

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

February 12, 2014

The meeting was held in the administrative office of the congregation's church building at 7141 California Ave SW, Seattle, Washington, and was called to order by President Joe Rettenmaier at 7:07 pm.

Present were President Joe Rettenmaier, Vice President Matt Aspin, Treasurer Eric Winiacki, Secretary Lisa Maynard, and Trustees Amy Hance-Brancati, Shannon Day, and John Britt, as well as Rev. Peg Morgan and Michelle Conklin. Kari Kopnick joined at 8 pm.

Auction Kudos

We started with a big round of applause for Matt Aspin, our auction chair. Note that since 2006, with Shannon Day's and Matt's efforts, our auction revenue has quadrupled (in 2006 was around \$11K, this year was \$42K).

Thank You Notes

To Cecelia Hayes for music ministry. To Linda Tally for kitchen leadership (she is stepping down after years of terrific work). To Jill for Building Committee leadership as she steps down. To Betsy Lowry for all the amazing programming she has been pulling off lately in RE.

Minutes

Upon a motion duly moved and seconded, minutes from the Jan 8, 2014, meeting were approved with no corrections.

Treasurer's Report

The 2014–2015 budget process so far: Eric collected budget info from committee chairs and plugged that into a draft budget; the Finance Comm (Paula and Eric only), Peg, and Joe filled in other info based on what we've spent this year. Budget schedule:

- Feb 12 (today) – rough draft of nonprioritized (dream) budget to Board for review.
- Feb 11-30 – work with Peg, Finance Comm, and committee leads to finalize the proposal.
- March 1 – dream budget in place for the pledge drive (final enough to define the dream items for the congregation).
- March 5 – Finance Comm and Board working meeting (go line-by-line through the budget).
- March 16 – budget proposal finalized and sent to congregation.
- Apr 6 – Commitment Sunday.

Eric distributed a hard copy of the proposed budget(s). Standard budget is 25% over last year's budget and above-standard budget is 32% over last year's budget. Highlights of proposed enhancements:

- Raises for Peg, Betsy, and Bert to recognize the quality of their work, and their education or credentialing, and how during this fiscal year we will surely move to a new salary category for a larger size congregation (250+), which will require higher salary levels to stay within guidelines. (We are at 233 members now.)
- Admin (Shannon) proposed to go from 13 to 20 hours.
- A few hours for a youth coordinator to manage details such as youth con registration, transportation, etc.
- Handyperson stipend or budget (\$3K).
- Fulltime intern (\$20K but all but \$4K is paid through outside grants).

Our bookkeeper has been out so not all income/expense info for January has been recorded; skipping the review for this month. As noted in the minister's report, pledged money from current and new members (projected at \$255K) may come in at \$245K.

Member count (for UUA dues): reported 214 members last year; just reported 233 members for this year's dues.

Reports

MINISTER'S REPORT action items:

- Moved, seconded, and approved Peg's request that the minister can be the "responsible party" for IRS reporting (allows IRS to know who to communicate with if something is amiss in payroll taxes, etc.), but papers are signed by current treasurer.
- Board agrees with Peg's revised wording for policy on canceling services due to weather.

SUNDAY SERVICES COMMITTEE: Moved, seconded, and approved committee's request to change its name to Worship Council.

Policies and Documents to Review

Accessibility Statement of Commitment: Amy sent draft. Thank you to Amy for leading this effort. Peg suggests putting this on the Policies and Procedures area of our public website (already adopted). Shannon will ask Laurie Radin, who still manages changes to our website, to post it. Amy suggests that John share it at the Leadership Assembly.

Proposed Endowment Fund by-law: Joe asked the Board to review a proposed by-law change that Alan Lang sent. Lisa will forward it to the rest of the Board.

Policies & Procedures: Shannon deleted the old policies and procedures doc from the skydrive and put the new/current one up there. Lisa will send a link to it. Joe asked the Board to review it so that we can have a discussion at March meeting and post it publicly on our wsuu.org website under Policies and Procedures.

Leadership Directory and Org Chart Work

Joe led a review of our Leadership Directory info on the members-only section of the wsuu.org website; Shannon will ask Laurie Radin to update it according to our discussed changes.

