

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

January 9, 2013

The meeting was held in the Administrative Office of the Congregation's church building at 7141 California Avenue SW, Seattle, Washington, and was called to order by President Jill Fleming at 7:10 p.m. with chalice lighting words from Moving on from Church Folly Lane, and everyone checking in. Candace Sullivan provided excellent ham and cheese for sandwiches and homemade cookies.

Present were President Jill Fleming, Vice President Candace Sullivan, Secretary Karin Cumming, Treasurer Matt Aspin, Trustees Laura Matson, Eric Winiecki and Joe Rettenmaier and Rev. Peg Morgan. Also present was Betsy Lowry, Director of Religious Exploration.

Jill noted that proposed minutes of the December 12, 2012 board meeting had been distributed to the members of the Board for review. She suggested corrections to say that we had been working with the PNWD to host the stewardship workshop and it had been set for January 26, 2013, and to correct the sentence under Building Update as to location of stucco (east side), date of appointment of Mike Cox (December 21) and spelling of contractor name (Rafn). Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were approved unanimously approved as amended.

Treasurer's Report

Copies of the report that Matt had distributed by email were distributed in reduced, two-sided format. Matt said we are short in pledge donations at 54% (should be 58%), although it was noted that it is the percentage of the budgeted amount, not the actual pledges, and Peg commented that people are current in their pledges but we expect to add more actual pledges during this fiscal year. Jill commented that we should now be at the 58% mark in revenues but the actual revenues now at 47% will improve after the Labor of Love Auction. Discussion of some items were deferred until Carie, the bookkeeper, returns to the office after next week. The Treasurer's Report was accepted.

Minister's Report

Rev. Peg had distributed her report via email in two parts, the entirety of which is attached to these minutes.

Rev. Peg distributed at the meeting a report of undesignated cash contributions for the past three months, plus the first collection in 2013, which was split between the General Fund and WS Helpline, the charity designated for January 2013. It was suggested that we try a month where we choose a different charity for each week. There was discussion regarding the purpose of this method giving, such as building relationships with certain charities, or whether we should chose a theme either similar or unrelated to our social justice focus.

Stewardship Workshop

A flyer was handed out for "Money, Mission and Meaning: Stewardship as Spiritual Practice," a

workshop that this congregation will be hosting on January 26. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Orion Center was unanimously selected to be the recipient of a goodwill offering from that workshop. Several board members indicated that they would attend.

DRE Report

Betsy distributed and discussed her report (attachment available from Betsy). She noted that Natalie has helped make a smooth transition and Peg noted that Natalie's husband is continuing to teach his class until the end of March, which will provide for a smooth transition there.

Safety Policy

Jill said we may need to address the matter of marijuana use separately and not as an "illegal drug," particularly since its use is now legal in Washington. Candace said that the time period for adults working with the youth program prohibiting friendship with those youth until age of 25 was too restrictive. Also, she strongly opposed the provision for prohibition of alcohol at events where youth are present. Betsy presented the idea that it is better to adopt policies that are reasonable and will be followed rather than so strict that it was likely to be violated and create liability. Jill asked for a definition of "endorsement" for participation at congregation events. Noting the advantages of older youth working with younger kids, it was agreed that we need to take reasonable steps to ensure that protocol is followed. Betsy will email a revised version before next meeting.

Strategic Planning

Jill suggested we add a column for status. Other suggestions were to have columns for board person responsible, implementer, next steps and outcomes. Joe suggested that the description of each objective and strategy be abbreviated in order to reduce the number of pages. Jill noted that we had already accomplished certain things, such as scheduling the congregational retreat and the stewardship workshop, establishing a Finance Committee, planning for the social justice event, forming a leadership task force and organizing a transition committee. In this regard, it was agreed to meet for the purpose of discussing "Moving from Church Folly Lane," after a potluck dinner at Candace's house beginning at 6:00 p.m.

Leadership Day

Jill suggested we change title to something like "Community Development Day," to attract anyone who wants to come, as well as the committee chairs and group leaders. Candace suggested Matt because she liked his ideas and Laura Matson, due to her involvement with the Leadership Task Force. Due to conflict with a choir event, the hours of this event were shortened to 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., still on March 2, 2013.

