

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

Sept 17, 2014

The meeting was held at President Joe Rettenmaier's home on SW Barton St, Seattle, WA, and was called to order by Joe at 6:40 pm. Joe offered words of chalice-lighting wisdom from Thich Nhat Hanh.

Present were President Joe Rettenmaier, VP Matt Aspin, Secretary Lisa Maynard, and Trustees John Britt, Shannon Day, and Glenn Phillips, as well as Rev. Peg Morgan. Treasurer Michael Matz was recovering from surgery.

Thank You Notes

Thank you to Linda Tally who is moving on from three years of coordinating kitchen volunteers and work. To Joe Rettenmaier (in person) and Patti McCall for organizing a fantastic ingathering BBQ, including donating considerable in-kind goods. To Julie Forkasdi who is stepping down after several years of RE Council leadership.

Appointments

Moved, seconded, voted to approve Amy Hance-Brancati as chair of RE Council.

Minutes

Question about whether the amount raised by the Chico's fundraiser was correct in Aug minutes. Peg will follow up with Cherie Tucker. Moved, seconded, voted to approve the Aug minutes (with corrected Chico's number).

ACTION: John will send a template to Lisa that includes an easier way to identify decisions.

Clusters

Eileen Duffy stopped by at 6:45 to tell us that she would like to hand off the work of reinvigorating clusters. She had asked for feedback and interviewed members about cluster value, ideas, etc. Board asked if she had recommendation based on feedback. Perhaps have the clusters meet at the church building because it is hard to get the cluster size below 20 people (with current membership, 10 clusters would be 24 people each). Are clusters out of date given technology we use now? Perhaps virtual groups would be next step. But ridesharing is still a reason to try to get clusters going. Care Team has tried to use clusters to support rideshare. This is an activity of Strategic Plan goal 1 (small group ministry).

CONSENSUS: Cluster organizing is in hiatus for now, although we will not discourage clusters that are meeting from continuing to do so. We will not assign new members to clusters.

Minister's Report

Peg had sent her report by email on Sept 16 (appended). Regarding hiring a new bookkeeper, Board agrees that at this point in the transition, hiring admin staff is Peg's responsibility. Some discussion about hiring as employee vs. contract, with general feeling that we prefer to contract.

Treasurer's Report

Michael had sent his report by email on Sept 16 (appended along with Quarterly Financial Report to Congregation). As the first quarter ends, we are on track to spend 100% of expenses but bring in 95% of our income. Finance Comm suggested that we take immediate action to correct that curve, and they sent some specific recommendations. One recommendation was to send email/letters to people who have not started to pledge or who have missed one payment.

ACTION: Shannon will send statements and remind folks who haven't started their pledges.

Noting that we have several groups that deal with money and have closely overlapping concerns (FC, Stewardship, income strategy task force) but they are not working together yet.

Auction leadership: Shannon and Matt sent the auction brainstorming invitation to 40 people and only three said they would come, including two from the Board. Suggestion that the auction meeting include brainstorming about fundraising in general to see if new ideas and leadership emerge. Board asks, "What has changed since we bought the building, that people are acting more consumers than participants?" Without causing undue alarm, we have to allow a way for the congregation to see the discrepancy between the congregation's financial needs and our current situation. How do we help people feel like they are part of something bigger than themselves?

Finance Committee Draft Charter

Distributed v. 9/17/2014 12:05 version of FC charter (includes edits from Peg). Point made that these are living documents. We want some common elements for each standing committee's charter (for example, terms of service for chair). Board agreed on the following edits:

- Under "Committee Objectives," second bullet should be "Support development of budget" using the same language as the first bullet under "Budget Development."
- Under "Committee Objectives," seventh bullet wording should be something like "Share with the Board a timeline with key financial milestones for year" (removing "work plan" language).
- Under "Policies and Procedures," change heading to "Financial Procedures" and remove "policies and" from first bullet.

ACTION: Peg will make these edits, add language about term limits for chair (two years), and circulate to Board for review. Then Michael will take Board-approved version back to FC.

