

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

January 8, 2014 FINAL

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 7:06 pm with chalice lighting and words from Michelle Conklin to inspire us.

Present were President Joe Rettenmaier, Secretary Lisa Maynard, Vice President Matt Aspin, Treasurer Eric Winiiecki, and Trustees Amy Hance-Brancati, Shannon Day, and John Britt, as well as Rev. Peg Morgan, Intern Minister Michelle Conklin. DRE Betsy Lowry arrived later.

Thank You Notes

To Joanne Cook for doing weekly cash deposits and Finance Committee and Wedding Committee work. To Rob Fenwick for installing all baseboards in the youth room. To Wendy Swyte for cooking our delicious dinner tonight.

Minutes

Upon motion duly moved and seconded, minutes from the Dec 2013 meeting were approved with no corrections.

Treasurer's Report

Eric distributed a printout. Overall the budget is in pretty good shape. As of Dec 31, our expenses exceed revenues by about \$5K, which is relatively small compared to the total. It is also less than last month's discrepancy. RE program support is exceeding expected income for this time of year. Cell tower income is coming in well. Matt remarked that the Finance Committee advised us strongly last year to budget conservatively. Income/expense categories are coming closer to 100% YTD as the months roll on. DRE pension is still at 0 because Betsy wasn't eligible until January (had to be in the position for a year). Advertising expenses are not being spent but we agree that it makes sense to leave the category unspent in case we need it to cover something else later.

Board discussed that we need to replace the faucet in the women's room downstairs because it is constantly dripping hot water. Shannon will put in a work order and say the Board has requested it.

Regarding expense line 4.100.160 Special Gifts for \$4500, of which \$3500 is for the percussionist and \$1000 is for AV: We haven't received the \$1000 yet but can't follow up because we don't know who offered it. Peg will ask Mark and some others to see if she can figure out.

Eric is seeking to collect budget info from committee chairs by Jan 10 (for next year's budget). A number of Board members were unaware of his requests to committees on which they served.

Kudos to Eric for producing the clear and beautiful quarterly report that goes to the congregation (one went out at end of Dec). He said he and Peg are coordinating this type of reporting with Kari as she thinks about the pledge drive planning and communicating.

Regarding pledge drive timing: March 30 is Celebration Sunday – will be publicizing it all during March with testimonials from the pulpit. John suggested the idea of "March Forth to support your congregation" on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Peg said that

some people have expressed that they prefer an in-person canvass, and that the pledge drive will be flexible so that people who want in-person canvass will get it.

### Strategic Plan

Joe has compiled the spreadsheets for the four goals into one master tracking doc. He updated status to the best of his understanding, using green/yellow/red shading. Board quickly reviewed tasks for all four goals and Joe made changes as needed.

*Goal 1. Maintain and enhance our close-knit community.* In good shape, with lots of green. Accessibility: Amy was researching accessibility—she has a document but it didn't seem timely once we decided to do the accessibility feasibility study. Some differences of opinion about whether we have requested a general accessibility review or an elevator/lift study (see Oct 2013 minutes, which indicate a more general review). Amy will send her accessibility doc to the Board and we will review for Feb meeting.

RE: Increasing young adult activities (age 18–35 is how we define it, but there is a national UU conversation about how that really falls into two groups). Betsy went to several young adult activities at LAREDA, and says “young adult” is like adding an entirely separate ministry. You don't/can't attract young adults to what we are already doing, which is oriented toward families and older folks. We don't have the kind of things going on in our congregation that feed young adults. Our best bet would be to write a grant to fund some portion of a position to do young adult ministry. Is this a direction we want to go in? Betsy used to be enthusiastic about it but her thinking has evolved – perhaps it is not an immediate priority for our congregation. Currently this task is targeted toward Q1 2014. Betsy recommends pushing the target way back or putting it on hold until we feel ready to allocate resources to it. Add it to part of a broader prioritization discussion. Matt suggests that partnering with South Seattle Community College may be a way to approach young adult ministry until we are ready to go for something more substantial, and Lisa suggests that new SJ focus (Food First) may be an entry point for partnering with a group at SSCC.