Raise the Paddle

As a specific fundraising item, Candace suggested we split between water-related repairs and beautification of the social hall. Joe suggested the remodel of the administrative office, which would

have less potential conflict as far as the master plan is concerned. Upon motion duly made and seconded, Joe's idea was unanimously approved.

AV Issue

It was reported that a donor gave the church \$6,000, which was put in a discretionary account labeled "Donation for Board Discretion." In the midst of all the very serious trouble we are having in the AV booth with power and sound problems, upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously voted to draw from that donation to pay a troubleshooting AV person to come in and see what needs to be done to solve the problems.

Document Management

Joe requested that we utilize something like Google Docs to assemble the materials that the board needs to review prior to each board meeting, rather than distribute them individually by email. He offered to work on getting it set up and Karin agreed that she would be responsible for collecting and depositing such materials in that location.

Policy Dissemination

Jill commented that upon visiting the Edmonds UU web site, she noticed that they had a link for access to policies that are proposed and under consideration or adopted by the board. She thought it seemed like a good idea and other board members concurred. Various configurations were discussed and Jill said she will check that web site again and advise exactly how theirs is set up.

Thank You Notes

Thank you notes were written and signed to Cliff Houlihan for his help in keeping the building functioning and to Stina Lane Cummings for organizing RE supplies and the administrative office cupboard .

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Karin Cumming, Secretary

Minister's Report
Rev. Peg Morgan
January 2013

The District Executive, Janine Larsen, is interested in nominating us to be involved in the leap of faith program. Jill Fleming and I discussed this and told the Executive that we would like to be considered...we haven't made any commitments, and may not be chosen, but I would like to know if the board would like us to continue our interest. Peg

Here is what she wrote to me:

Hello, Peg –

I would be interested in nominating Westside UU Congregation to participate in the Pacific Western Region's "Leap of Faith" program, which will launch next fall. The program has been piloted for 2 years at the national level, and our regional staff was impressed enough with the outcomes that we are ready to take it "local" (western style, meaning a generous definition of "local"). I think WSUU would be ideally suited for this program as an "Aspiring Congregation," now that you've gotten the hang of your new space and may be ready to grow in additional ways. But I could also see you as a Mentor Congregation, so let's tuck that in the back of our minds, too, ok?

I'm going to tell you more about the program as if you would be an Aspiring Congregation.

"Leap of Faith" creatively pairs congregations as learning communities that share ideas, tools, and challenges with vision and inspiration. As a congregation aspiring to and ready for the kind of dynamic growth that leads to a breakthrough to a new level of effective ministry (that is, deep connection within the congregation and meaningful service to our world), WSUU would be matched with a Mentor Congregation eager to support your exploration of new possibilities and methodologies for building religious presence and practices.

The primary goal of "Leap of Faith" is to nurture a culture of learning in public, and to tap into wisdom and innovation through congregation-to-congregation dialogue and inquiry. Partnership with a Mentor Congregation that has experienced the kind of successful trajectory WSUU envisions is intended to foster empowerment of congregational leaders by demonstrating that the "leap" into change is feasible and sustainable. The support of a Mentor Congregation helps demystify the path to growth, inspire innovative vision, and model productive risk-taking.

The New England Region is also undertaking a regional Leap of Faith program, but we expect our Aspiring and Mentor congregations to be matched from within our region.

We are still developing our program website -- but you can see it in its nearly finished form at <http://pwruua.org/leap-of-faith-home/>. Some of the pages (use the drop down menu at top of the main page) still show some TBAs, but I think the most important details are there.

Thanks to grants from the UUA Funding Panel and financial commitments from each of our western districts, costs for participating congregations are generously subsidized. Aspiring congregations will be expected to invest \$2500, which will cover basic costs for a traveling team of 5 to attend a Launch Conference in California, plus airfare for your traveling team to make a site visit to the mentoring congregation.