Chartering Committees

What are our core committees and which should we charter first? We need to focus this year on committees that, due to our transition to program-size, have lots of change, new responsibilities, and a need for greater clarity between committee, Board, and other parts of the congregation: these are Finance Committee and Membership Committee. Building Committee may be next. Our other core committees are RE Council, Music Council, Worship Council, Care Team, Social Justice. John has drafted a preliminary org chart for the congregation (appended).

Is Leadership Assembly a chartered committee? Not really. LA's purpose still being defined, in part by the group itself. John hopes to have the LA start that conversation at the November meeting. By the end of the year we ought to have some kind of description of LA and who is on it and the types of activities they conduct. Discussion about whether LA facilitator should be Board-appointed (e.g., John or VP) or chosen from within the LA each year, but no resolution. Good that John is guiding the process for now.

CONSENSUS: Board VP is the official liaison between LA and Board.

CONSENSUS: We should encourage committees to share their self-chartering/self-defining documents with the Board.

Membership Committee has heard from Joe that they are next in line for the chartering process.

Membership Committee—Approach to Chartering

What should be our approach for chartering MC? Similar to FC, do we come up with dream list of tasks and then take to full MC meeting? Relate it to the many membership-related tasks in the strategic plan? Describe to MC the needs we see as we grow? Membership work shows up in so many places, what is a reasonable scope of work for this committee and should some of the tasks reside elsewhere?

Peg suggests that the name "Membership Committee" is too limiting. There is a more profound need: to help everyone engage in the life of the congregation, find their ministry, and grow their own spiritual and personal lives. Other names she has seen elsewhere for this activity: Congregational Vitality Team, Welcoming and Inclusion Team, Connections Committee, Engagement Committee. Membership issues are essential and changing rapidly. How do we start thinking outside our current box? What can we learn from other congregations? John is in touch with knowledgeable membership staff in Vancouver.

CONSENSUS: A broader visioning process for "membership" is needed, using World Café model.

The art of a World Café is designing the right, stimulating questions. Maybe we could ask Transition Committee members to help us come up with questions.

ACTION: Board-led team will host a World Café focused on engagement and vitality of the congregation: Matt to facilitate; Shannon to work on logistics; Glenn to share his knowledge and experience with workforce engagement; John to bring his previous World Café experience; Kevin and Peg to support. Aiming to do it in November.

Sept 27 Board Retreat Agenda

- Develop a covenant for working together.
- Look at year ahead; get milestones on calendar.
- Decide what we want to achieve in the coming year; review highlights of strategic plan goals.
- Realistically assess what the seven of us have the capacity to pull off between now and June.
- Determine how to fire up the income strategy task force.

Potluck food, 9 am to 2 pm on Sept 27, Joe's John Britt's house [location changed after Board mtg]. Attendees are Board plus Peg and Kevin. Kevin volunteered to facilitate so that all Board members could participate fully—thank you!

ACTION: Board will determine by email ahead of time the goal for each major portion of the agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 9 pm.

MINISTER'S REPORT

Peg Morgan (Sept 16, 2014)

CHALICE LIGHTER GRANT

The grant was submitted and the chalice lighter call is approved and going out. We have exactly 30% of our congregation as chalice lighters, but there are two or three folks that probably are not around, so we really need to add five or so more people...our obligation as a receiver of funds is to continue to keep 30%. For a growing congregation that means adding a few to keep a safe margin. The obligation is \$15 three times a year. I'll have an opportunity for folks this next Sunday, perhaps...and will announce the chalice lighter call, if that is ok with you.

PERSONNEL

Our bookkeeper is leaving by December 1. I think that at this point in our transition, it should be my responsibility to select another bookkeeper. I am planning on asking our current bookkeeper, who I so respect and wish she wasn't leaving! To help me interview. She has done that for other clients...She is dropping all on-sight clients and staying only with telecommute clients to move into a more retirement mode.

I think the Board makes sure the money is there and the chief of operational staff (me) should just hire. Particularly since it isn't a program staff person...In the past I have recommended someone for hire and the Board was the official hire. What are your thoughts about this?

