

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

October 9, 2013

The meeting was held in the administrative office of WSUU at 7141 California Ave SW, Seattle, and was called to order by Joe at 7:03 p.m. with chalice lighting and words from the Dalai Lama. Thank you to Amy for delicious black bean soup and quesadillas!

Present were President Joe Rettenmaier; Secretary Lisa Maynard; Vice President Matt Aspin; Treasurer Eric Winiecki; Trustees Amy Hance-Brancati and John Britt; and Rev. Peg Morgan.

Minutes of the Sept 11, 2013, board meeting were reviewed with no corrections. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Sept minutes were approved.

Thank You Notes

To Jeannie Warner for sending warm welcome emails to visitors and new members with detailed info about groups they might be interested in (based on info from visitor cards); she also helped carried a sofa for youth up to the third floor with Lisa Reitzes. To Cliff Houlihan who has succeeded in getting all of our back electricity payment from T-Mobile for \$7600, plus payment going forward. To Rand and his band Not Dead Yet for playing at the ingathering cookout. To Ben Sherry for DJ work at the cookout. To Linda Tally for shopping/logistics for World Cafe.

Treasurer's Report

Eric presented the treasurer's report as of Oct 8, 2013. Total general fund income is at 103% of where we expect to be for the year. We are at 99% of where we should be for expenses. No ministerial intern expense yet but that will be shown soon (Aug/Sept pay). Printing/copying expenses seem to be running a little high. Unclear why electricity expense is 0, and Peg will look into it. Eric passed around the quarterly budget report (the one we will share with the congregation). Suggestion to add a brief narrative to the charts before publishing. Matt reminds us we are supposed to communicate in three channels so Eric will post to website, e-news, and bulletin board. John suggested using these reports to highlight info that will be useful later during pledge drive (raising awareness).

Other Reports

Reports from minister, music director, and DRE are appended. Additional to written reports: Peg thinks we got a little more than expected/budgeted from T-Mobile.

Action item from Peg's report: Seeking Board approval for congregation to switch bank from Chase to Umpqua. Peg and Eric will go to Umpqua this week to make sure we can get all the same services there as we now have.

Action item from Peg's report: What should limits be for credit cards for staff at Umpqua? They automatically gave Peg a limit of \$1000. Recommendation of Finance Committee (FC) was a total limit of \$3000 for all cards. Peg points out that \$3000 total is too low especially during months with GA expenses. Board discussed limits and agreed on \$2000 limit if we can get it for Peg, Bert, and Betsy. Suggested limits for Gabby and Laurie will be \$500. Eric and Peg will write a draft policy "use of credit card" sheet that explains how staff can use credit cards and how to turn in receipts with budget codes in

a timely way so that the bookkeeper can reconcile before paying credit card.

Finance Committee

Matt described a draft policy from FC for receiving restricted funds. Additionally, Matt suggests developing a document that guides donors to choose a line item from the budget for restricted donations. For undesignated funds, we would develop a default breakdown of how to distribute undesignated funds. He will share doc with us.

Peg reported that the Planned Giving Committee suggests we run a “50 for 50” campaign to try to get \$50,000 into the Endowment Fund by the end of this anniversary year. John suggests people could “buy” a specific year of the congregation’s life for donating \$1000.

Child and Youth Safety Policy

Joe asked all Board members to get comments on the draft policy to Betsy in the next week, if we haven’t done that yet. Some discussion about whether the tone of the policy implies that adults are untrustworthy. There are places where the language is feels negative and dark – maybe not necessary to explain so much. Focus on positive of “here’s how we look out for our children.”

World Cafe

Around 50 people participated in the main meeting or one of the follow-ups, and 53 people took the survey. John reports that there was great dialogue at tables and the event seemed to pull us together as a community. The “theme team” will start their work of pulling themes from the notes on Oct 17. John paid for tables and will not submit for reimbursement because budget isn’t big enough to cover expenses. Board expresses gratitude. John asks Board to approve paying for 5 people to attend a “beloved community” training in Bellingham on Sat, Oct 26 (UUA training for using small group ministry to do social justice work). Eileen and Regina want to go. Betsy and/or Wendy may go from RE Council. SJ consultant Rev. Holden is doing the training. Joe and Matt both interested in attending. Cost is \$150 for up to 5 people from the congregation, then \$10 a head after that. Peg will figure out the expense category. Board voted to approve the expense of \$150 or a little more for this. John will register online and submit the receipt for reimbursement.

Building Committee, Master Plan, and Accessibility

Building Committee Chair Jill Fleming reported to Joe that accessibility comes up at every turn when the BC begins talking about the master plan, and that the BC cannot proceed until we determine feasible options for addressing our accessibility needs. BC proposes spending up to \$1500 from Building Fund for a building accessibility feasibility study. Board discussion included idea that the consultant do a broad review of accessibility and not just be an elevator consultant. We have enough money in our Building Fund. Board voted to approve the expense of up to \$1500 for a broader review of accessibility including how to move between floors.

Discussion that an elevator is possibly something we could get a loan and/or a grant for.