Liz Bucklew is currently the only member of the Nominating Committee because Jeff Richardson moved away and Tracy Burrows has stepped down. Peg provided Liz with some suggested names for NC candidates. Lisa will ask Liz to prioritize getting at least one other person onto the Nom Comm with her before she continues to seek candidates for the May slate.

Stewardship Committee

Kari Kopnick came at 8 pm to address questions/comments about the pledge drive. Peg comments that is such a step in the right direction to change the wording to “stewardship”; it reflects strategic plan and opens up to a year-round effort. Joe is happy to be able to quantify volunteer effort along with fiscal effort. John raises concern about proposed lead donor event: concern is identifying a group of people in the congregation and pulling them out based on financial capacity. Kari and Joe explained that the event will focus on developing stewardship leads, not just fiscal contributions. John asks that if we do decide to do it, that we don’t do it as a policy going forward but evaluate it afterward and think carefully about whether to do it again. Discussion about UU congregations ignoring class issues. Peg mentions that some more affluent folks have felt uncomfortable or not appreciated.

Motion made, seconded to approve Kari’s plan for the “Stewardship Committee” (including name change, lead donor event, etc.). Unanimously approved. Matt suggests a catalog of options for volunteer positions. Huge thanks to Kari for taking this on and great work so far!

Membership Committee

Joe led a discussion of how to improve Membership Committee effectiveness as called for in the Strategic Plan. Based on tasks in the strategic plan, the work of the committee has changed and we need more activities/effort in this area. Board needs to re-envision the roles, responsibilities, desired outcomes, and description of success for Membership Committee. Perhaps need more than one leader.

Joe pointed out concerns about UU Connects (the database) and getting an updated, accessible database of our members’ skills and interests. But it is more than just the database. Need a way to create systems for this hugely important area in congregational life. Ideas: break up Membership Committee into more than one team; ask Transition Comm to help us think about how membership tasks should be structured; use language that makes room for new folks to step up.

Leadership development in general is being examined by Transition Committee.

Next steps: Matt, John, and Amy will pull together a vision and scope of Membership Comm objectives and structure as suggested by the strategic plan. They will articulate what we hope to achieve, and from that will come structures and processes. One step will be talking with the current MC about how they envision it. Peg questions use of the word “membership.” There are different needs for newcomers, new folks, long-time members, etc. Can we find a better word? This subgroup will present something for Board to react to at the March meeting.

Building Committee Report

Jill Fleming has stepped down as Building Comm chair and didn't recommend a replacement chair. She recommends Dan Day for managing master plan issues/list/priorities, and Rose Sheppard for maintenance lead or chair. John asks if we are reorienting the charge of the committee (feasibility, capital campaign, etc.). Board needs leadership in "master plan" side of committee (architect or master planner), not the "maintenance" side (Cliff and Michael are focused there).

Jill distributed a master plan summary before stepping down. It suggests a "Go Big" capital campaign that would include elevator/lift, social hall restroom improvements, third floor classroom/hallway changes. Joe and Matt raised issue of using a line of credit to build the elevator, etc. Jill was strongly opposed to the congregation taking on more debt. Peg thinks UUA has loan possibilities for accessibility needs, and that Umpqua Bank would look at a loan such as this favorably.

John asks us to think about impact on congregational life and all the other things we are doing of starting a major capital campaign now. Could be very positive and pull people together. We've just concluded a process of determining our SJ focus (external drive). Peg thinks that there is a lot of energy and passion in the community for accessibility and it will inspire us. John asks us to think about our assumptions going into the idea of starting a capital campaign.

Matt asks about the idea of putting a parking garage on the lot and the elevator could be in that.

Eric mentions the line item that John Monahan put in the new budget for repairing the corner of the parking lot that is sagging. Board discusses that we need a geotech firm to evaluate the hillside for how it should be stabilized. Lisa will ask Chris R for a recommendation for a geotech firm.

Joe will talk with Rose about the possibility of leading the Building Committee, and put it on the agenda again for next month. John says he needs a structured way of thinking about the capital campaign request (whether to do it, are these the changes we want, once we settle on the scope how to move forward on both fronts).