All-cong social events doing well. All-cong retreat: Planning is underway but Peg is concerned that we don't have enough people committed to help plan it. Amy says she is okay leading for now but doesn't know what the interest is. Have to fundraise for scholarships as part of the three-congregation effort, and they intend to do a soup lunch for it. Retreat is publicized in e-news this week.

Expand common quest: Lots of offerings but it is not directed, more of a potluck. Shannon asks if it is taken advantage of by a broad group. Betsy recommends more intentionality toward lifespan faith development, systemic in nature, with goal of empowering people to find their way on their own spiritual path. Eventually we would have a paid staff person to think about this. John asks whether the organic nature of it now is a reflection of the cong, so what are the gifts we spontaneously bring?

Mentoring model for membership development: John and Peg both say that mentoring is very difficult and may not be the right model for membership development.

Photo directory: Lisa is reminded that she said she would check with Creighton about an update to the directory and help him get going if he is interested and would like some help.

New member bios to committee chairs within two months: Shannon will add the new member bio to the data that the admin requests as part of the “new member tracking” spreadsheet she assembles. Then she could distribute to

committee chairs. Peg asks us to think about, as we grow, what tasks should be handled by Membership Committee and what by admin staff.

Pastoral care program enhancements: We're about to add two adult/youth chaplain pairs.

Adopt a social justice focus: Yay, we did it! Announced in today's e-news. Kudos to John and team.

*Goal II. Refine our organizational and management structure to support a program-size congregation.* Org chart: John says his next target is taking the reports about structure that have been coming in from committees and creating a narrative document that addresses roles, etc.

Policies and procedures manual: Doc has been posted on website. John thinks it is a mix of a number of things – some procedures, some policies – and that the Board needs to review it and make sure it includes what it needs. Shannon and Peg have been updating this doc, but Lisa has put the original on skydrive – need to reconcile. “Policies” should be short and conceptual; “procedures” should be more detailed and methodological. John reports that UU consultant Tandy Rodgers is meeting with the Transition Committee on Jan 13.

Strengthen internal and external communication: Currently using three communication mechanisms to communicate to congregation. Need to increase connections with broader community. Ask committees for volunteer needs as well as budgetary needs – Kari is planning to ask for time as well as treasure pledges. Need to clarify areas for shared decision-making between staff and lay leaders. Some congregations have flow charts for decision-making. Transition committee is dealing with this. Delivery of routine reports supports an informed Board.

Increase pool of lay leaders, provide leadership training: Steve Becker had a leadership training session and asked John to be on a curriculum development group to expand leadership training further. UU Connects initiative – currently a spreadsheet on Steve's computer but it should be a more robust database. This is an area that needs some Board attention.

Identify staffing needs: John says it falls within Peg's purview to present staffing needs to the Board so that we can talk about it. This will happen with budgeting process.

*Goal III. Ensure our financial stability.* Income strategy task force was targeted to be happening right now (to identify multiple potential income strategies – in other words, what are some of the small, medium, and large fundraising opportunities and best practices that we could be taking advantage of? Move target to Q3 2014 as we debrief on pledge drive. Kudos to Fred Matthews for his jump start of the Planned Giving Task Force and PG policies.

*Goal IV. Enhance our building.* Cliff has been working on an operations manual. Probably won't be ready until end of church year. Long-term maintenance plan for building? Expansion Task Force – underway because Joe R asked Joe Nabbefeld to start developing relationships with neighboring building owners. Jill thinks expansion is outside the Building Comm's purview.

John points out that we as a Board and congregation have gotten a lot done since the strategic plan was approved by the Board in Nov 2012. Kudos to Joe for keeping us on track.