That means that in return for your cost sharing contribution, your congregation will receive:

- Airfare, hotel, meals and program registration for a team of 5 to
 - o the Launch Conference in California, probably in August
 - o a site visit to your Mentor Congregation, at a time you mutually set
- A site visit from your Mentor Congregation's traveling team, at a time you mutually set
- Coaching from your Mentor Congregation through June, 2014
- Access to a virtual learning community with other "Leap of Faith" congregations (aspiring and mentor)
- Technology coaching for virtual connections throughout the project period

There will likely be some incidentals or options WSUU would need to additionally fund, but these are not expected to be major (unless you so choose). For example, when you host your Mentor Congregation for the site visit, you will want to provide refreshments; possibly, you'd need to provide meals. I think you'd need to provide home hospitality for them. Their travel costs would otherwise be covered.

In addition to the \$2500 project contribution, WSUU would be required to

- Name a leadership learning team – including a 5-person travel team – to develop goals, bring back insights to the rest of the congregation, and help implement congregation-wide action plans
- Participate actively in the virtual learning community
- Do your "homework" as you and your Mentor Congregation develop
- Cover your own traveling team's costs to attend GA, if a gathering of Leap congregations is scheduled there
- Participate in an evaluation of the project

Not every congregation nominated will be selected to participate. A maximum of 8 Aspiring and 8 Mentoring congregations will be chosen by our regional staff team. We expect to have those decisions made in January. It's our hope that the chosen congregations will be able to make an initial connection at Regional Assembly in April. We anticipate the Launch Conference will be August 22-24 or August 15-17.

Let me know if you think WSUU would be interested in this, as either an Aspiring or Mentoring. If not, I won't recommend you. And if you are interested, let me know what additional questions you have and I'll hunt down the answers for you!

Yours in faith,

Janine Larsen, District Executive
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, Pacific Northwest

*Part of the Pacific Western Region: Big Faith * No Borders*

jlarsen@uua.org

What a month it has been. Goodness. Natalie's resignation/the hiring of Betsy and Christmas holidays made for a very busy 4 weeks. Here are some things you might like to know:

DRE Transition: Natalie and Betsy have worked extremely well together to accomplish a seamless transition. Natalie will come back to facilitate the youth vision/planning workshop this coming Sunday at 1:30. We are very grateful for that. Betsy is a gem, and is leaping in with great energy and natural inclinations. The REC Council, Natalie and I are discussing an installation to occur in April, after Natalie and her family have moved. That will also give some good time for the children to bond with Betsy...we would like to involve them more in this installation. Liz Bucklew and Lisa Maynard are agreeing to pulling together a little children's choir to do a song.

I have drafted a letter to the UUA to begin our dialogue about compensation. Here is how it reads right now...you can suggest changes if you like, but this does not need to take up Board time.

Terasa, (the staff person is Rev. Terasa Cooley)

I am writing to you on behalf of myself, my Board of Trustees, and our congregation.

I would like to have a conversation with you about the UUA's hiring of Natalie Briscoe. Here is the background as I understand it and as I have experienced it.

Natalie began as our DRE in August, after a several month planning and continental search process, and after we spent \$777.40 on interview airfare for her, and \$2000.00 on moving costs to bring her to us from Texas. As I understand it, and I realize I have not spoken to you yet for your story, you called her in November to offer her a job that was repackaged specifically for her skills...taking the half time job you had offered her which she turned down earlier in the year, and making it full time. She hesitated, but upon your calling her again in December, she accepted the position.

Our congregation feels wounded by this. Not that Natalie doesn't have every right to take a good step up for her and her family. She does. We are not angry with Natalie. We are disappointed, but not angry. And Natalie has been very thoughtful in how she has been providing assistance as we bring on a new person. Fortunately, our #2 candidate had stayed at Westside, and she accepted our offer to fill the vacant position. However, she has never been a DRE, and thus we face extra costs we would not have had to bring her into her required knowledge and skill level.

But we feel wounded that you/the UUA have not been in communication with us, and did not have the courtesy to speak with me or our Board President about this prior to approaching Natalie, or at least immediately afterwards, to process this shift in resources to our faith. I have to say, it was a shock to all of us...after we worked so hard and long to find the right candidate and then invested in a thoughtful process of assimilating her into the life of our congregation and her position with us. We had a special assimilation workshop with congregational leaders and a moving installation service, and of course I and others have invested much time in her beginning months with us. Our children and youth have been affected also...To be very honest, there has been a lot of anger towards the UUA because of your silence...you seem so insensitive to the effect upon our congregation...and isn't the UUA existing to serve our congregations?