Our current bookkeeper is a contractor, but we could go back to an employee hire. That will depend a lot on who we choose and whether they qualify as a contractor; there are some specific requirements. The pay per hour will be effected by that decision to allow for employer social security and state accident insurance if it is an employee status. So current contract is \$40/hour. An employee would be less per hour. I am asking candidates to declare their pay requirements, which seems to be the norm on Craig's list. I have advertised on Craig's list already have several responses, one woman who currently uses the same software at Normandy Park UCC, which is I think where our Michael Armstrong's wife Jane has been President.

STAFF TEAM AND INTERN MINISTER

We are all very happy to have Kevin as part of our staff/ministry team. We have had some steep startup to do lists for this fall, and he has just jumped right in as a staff team member. His first sermon was VERY well received. Lots of people are already saying to me "I love him!"

All is well across the team in program matters. Bert just led a choir retreat which I hear was very successful and slated to be just the first of an annual event. Bert will be on medical leave Sept 26 for surgery. This is not a life threatening situation, but will require major surgery recovery.

I'm enormously proud of Betsy and her team for such amazing line up of services for our children and youth. 11 high school youth!!! 50+ kids served on in-gathering Sunday!

VACATION

I expect to be on vacation October 1st-11th ...confirmation within 48 hrs. This would be starting in Istanbul...some Greece, and ending in Athens I think. I am not scheduled to be in the pulpit during the first Sunday in Oct and I would hope to be at church on the 12th. We go on cruises with our friends who get a free cruise once a year and go standby. Then we wait to be booked as "family or friend". Hopefully there is room for us.

Wider UU Service

I am partnering with Rev. Lois van Leer, Minister at Woodinville UU to teach a webinar on pastoral care teams...a three evening series. That will be a first for me...maybe I'll love it and you'll see me anchoring the evening news? I'll bring only good redeeming social value news...

TREASURER'S REPORT

Michael Matz (Sept 16, 2014)

The Finance Committee (FC) met last Tuesday, September 9, 2014, and addressed three general subjects:

- 1) The FC revised and approved a charter, the version dated 9/9/2014, which is attached for your review and acceptance.
- 2) The Treasurer presented to the FC an initial, high level analysis of incomes and expenses for the last three years (FY12-13 forward), which we discussed and below are some of our concerns and ideas for addressing them. An up-dated report called "WSUU Income v Expense" and a .pdf of "Budget to Actuals" is included for your review.

Treasurer comments regarding WSUU Budget-setting:

In the budgeting process, we plan a budget of "X"-thousand dollars in which expenditures are expected to meet incomes. We have been very diligent in spending 100% of our expense budget, yet are collecting less than 100% of our budgeted income. In FY12-13, we collected 96.6% of our income budget, and in FY13-14 we collected only 95.0% of our income budget. This has resulted in expenses exceeding revenues by over \$4,000 in FY12-13 and by over \$15,000 in FY13-14. *This is a recipe for disaster.*

The FC and Treasurer recommend the following actions be considered:

- a) Swift action to assess pledge donations so far this year. Emails and/or letters be sent immediately to those who have missed at least one payment, and thank you emails to those who have pledged.
- b) Craft an email campaign to members educating and encouraging them to take advantage of the Merchant Scrip as well as Powell's Books and Amazon Affinity Programs.
- c) Craft an online and/or public advertising project (get the Youth to create?) to encourage young families and singles to visit before Christmas
- d) Develop next-year's budget with a 5% expense "reserve" (All expenses must add up to 95% of expected income, not 100%). If we are able to collect 100% of our expected income, then we earn the equivalent of a "Second Raise the Paddle."
- e) Require the Treasurer to stop signing checks when expenses paid exceed income received during the year, up to that date. Only when more funds have been received will (non-personnel) checks again be signed.