#### Leadership Directory and Org Chart Work

Joe asks: what constitutes a committee, team, project, task force, or group? What is established officially by the board and develops more organically? No resolution, but John is continuing to work on the org chart.

### Council of Committees

John asks the Board if he can go ahead and launch this effort. He has been researching how other congregations organize such gatherings. VP serves as the chair in all the ones John has examined. He would like to hold a couple gatherings before the end of the year. When would be good? ASAP after the auction, but not interfering with pledge drive. One goal of the gathering is to help the Board understand what additional policies and procedures are needed. Possible names: Council of Committees, Program Council, Leadership Assembly, Ministry Council). Moved, seconded, and approved that John be empowered to launch the Leadership Assembly (Board prefers this term).

### Approval of Planned Giving Policy

Edits since the last time we saw it are fairly minor. Eric asks if Finance Comm reviewed it, but Matt says that since Melissa Lang was one of the drafters, we didn't need to have the FC look at it separately. Moved, seconded, and approved that we adopt the revised Planned Giving policy. Board asks Shannon to place content into the Policies and Procedures manual and move it into final policies place on website.

### Auction Update

Matt says we are able to use credit cards on our website now. Procurement seems to be at an okay level and needs to finish by next Sunday. He hired a professional auctioneer (son of a congregant) based on idea that they can generate 10-20% higher revenue than an amateur. Matt says this has been a great learning experience, but what a lot of effort. Discussion of how to sell the idea of revamping the nursery and crying room for Raise the Paddle; theme could be "what if this was your first impression of WSUU." Betsy has a meeting with Laura White, an early childhood person, who has some ideas for the space. Theme could tie in with garden idea – this is where our seeds get planted. Use Anne Geddes-type photos of babies in pots? Board decided to offer a champagne breakfast before church on Sun, Apr 13 – Matt will write up the description. BOARD MEMBERS: Add this date/event to your calendars!

### Appointments

Moved, seconded, and approved Laura White as new greeter chair (replacing Jeff Richardson).

Peg will ask Tracy Burrows if she is able to continue on Nominating Committee with Liz Bucklew. Also need a third member to replace Jeff R.

### Dinner

Amy proposes that we switch to just dessert because making dinner is such a big job. Board agrees. We all owe Eric and Wendy a dinner because he's done it twice this year!

Meeting adjourned at 9:19 pm.

Submitted by Lisa Maynard, Board Secretary

## MINISTER'S REPORT

Rev. Peg Morgan

Jan 7, 2014

### Money things:

The Shelby Greiner/wreath project netted 795.00 with 20% going to general fund (\$159.00).

The Peter Mayer Concert earned \$680.00.

The Glenn Brewer donations in memory totaled 2025.00 and Ginger had named the arts and aesthetics fund. However, she would like to send a little bit of that to Transylvania. The amount to be determined at their Partner Church meeting Tuesday evening. I assume that is ok since she was the one to name where we should put the donations. But I wanted you to know. The trip to Transylvania will be discussed at their meeting also.

Eric, our Bookkeeper and I are transitioning the books to UMPQUA. February 1<sup>st</sup> is hopefully the cut off date...for no more items flowing into Chase. We have some bill pays to transition over including the loan payments, and revenue from member charge cards/pledges and our eTrade account. All of those transitions are in process.

### Pastoral Care:

I've been busy...two member weddings this month (Joe B. and Bill C.; Mark and Mike). Home visit with Sharon Creeden. A couple other people new to the church having some medical issues and wanting some support. That's good that they feel comfortable to reach out as new people. Another who is a member in domestic transition. One small rental wedding I'm in the midst of planning for April and another in August being held elsewhere.

### Miscellaneous:

Shelby got a bunch of things for the church from Barbara Sherry's brother's home (he died in early December), including some heavy duty shelving which she has put up in the dunk tank. That is really helping with our storage organization.

