund toward the up-to-\$7500 moving benefit.

We make the offer May 15, so we'll know more about our budget by then. Annual meeting is May 18.

Mark clarified that if we give a range then we need to give low/high/midpoint, which pretty much rules out a range for us.

Shannon moved that we offer a fixed salary/housing benefit of \$75K, seconded, approved by the Board.

The Board will need to decide who is going to negotiate with the candidate. Usually the negotiating team is two members of the Board. Conveniently there are two Board members on the task force.

Sat, June 6: Grace Simon would like to hold two group meetings to interview key leaders of the congregation about Peg's departure (processing how our leadership feels about Peg's departure; what doors are opening/closing; what have been the accomplishments of this shared ministry that is ending; any disappointments).

Draft Budget

Tonight's aim is to quickly note points of discussion/justification as we go through the numbers. This is our first draft. On Apr 20 we are due to receive a revised recommended budget that incorporates early estimates from the pledge drive team. After that, the Board must reconcile the income and expenses for next year.

Finance Committee introduction from Paula vH: FC viewed income very carefully to avoid false optimism. They used data and inflation rates, etc. for expenses. This year FC wanted to make sure to provide a balanced budget. Committed to three-quarter time for admin asst. Tried to maintain all the

staffing (aside from paid musicians). Paula clarified that this was a very painful budget to provide. We need to have people on board with what we need to earn this year, so that we don't need to go back to the congregation halfway through the year and ask for more money.

Acknowledgment from Board that it is incredibly painful and exhausting to cut this deeply into the budget.

Peg recommends that we fire up the income strategy task force and really put some effort into figuring out fundraising strategies for next year. Need to calendar out the fundraising events for next year. A challenge is that many of those folks are involved in the pledge drive.

John thinks it could be done at the next leadership assembly (May 3). Figure out the amount we raised this year and have a 'meet it or beat it' challenge. Question raised about whether the folks who attend the LA are more 'doers' than 'thinkers' and how to bring in the thinkers/brainstormers to the mtg.

We need to give the Stewardship team the high-level messaging that lets pledgers know what is at stake. The biggest chunks of the budget are the costs of the building and our staff salaries. The dollar amounts of the program are small but they are heavily leveraged. Even if our program doesn't change at all, our fixed expenses go up every year.

Current revenues including fundraising (as corrected from Peg's email). What is the gap that needs to be made up with fundraising if pledges do increase by 10% as is the Stewardship Committee's goal?

Fundraising for this year is 14% of budget, and next year also. Next year we are projecting we will raise \$55K, of which \$40K is auction.

Fundraising idea: New Year's Eve Dance. Maybe a Burning Bowl ceremony followed by a dance?

Suggestion that we provide the Stewardship Comm with the gap that needs to be filled if we keep the budget the same bare-bones from this year (increased with inflation), increase Shannon to three-quarter time and bring music director to mid-range – the gap is \$44,500. A big chunk of that is that we were more realistic/conservative about our projected revenue this year. It also includes \$7K to set aside toward the Building Fund. Would be good for canvassers to have a clear page with this info that they can hand out.

ACTION: Michael, Peg, Joe, and Lisa will send an email to Jill that explains the gap and asks how Board could work with Stewardship to convey the seriousness of our need to increase pledges this year.

Apr 22 (and possibly Apr 29) will probably be additional Board meetings to work on budget.

Annual Meeting Planning

Topics: by-laws change to adjust fiscal year dates, by-laws change for Endowment Comm as proposed by Fred Matthews, installing Peg as minister emerita.

ACTION: John will touch base with Endowment Comm (Steve Becker, Gary Gertig, [WHO ELSE?]) about their ideas of using UUA's endowment fund service. He will also look up Endowment Comm changes proposed by Fred.

ACTION: Michael will work on language for presenting the new fiscal year that could go out in the letter to the congregation.

Joe recommends that we send a letter to the congregation by May 1 with suggested bylaws change, etc.

Confirmations

Board affirms that we are delighted that Judy Finney will take over Care Team (from April Kristjansen).

Moved, seconded, approved grant application/reception of grant to Seattle Tilth.

Delegates to General Assembly in Portland (WSUU can have 5 delegates): those interested are Steve Graves, Shelby Greiner (wants to work with a youth delegate). We have time to approve at the April meeting.

Treats

Alice volunteered to bring treats for the April Board meeting!

Meeting adjourned at 9 pm.