Updates About Potential Program Leads

Nominating Committee needs support because Tracy Burrows is going through intense chemotherapy this fall/winter and Jeff Richardson is moving back to Texas in December. Liz Bucklew is the third

member. Peg will talk with Tracy about how she would like to handle all of her commitments (Transition Comm, cluster leader, Nom Comm, and one more).

John pointed out that according to the most recent book we read, the nominating function in larger congregations broadens to being a “governance committee” that thinks about leadership development, strengthening the board, and governance. In that light, we brainstormed ideas for new Nom Comm members (particularly former board members and leaders).

Pledge Drive Chair is our most urgent need. The team (Laura Pierce, Ellen West, Jill Fleming) approached [someone] about being chair, but she turned it down. Joe will ask team to approach [someone].

Liaison to three-congregation retreat at Seabeck – The main tasks are to attend planning meetings at Shoreline either in person or by Skype and then communicate with the congregation. Chris Poole at Shoreline is in charge. Last year our liaison was Martha Cohen. Amy Hance-Brancati will go to the meeting on Nov 5.

Cluster group leader – Joe will ask [someone].

Expansion liaison – Joe asked Joe Nabbefeld to be in contact with building owners on both sides quarterly to ask for first right of refusal and he agreed to do it.

Executive Session

Peg would like to spend \$1800 of her wedding money (money she receives for doing weddings, non-member memorials, etc. that she then donates to her minister’s discretionary fund – current balance is \$2600) to pay Gabby to do more work and free up Betsy to do higher level tasks. Peg suggests 3 hrs/week x 31 weeks = 93 hrs x \$20 (hourly + taxes) = \$1860. This would be added to the 8 hours that Gabby is already doing. Board noted that we will have to budget for this next year and voted to accept Peg’s proposal.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Lisa Maynard, Secretary

Report to the Board of Trustees

October 2013

Rev. Peg Morgan

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Bookkeeping. I am so grateful to have our current bookkeeper who is so very talented, reliable, fast, and pleasant to work with. She is amazing in how she can handle so many little details during the month and then reconcile the accounts in the blink of an eye...it is a tribute to her accuracy. This takes a huge load off of me.

T-Mobile. I was pleased to see the \$7600 T mobile check in the mail on Saturday! So now we are paid for back electricity as well as for this past summer/fall months...essentially caught up.

Did I tell you how much I love our new office?

I received an email from the District Chalice Lighters grant program. We have only 15% of our congregation participating (contributing 15.00 3 x a year –money is used for three selected congregations' project, like helping to build a playground, or expanding staff or putting on a new roof). We need 30% to be eligible again. I have asked for our list of participants. Wonder where this project fits in our organization.

Planned Giving Task Force. This group is productive and moving along. I suspect we will be hearing from them one of these days soon! One thing they are doing is reconfirming with people who have their names on the Planned Giving plaque. Then it will be hung in a public place...guess we will have to ask building committee where we can put it. Perhaps in the front office hall way? We will receive another and final check from Michael Greene's estate. We already received 6,000.00. I don't know how much we will receive. They sold an ocean lot for next to nothing...but his condo sale might be in this next check. We receive 1/6th of the estate.

New Years Eve Rental. An Orthodox Romanian Christian Church wishes to rent our social hall on New Years Eve. 6 pm to 2 am. Joe and I have spoken about this, and we think we should go for it, as long as we can find staffing for the building management/supervision. It will be an intergenerational event for them.

PNWD: The Pacific Northwest District really was smiling when they received your thank you card for keeping the survey monkey account available to congregations. They expressed that they seldom receive thank you notes. Thank you John, for this suggestion!

CREDIT CARD: Umpqua Bank approved our church credit card and sent mine. I have to drop off info on the staff who will also have cards...all one statement, broken into staff sections...each staff will turn in receipts with budget codes prior to arrival of statement so bookkeeper can process. AND, the manager (I've been at the Roosevelt branch closer to my home) would like us to consider moving our banking to their bank, and stresses their values being similar to ours (I would add though he did not, versus Chase's values). I'm in favor of us talking with him...there is an Umpqua bank in west seattle so this is doable. Should this go to finance committee for consideration?

PROGRAMS

Three Covenant Groups have 11 people in them...we have opened a new Wednesday morning group.

Emerson workshop...I expect about 10 people at the Emerson workshop...would love to have twenty!

Intern Committee. Is meeting on the 13th for the first time. Chair is Lisa Reitzes. Other members are: Glenn Phillips, Debra Duff, Larkie Gildersleeve, Ron Corley.

Peter Mayer concert...Oct 19th ...are you all coming?

Care Team...April Kristjansson is doing a bang up responsible job getting us organized in the Care Team. We could use a couple more members. It is a day time meeting.

Clusters. Hopefully we will get someone willing to work on clusters so we can do a cluster Sunday where during social hour we gather by clusters, including any visitors.

Music Director's Report to the Board of Trustees

October 2013

Chorale

The Chorale has gotten off to a great start this fall with several new members and a few long standing members deciding to move on and focus on other congregational projects. I'm very excited about how much their choral singing skill has improved and look forward to making a lot of great music with them.