Finally, two more items:

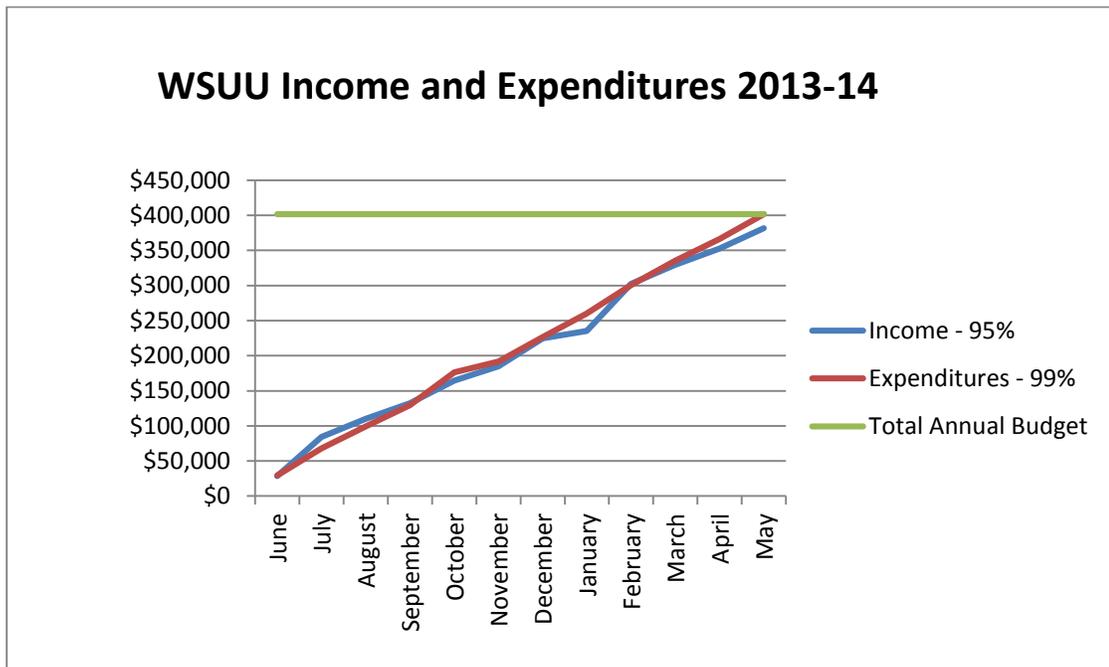
4) The 4th Qtr Treasurer Report is ready for distribution to the congregation. Please send the attached report "WSUU - Fourth Quarter Budget Report - FY2013-2014 - final.docx" out, either as an email or as an attachment to an email, asap.

5) The 1st Qtr Treasurer Report is ready for your review, attached. ("Treasurer's Report as of August 2014 for General Fund.xlsx")

A Report from the Treasurer

The General Budget for fiscal year 2013-2014, which runs from June 2013 through May 2014, was originally set at \$396,639. However, this quarter, it was adjusted upward to incorporate “Raise The Paddle” and other fundraising efforts.

The budget was raised to \$401,471 and expenditures were kept in-line with the budget at \$401,749. However, General fund income fell about 5% short of expectations to \$381,552. This was primarily due to new pledge revenues falling short in the last few months of the year from what we had anticipated when we put the budget together originally. This chart shows total income and expenditures compared to the annual budget.