MINISTER'S REPORT

Sent by Rev. Peg Morgan in email to Board on March 2, 2015

There is a lot to catch you up on so I am sending you a report now, though it is early for the Board meeting. Three action items:

1. Confirm Judi Finney as new chair of Care Team.
2. Decide upon delegate selection process.
3. Approve permission to apply for Tilth grant.

PROGRAM MINISTRIES

My workshop Saturday on Planning Your Own Memorial was attended by 13 members of the congregation and established a new form which if submitted to the congregation can be a guide for that person's wishes about their own memorial...favorite hymns, some biographical data, their own reflections on what have been highlights in their life, etc. Each pledging household has their own file in a locked cabinet in the office where their pledge paperwork, chalice lighting bios, new member bios, and any other important communications are filed. There was a great deal of interest also in the People's Memorial Coop (for cremation or burial).

The climate change gathering today had 19 people including Kevin and I. Anne Miller is the Coordinator of this new group. She will be communicating with the people who came and a few others who wanted to be there as to opportunities happening in this area of justice...there obviously is interest, and our group joins in collaboration with established groups at UUC, Eastshore and a new group at Saltwater. We will see how many people wish to be part of an on-going group.

Rose, Regina and I met with Seattle Tilth, the group that is going to help us building a food garden on the south side. The expenses of that garden will be provided by them. We are also applying for a grant through them...they received money through a foundation which they have to give to faith communities; this grant will provide us money for supplies and equipment, e.g. specifically we can get money for good soil, wheel barrow, tools, etc.

The K-1 OWL program concluded today with many many happy parents and jubilant Rand Cufley and Betsy Lowry.

Bert is working very hard on the Seattle area UU music festival and the GA choir work. While maintaining his usual wonderful music planning with us.

Kevin is about a month away from his interview in Boston. **NOTE ON YOUR CALENDAR:** We are planning a fun party for him on June 6th, 5 pm gathering, 6 pm potluck...7 pm recognition...and dancing and merriment afterwards...to thank him for all he has brought to us, to celebrate his turning 50, and to wish him well. I expect the Intern Committee will take the lead on planning the party but anyone else want to help? By the way, Kevin managed the book sale we had which was over the top successful (\$1300). And we are going to try an experiment of selling books during social hour on the shelves of the

stage, middle section just a \$1.00 each with a container for folks to put money in on their honor. Just an experiment...advantages...maybe a little money? Something for introverts to be doing? Disadvantage... taking storage space, children often play on stage? An experiment!!!

Regarding Worship, I hope you all have had a chance to meet Juan Carlos, a new person in our community. His Florida UU minister wrote to Seattle area ministers about him. He was described as a very excellent congregant, and an expert at AV. He needed a place to stay for three weeks while getting an apartment to rent for his wife and one of his children (18 year old). I jumped at the "hospitality" ministry, writing to a number of our people requesting home hospitality for him. He stayed with Joe Nabbefeld one week, and is now staying with Candy. AND he is a gem. Just a real delight. On his second week, yesterday, he was up there in the AV booth learning the ropes.

And another fyi: I am meeting with Judi Finney this week to begin the process of her becoming the new chair of the Care Team.

And on a pastoral care note, Patti McCall's father is dying this week. She has good family there; service will be at his Presbyterian Church. I had offered us... Patti feels and knows of my support for her.

I am having a number of requests for appointments, several about "I knew I wanted to talk to you about this, so now I had better get in before you leave."

ADMINISTRATIVE/FINANCIAL:

General Assembly Delegates: we may well have more people wanting to be delegates than positions (five delegates). What shall be the criteria for choosing delegates? Some criteria to consider to get conversation going: people who are newly taking on major leadership roles in the congregation, or are continuing in major roles, including Board members; people who haven't had the privilege before? This needs discussion. In the past we haven't had more people than wanted to be delegates. Bert, Shelby and a couple youth and Joe were delegates last time, maybe Betsy was too. Anyone want to make a proposal on this?

Our office continues to hum along with Shannon's energy and skills. Renee, our bookkeeper still has some learning curve which we are working on.