Rob Fenwick volunteered to put the baseboard's in the youth room...they look great.

Phil Mariconda is willing to take charge of spreading salt on icy Sunday mornings. Bert or Betsy will call him if it is icy as they are the first people in.

### History Class:

I will have over 20 people for the history intensive on Saturday. The concept of just learning it all in one committed day seems easier for folks than 8 weeks of classes. There is plenty of room (social hall) if any of you wish to come.

### Spokane District Meeting:

There is information out now on the Spokane District meeting...a flier on the bulletin board by kitchen. The speaker is high powered. It would be a good experience I think. More info at PNWD.org

# RE Report to the Board

## January 2014

### Highlights

December was truly the “Season of Renewal.”

#### Multigenerational Service

- Twenty of our kids, ages 4 to 16, participated in our multigenerational service on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, helping us to bring the “Season of Renewal” to life for its debut.
- We met for six rehearsals, building the bonds that come with the fun of a shared project and goal.
- Katherine Fry, a high school youth, shared the pulpit with different adults each Sunday in December to offer rich words of faith, hope, service, and love for a candle ritual to mark this unique time of the year.
- Bert and I developed the “Season of Renewal” concept and script, and shaped it with input from Reverend Peg, Michelle Conklin, Sunday Services Committee folks, and the RE Council. Our intent was to highlight and honor what we as UU’s hold dear as our values and in our worship experience, and to invite us all to use this year-end opportunity to reflect on how we individually and collectively experience and live those values. The service allowed our children and youth to guide all of us in an exploration of how our UU principles and sources are woven through the elements of our weekly worship services. At the end of the service we incorporated a reflection ritual around our UU sources and principles, engaging adults from our congregation, as a way of anchoring us as a UU community moving in to the New Year.
- We would like to offer this again next year as our multigenerational service in December on the Solstice weekend.





### Christmas Eve Service

- We enjoyed the annual tradition of our festive and energetic 5:00pm family service again this year. While a few key roles for kids were identified early, most roles were selected that night as kids arrived. We did the manger story – UU style – and our kids got to act it out a bit in costumes. Mark Newton’s reading of “The Night Before Christmas” was a hit again, as were the Christmas carols we sang together, our candy cane communion, and our glow light version of “Silent Night.”



### Continuing Activities in December

- Regular RE classes were held for all ages December 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. On December 29<sup>th</sup>, we had a multi-age Game Day for the kids in the Social Hall during the service, with four adults who had a great time giving the kids who attended, lots of attention.
- Junior High OWL, Coming of Age, and Youth Group met regularly in December.
- We held a potluck parent session for the 18 Junior High OWL families, to talk about parent challenges, ideas, and questions around sexuality education with their kids.
- We (WSUU) supported and sponsored a Seattle Homeschool Group OWL class for high school age youth in the Seattle area as an outreach, social action effort. Rand Cufley is one of the teachers. The

15 or so families participating attended an orientation session that we offered at Westside in December.

- Michael Franzen and I offered three OWL, 90-minute parent information sessions in December for families of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders, to prepare for a start time in late January and to solidify our OWL meeting dates for the winter semester.
- The high school youth carried out their first greens sales fundraiser, organizing the plans, selling the greens and distributing the products to Westside congregants. They were thrilled with the financial outcome of raising close to \$1000, and they feel they can do even more with this next year now that they know how it works.



RE Attendance Analysis for January:

Average for each class in January	
Nursery	0.5
Story Time	3.8
Spirit Play	4.0
K-1	8.3
2/3 grade	5.0
4/5 grade	8.8
6/8 grade	6.0
High School	5.0

Average # of students for January	
Average # each Sunday	37.5
% present each Sunday	36%

% of students present per class	
Nursery	10%
Story Time	54%
Spirit Play	40%
K-1	43%
2/3 grade	29%
4/5 grade	49%
6/8 grade	23%
High School	100%