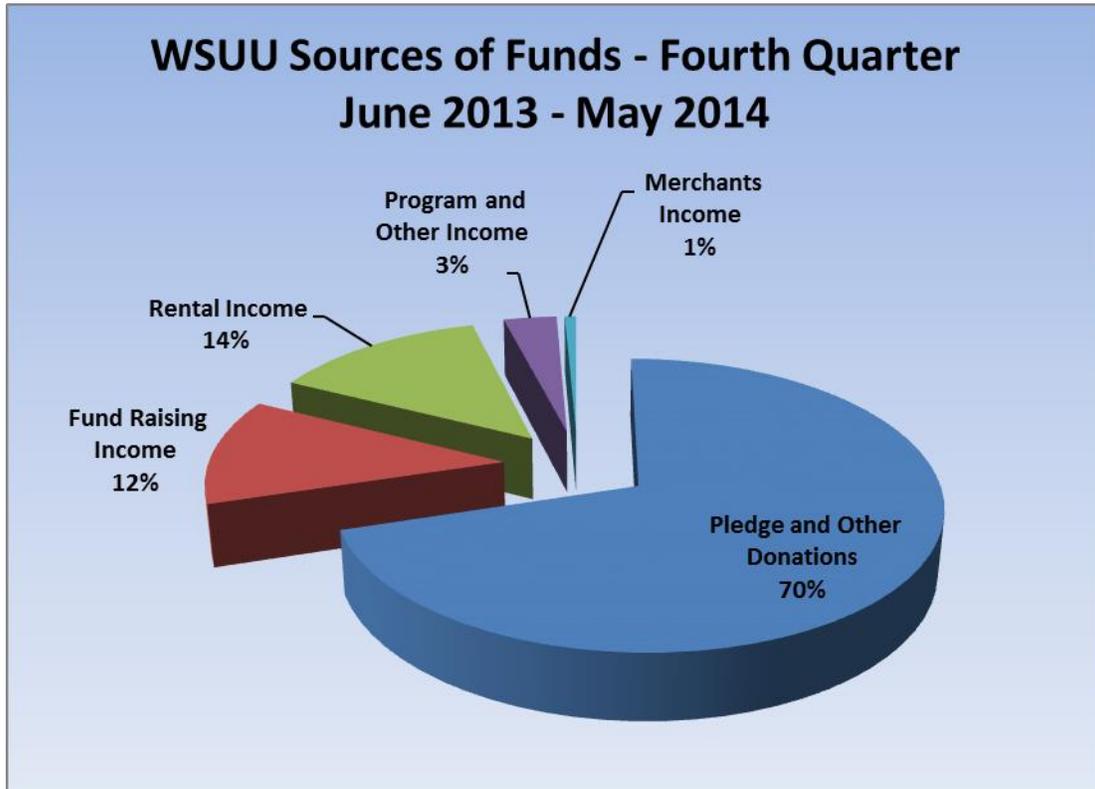


Income Summary

Total income for the fiscal year was \$381,552 for the year. Here is a summary of funds that we received during the year:

Pledges and other donations	\$268,046	(Budget \$285,300)
Rental income	\$51,636	(Budget \$47,431)
Program and other income	\$12,724	(Budget \$12,985)
Fundraising income	\$46,385	(Budget \$52,605)
Amazon, PCC, Safeway	\$2,759	(Budget \$3,150)

Here is a chart that shows the relative sizes of the income streams as percentages of the whole, showing the importance of pledges and donations.