On the financial front, here is where I think we are:

TOPIC	REDUCTION	DEFICIT
December deficit		27,000
Auction raise the paddle	8,879	18,121
Review of Expenditures we can hold, and update of revenues including auction proceeds as		12,893

reported at last Board meeting...Peg's report in Treasurer's report form with added column.		
Book Sale 1350 profits	850 more than the 500 estimated in the 12,893 deficit estimate	12,043
Worship Council savings	784 (current left to spend 884; we'll instead only spend 100 more)	11,259
Chicos fund raiser	Check finally arrived, much less than we had hoped, 10% of sales of a \$1,000+ \$121	11,138

Shannon and I are working with the Sweetpea Preschool to consider their interest in starting a kindergarten in our upstairs library during the day time M-F. They will be making a proposal perhaps this coming week. We will keep you informed. We will of course be assessing whether we can afford to commit that space during the week through 3 pm, how it would affect that space, and the revenue that would come to us. Ultimately, a board decision.

Peg

**Interim Minister Task Force
Recommendations to Westside's Board of Trustees**

by: Matt Aspin, John Britt, Mark Newton, Laura Pierce, and Lisa Reitzes
March 18, 2015.

1. An Interim Ministry of two years, beginning August 1, 2015. Our rationale:

- Recommended by both our District consultant, and our consultant from the Western Region based on the multi-year experience of the Transitional Ministry function of the UUA. The **first year** is devoted to normalizing the transition/change period, conducting an in-depth assessment of the current-state of the Congregation, and developing a commonly shared picture of our desired future. The better part of the **second year** will be devoted to formulating a search committee for a Called Minister, engaging in an extensive search process, preparing the Congregation, calling a new minister, and transitioning from the Interim Minister to the Called Minister.
- Recommended by research conducted by the Alban Institute. The Institute recommends a two year interim ministry if any of three scenarios match a congregation: (1) The current minister had tenure of 12 or more years; (2) The congregation is in turmoil, the minister left in a context of conflict, or the congregation is heavily divided; or (3) The Congregation is large, with a multi-layered staffing configuration.
- A two-year Interim ministry will keep Westside in the "cycle" of when ministers seek new congregations; rather than place us "off cycle" as a 12- month or 18 month interim contract would do.
- A two-year interim ministry may allow Westside to improve its financial foundation and better afford the expenses associated with the "called minister" process, as well as offering a competitive financial package.

2. A financial package that mirrors Rev. Peg's current package of salary/housing/benefits, plus actual moving expenses of up to 10% of salary and housing (\$7,500 under this scenario).

- **\$75,000.** Salary and Housing (S/H). (UUA recommends \$82,000, the midpoint. Our recommendation is \$7,350 below midpoint. Range is \$64,550 to \$100,000).
- **\$4,000** Medical Insurance) (UUA recommends 80% of premiums for Interim and 50% for spouse/partner/dependents; plus 100% premium for Long Term Disability for Interim; plus Group Term Life Insurance @ 2X S/H)
- **\$7,500** Retirement (UUA recommends no less than 10% S/H)
- **\$ 5,737** FICA Offset
- **\$4000** Professional Expenses (UUA Recommends \$7,500, 10% S/H, plus \$700 for tuition for Interim Minister professional development meeting, plus travel)
- **4 weeks of paid vacation.** (UUA recommends 8 weeks, plus participation in District, UUMA, IM, and UUA events---added together that could total 11-12 paid weeks away from Westside)

- **3 weeks of paid study time/leave.** (UUA offers no recommendation). The Task Force recommends adding this as paid leave time and/or paid vacation time.

Our rationale:

- In our opinion, we cannot afford the full package recommended by the UUA. Our Regional Consultant advised that we not stretch to a point of financial stress within the Congregation, or make an offer that cannot reasonably be met.
- Our recommendation is no less than Westside's current minister's package. Additional costs such as moving expenses must be added and are in addition to Rev. Peg's package.
- We think additional resources must be directed to administration and operations at Westside to account for services currently provided by Rev. Peg, and unlikely to be provided by an Interim Minister or a new Called Minister.
- Given the Congregation's financial status, additional salary and housing increases should be part of the package of the next Called Minister, not the Interim.
- Westside is a Breakthrough Congregation, is a relatively healthy congregation, has a reputation of being desirable, and would not be deemed as "hard duty" by prospective Interim Ministers. This may off-set some of Westside's financial limitations.
- Westside is located in a desirable, urban geographic area, offering much. This may off-set some of Westside's financial limitations.

Risk:

- No risk to securing a top-tier interim candidate by assuming UUA's full recommended package
- Some level of risk by reducing the UUA recommended package, but not less than current minister. How much will a respected congregation's offer in a desirable location off-set the risk?

negotiation **Note:** Some elements of the recommended package may change, and are subject to negotiation between the Board's representative and the desired candidate for Interim Minister.