Auction Chair

Matt says he cannot run the auction a second time. Discussion about possible auction chair candidates. Question about moving auction to fall? Idea is to separate it from pledge drive a bit.

Meeting adjourned at 9:56 pm.

Minutes recorded by Lisa Maynard, Board Secretary

TO: WSUU Board of Trustees
FROM: Rev. Peg
RE: **Minister's February Report**

Two decisions required:

IRS responsible party question under financial section below.

And update to Weather Building Closure policy...I edited our policy for your review based on our experience this past weekend.

MISCELLANEOUS:

50th BIRTHDAY

Put June 1st, Sunday's service and really the whole weekend on your calendar...plans are being made for a culmination of our 50th birthday celebration. Past members who have moved away, current members from the old days, and past ministers will be with us!

Shannon will be on vacation from Friday the 14th til Wednesday the 19th. She is preparing Friday's documents (oos and announcements) ahead of time, so we only need to put in last minute announcements and print.. Patti McCall will assist on Friday the 14th with that. The extra day that Shannon is working, now a total of 13 hours, is allowing me to delegate/teach so much more than I could with the 8 hours Laurie worked in the office. If we can get that position to ½ time, your minister will be really getting out of a lot of the details.

FINANCIAL

I've had two members who are currently homebound, during my home visits to them, say they are ready to contribute to an elevator fund. Let's get that project expedited!

Currently we have the following total pledged for this year: \$245,288. Budget is 255,000. Fortunately some other revenue lines are a bit ahead and we will get some more before end of the fiscal year. FYI, two members have had to stop making payments due to unemployment. What we do is first is express our compassion for them and our hopes that the financial pressures will not be long lasting, assuring them that their membership is not affected in any way. Then we see how much they have paid so far this year, and make that total their "this year's pledge". Then they are shown as paid in full. This total I just gave you includes such adjustments. As I mentioned, we always first let folks know we are most concerned for them, and for them not to worry about money and church...that we appreciate what they have already given to support the church, and I always also let them know that my door is always open to them for pastoral visits.

Little Library Project. I suggested to Ursula Ham that the church should be holding the money donated for this project. She agrees and will be turning it over on Sunday.

Note this requires action

The IRS has a new regulation requiring us to notify them of who is our “responsible party” regarding money issues. This allows them to know who to communicate with if something is amiss in payroll taxes, etc. The new requirement states that any entity with a tax identification number must notify the IRS of changes to its responsible party within 60 days of the change using Form 8822-B to communicate that change. The name on communications from IRS now is Paula vanHaagen, a long ago past president. In terms of the church, who is a responsible party? I don’t think it should be the Treasurer as that position turns over too often. I turned to Jill Fleming, our member CPA who is my accounting consultant, and she said the Minister can be, and that in a larger church it would be the Business Manager. Ok, that’s consistent with program church size decision making, right? The IRS form is signed by a Board member, so I would suggest our policy be: “Responsible party is the Minister (who supervises the bookkeeper and monitors our financial checks and balances) and that the form is signed by Treasurer.”

We have drafted a non-member memorial rental sheet, that starts with compassion, and then clearly outlines what we can offer in space and cost. Sanctuary only, and sanctuary with reception following. This will help us in the office when folks drop by to inquire. We won’t nickel and dime them with AV costs, use of piano, etc. just tell them all the services they get and one fee. I’m working with the rental/wedding folks to finalize this (Joanne Cook, Amy Hance-Brancati, Alice Britt).

Bert and Jerry are leading a theatre evening, as only they can! This will be a fundraiser for the music sourced general fund line. Thanks to them, and save the date! Here is the announcement:

Save the Date: March 29 at 7:30pm. Expressive Music and Theater Arts, a nonprofit arts organization, will present a fundraiser benefiting our congregation’s General Fund. Come be a part of the audience for a live radio broadcast (ca. 1942) of “Without a Clue” or “Who Did In Willamina Willagillespie from Walla Walla Washington”. It’s guaranteed to be the theater event of the year! For more information contact Expressive Music and Theater Arts at em.ta@ourlook.com, Bert Gulhaugen or Jerry Halsey.