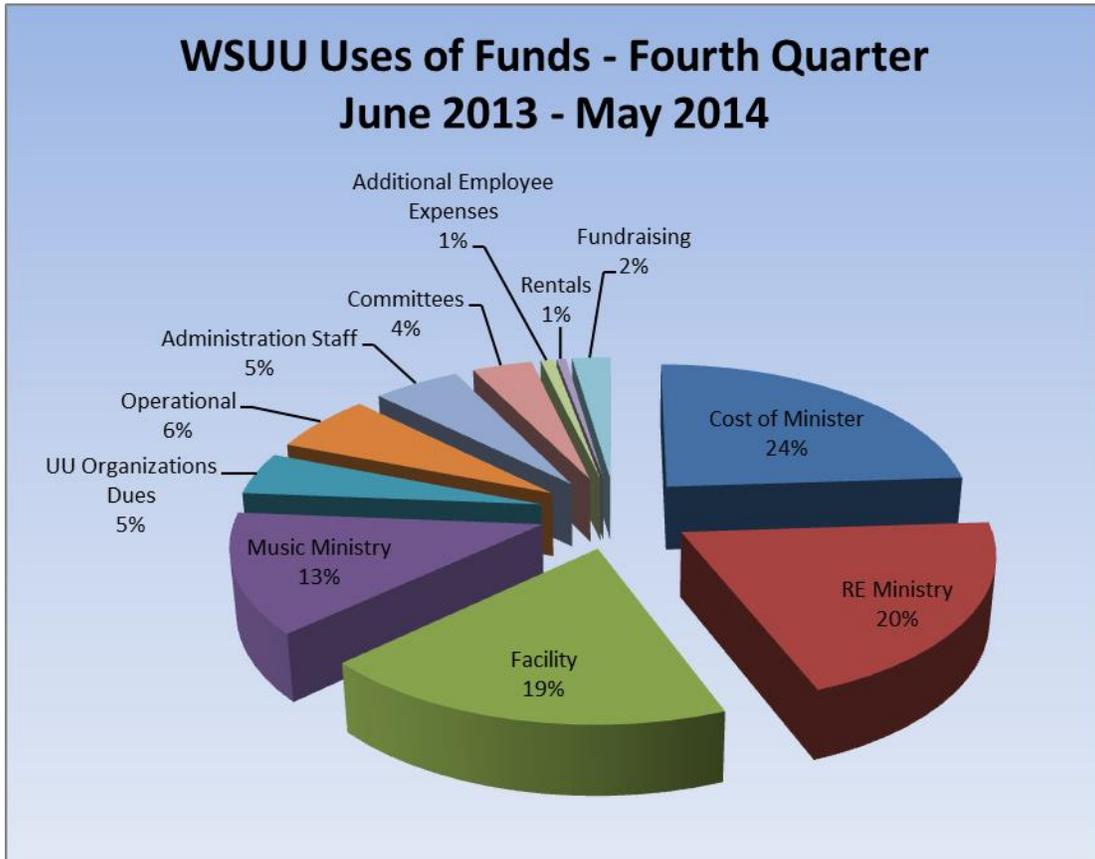
Expenditures

On the expenditures side of the ledger, our church spent \$401,749 in Fiscal Year 2013-2014. We spent funds in the following categories:

Position of Minister (salary, benefits, intern position and professional expenses)	\$94,962	(Budget \$95,580)
Religious education ministry	\$80,042	(Budget \$81,441)
Facility	\$75,209	(Budget \$75,876)
Music ministry	\$52,379	(Budget \$52,927)
UU organization dues	\$18,490	(Budget \$18,590)
Operational	\$25,263	(Budget \$20,862)
Administrative staff	\$21,081	(Budget \$20,242)
Committees expenses	\$14,469	(Budget \$16,103)

Additional employee expenses	\$3,233	(Budget \$2,570)
Rentals	\$2,239	(Budget \$3,125)
Fundraising expenses	\$14,378	(Budget \$14,155)

Here is a chart that illustrates the relative amounts of the expenditures:



Our policy is to donate half of the undesignated contributions from our Sunday plate collections to a worthy charity or cause. So far this fiscal year the recipients have been:

June	InvestED	\$1005
July	Drop-ins and members in need	\$901
August	West Seattle Food Bank	\$875
September	Orion Center	\$1092
October	UUA Headquarters Heritage & Vision Center	\$549
	Drop-ins and members in need	\$837

November	Philippines Disaster Relief	\$828
	Members in Need	\$100
	Senior Center	\$313
December	Westside Baby	\$1606
	Little Free Library	\$122
	WSUU Members in Need	\$500
	West Seattle Senior Center	\$490
January	West Seattle Helpline	\$979
February	Operation Sack Lunch	\$676
March	White Center Food Bank	\$735
	United Way / mudslide victims	\$553
April	United Way / mudslide victims	\$1709
	West Seattle Food Bank	\$623
May	Kitty Harbor	\$442
	Youth to Attend General Assembly	\$880

Net Worth

Our net worth is the total amount of our assets minus our debts and is a good indicator of overall financial health. WSUU has a positive net worth with over \$1.2M in assets and less than \$700,000 in debts and dedicated fund balances.

This report was prepared to fulfill an objective in our strategic plan to improve the communication of financial information. If you have any questions or suggestions for improving the report, please let me know.

Michael E. Matz, Treasurer
August 11, 2014