Losing Natalie means we are "out" the \$2777.40 plus funds it will take to bring our new DRE into the profession...sending her to Renaissance modules, each one being with airfare probably \$1000, and this year it seems essential to send her to the continental RE Directors gathering which will be \$1500 to \$2000. So it seems that your investment in Natalie ought to include compensating our congregation for these expenses

May we talk on the phone about this?

Peg

Rev. Peg Boyle Morgan, Parish Minister

Westside Unitarian Universalist Congregation

<http://www.wsuu.org/>

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Staff Absences: Laurie is not coming in for two weeks, though she will do some work from home...a staycation...and our Bookkeeper will not be in next week. I can do an emergency check. I've asked Patti McCall to be in the office on Wednesday and Friday to take Laurie's place, at least answering the phone and other directed tasks.

Charity Donations: Next month's charity will be our members in need. That well is dry. We spent the last money on a gift basket for three of our homebound members. Will we do it all the month of February like we are doing the Helpline? We don't have the data this week to make that decision. Perhaps we could discuss the criteria by which you would want to continue the "all month for one charity" practice. Then I could report how closely we met that criteria. By the Board meeting this week I will know how much we took in last Sunday and see how that compares to other weeks. Ideally we would be bringing in as much for the congregation as we usually do, even at taking only half...the data I gave you to begin this experiment had congregations reporting their ½ share as being close to, like 75% or equal to what the congregation got before. Under those circumstances, we would be doubling our overall basket contributions, giving much more to the community than before while nearly maintaining our

congregational support. Thoughts?

Seabeck Plans: Apr 26-28, 2013. I have recruited Martha Cohen, Barbara Sherry and Larkie Gildersleeve as our Seabeck registration and PR team. Registration is beginning immediately. Space is on first come first serve basis; if the three congregations exceed the space contracted for we will be asking for more beds from Seabeck.

Pastoral Listeners: This program is about to begin. Specific people have been invited to attend a training on Feb. 23rd. and to make a commitment after that day. People invited were folks often mentioned in the care questionnaire that we did several months ago, prioritized after some considerations for several factors of diversity. Viv Monahan is in charge of this program, and is getting credit through Antioch for her work.

Roy Zimmerman Concert: 2/9...a singer songwriter. We will not advertise until after the auction. But he is terrific and benefits our congregation. I'm not sure what time.

My Knee Surgery: I'll have some laparoscopic surgery on Monday Jan 28. Hope to still make the auction that Saturday and SS Committee retreat that day. But I will undoubtedly work from home all week.

Agenda for Leadership Day—Some Thoughts

Mission of Congregation/organizational chart/leadership directory

Website—resources there for you, how you can develop pages for your group

Logistics: getting in/locking up/building emergency problem contacts/heat

Calendaring and Reserving Space—getting space, revising your plans

How to publicize your church event at Westside (oos, eNews, newsletter, fliers, bulletin board, facebook page)

What to do if you hear of a pastoral care need.

Running Meetings: anchoring all meetings in UU, lighting chalice, sharing joys and sorrows.

Weddings: Coming up...a lesbian couple formerly related to RVUUC, now out of state—June 13 small group, a little rental; Sharyn Chen and Jeff Richardson July 20th; and later in September Jeannie Warner and Debra Duff off site.

Break from Preaching: while I will be preaching twice a month every month, we have cleared 4 Sundays in a row for me to have a break over late Feb-late March...so that I can do a day a week study in collaboration with a colleague in Vancouver ...we will be studying and indexing poetry for sermon use; I also hope to do some other study..so many intriguing books, so little time...and I'll hope to take a vacation if Wayne's health allows. I'll still attend important meetings and take care of other responsibilities. Super woman.

Thank yous...to Stina Lane Cummings for organizing RE supplies and admin office cupboard. To Laura Ehret for doing many WSUU early member interviews for our 50th birthday year. (2014?).