SUNDAY SERVICES

I mentioned an AV grant resource in November. Our AV pro Nathan Mesnard, Steve Burrows, Mark Newton, Bert Gulhaugen and myself met to discuss potential equipment to ask for. We wrote a grant to the district Chalice Lighters for over a 1,000.00 in AV equipment (new lap top for AV booth, kick drum mic, pencil microphone, powered speaker in podium, three more assisted listening devices). While the chalice lighters grants are usually to a specific congregation, last year they did a call for donations that would create a pot of money for increasing technology ability in congregations. We need 30% of our members signed up to be “chalice lighters.” A chalice lighter contributes \$15 three times a year to support another church’s growth or building initiative...a new roof, a playground, or increase in staffing to support growth. We have received two chalice lighters grants in the past, bringing me to full time and hiring our first music director. The last one we received was for over 20,000.00. And didn’t those were investments pay off for the chalice lighters program! They are proud of us and our growth. Our AV grant has been awarded to us, with a contingency. In order to get this grant, we need 7 more chalice lighters, as we are that much below our 30% figure. If any of you are not on

this list, and you are willing, let me know. I actually have the list, so I could let you know if you aren't sure. One option is to contribute the whole \$45 in the fall and be done with the contributions for a year.

I'm doing a pulpit exchange with the Bainbridge Island "Cedars" Unitarian Universalist Congregation's ministers...I'll be there February 23rd to do their canvass Sunday sermon...they will come in July to Westside.

Large Print Hymnals and OOS: we have ordered two copies of the large print teal hymnal, already have a large print grey hymnal, and will produce three large print oos each week, placing them in the vestibule at the greeters' desk for folks with limited sight.

People are telling us how much they appreciate the drums...good balance, just right.

On March 2nd we expect lots of extra folks to be at our service, as we are hosting a youth/young adult chaplaincy training for the district, plus UUC will be bringing some of their youth. I have changed my topic to deep listening, to match the chaplaincy training topic...we could use lots of greeters/friendly folk if you are coming that day! We could have 30-50 guests.

CLASSES

The Exel (exploring elderhood) group that Fred Matthews leads twice a month on Fridays is well attended....last week had eight people. It seems to be a gateway in for some of our newer elder visitors.

UU History Class: my Saturday intensive history class had 23 attending. There is now a follow up class, listed in the common quest listings where we will be reading the three FAMOUS UU sermons that changed our faith!

Spiritual Study Group...this group is a serious group doing serious spiritual discernment...making impacts on their lives...last month there were 16 people there.

Covenant Groups: our leaders are writing the most profound session topics. We are indebted to Patti McCall, Joe Rettenmaier, Julie Charles and Mark Mackay. I am hearing very very good feedback from people who appreciate the deep sharing. This week's is related to our social justice topic, as it is all about hunger and our experience with eating.

WEATHER POLICY AND BUILDING CLOSURE—time to critique this policy! I sent it to you in December. I would recommend the following changes, given that our experience this time is that we have no building chair and the safety chair lives on Vashon Island! I also recognize that if I were preaching and could get there, I might have held a service, but this particular service involved many many participants, and their absence would have hurt the quality of the planned service, thus those planning the service need to be involved in the decision making. It's not just a President decision. So what do you think about these changes?

Should weather or any natural disaster or building condition cause the need to decide upon closing for safety purposes, the following guidelines and procedures will be followed:

- 1) If South Seattle Community College is closed, the church will automatically be closed.

- 2) In other events and conditions, the President and Minister will make the decision as to closure, in consultation with ~~the Building Committee Chair, and/or Chair of Safety Committee, other leaders~~ they deem appropriate.
- ~~3) In the absence of the President, the Building Chair can make the decision, in consultation with the Safety Committee chair, if desired.~~
- 4) Whenever the church building is closed, the President, Minister or other official will make every effort to make sure we post decisions on the website, on the office phone recording, on entry doors, as well as sending an email to the congregation.
- 5) When the closure affects either Sunday morning services or Christmas Eve, ~~the Minister~~ those planning the service will be involved in the decision making.

In case of power outages in the neighborhood, if the church has power including the stove, and if we have church members to facilitate, we will open our doors for people to cook and be warm. That decision making should be cleared by the President or Minister.