We have been wearing special Chorale tags to make ourselves more visible during the Sunday coffee our in an effort to encourage more membership. The minimum requirement for membership now is the ability to sing harmony.

Chalice Singers

The Chalice Singers personnel is in flux with some opting to move on to make more time for family and other congregation projects. This is to be expected and the ensemble will be stronger for it.

Celebration Singers

The Celebration Singers are also undergoing personnel changes. As we move into our second year we are beginning to have a clearer sense of our place in the worship life of the congregation and are working to establish a rehearsal routine.

Web page

I have been working on a long overdue update of the WSUU web site music page. Creighton Depew took a series of excellent photos after the Ingathering Service which will add a great deal to the energy of the page. I am also including bios for all the music leadership roles (currently mine is the only bio) including the WSUU Music Leaders, Lisa Maynard, Glenn Phillips and Michael Mothershed, and John Hansen, Martin Sherry, Larry Jones, and Marion Kee. Betsy and I will add a separate Multigenerational Music page which will be connected with a link from both the RE and Music pages. The updated pages should go live by the middle of October.

Multigenerational Music

Betsy and I have been clarifying the Multigenerational Music program by clearly defining the offerings. As parents, children and youth begin to discover what we have to offer we will slowly build an exciting program. I created the attached registration form as both a means for registration and clearly laying out the offerings. Lisa Maynard will serve as ongoing leader for the All Ages Song Circle and Uke Jam which started last week and will continue on the first Wednesday of the month (It's also a pot luck so I'll be doing the dishes).

Publicity

As our congregation grows the number of music oriented programs has also grown to the point that it can seem confusing and daunting to the average member so to that end, working with Betsy, I've created a couple of information displays that will be in place every Sunday during the coffee hour. There are photos, brief explanations for each ensemble, and information sheets that members can take home.

Music Council

The Music Council is busy selling tickets and preparing for the Peter Mayer concert on October 19th. They will produce the next Chalice Palace on November 1st and hold another of their popular pie sales on November 3rd.

Bertram Gulhaugen, music director/choir conductor

Westside Unitarian Universalist Congregation

RE Report to the Board

October 2013

Highlights

- We had 16 middle schoolers attend the MS Con at the end of September – the largest representation from any church attending. All accounts report a very good time had by all, including accounts from several conversations with parents the week after. Our kids were inclusive of each other and other churches, and they spent time bonding as a group – literally, circled up and talking and laughing together. Very cool.
- We have 18 7th and 8th graders starting OWL this Sunday. The OWL program will end with a celebration in our service on April 6th.
- Three of our OWL teachers attended training together on the last weekend of September in Vancouver, WA and came back energized and ready to start!
- We have 8 high schoolers attending the HS Con at the end of October. They will go with other local youth groups on a bus we are jointly procuring.
- We have 6 high schoolers participating in the Coming of Age program. We kicked it off the last Sunday of September with a Release Ceremony involving the kids and their parents, which Rev. Peg officiated.

RE Ministry Updates

- Attendance –
 - We have had strong attendance numbers for our youth during September, but lower than expected numbers for our youngest classes for Nursery, 2-3 year olds, and our Spirit Play class for 4-5 year olds. We don't have a good explanation for the unusually small numbers there yet. Our K-5 attendance has maintained from previous months.
- RE Teacher Recruitment and Training –
 - All of our current RE teachers have participated in training through two large sessions in early September, and a series of small group and individual meetings.
 - I am still recruiting to fill openings in our Story Time class for 2-3 year olds, and one opening in our Spirit Play class and one in our K-1 class. Very few stones have been unturned in our congregation! We are slowly finding new inspiration to fill the slots needed, with the exception of the Story Time class. If we are not able to adequately staff this class, we will cancel it and move those kids into the Nursery, which our two primary Story Time teachers are strongly opposed to because it takes away the developmentally appropriate RE education we've been providing for our toddlers.

- RE Classes –
 - Our opening classes have been going beautifully. Many of our teachers are new to teaching all together, or new to teaching RE. They have demonstrated a high level of investment in their classes!
 - Gabbie Guncay, our Teacher Support Coordinator, has been a fantastic addition to the teacher support plan. Through email during the week, supply preparation, and hands-on help on Sunday mornings, she has contributed enormous positive energy and commitment to the weekly preparation and teaching processes.
 - Our theme liaisons for the five themes weaving through RE this year have met and planned a year-long timeline of events and activities.
 - Music – Bert and Betsy
 - Art – Lorelei Amato and Alice Britt
 - Social Justice – Wendy Swyt and Regina Brennen
 - Partner Church -- Ginger Brewer and Pat McGovern
 - Spiritual Practices – Dana Del Monte Townsend and Tom Townsend
- Youth Ministry –
 - The Youth Room has been painted, and has a new donated couch, bean-bag chair, and microwave. We are using it weekly for Coming of Age classes and Youth Group sessions. The youth have trips planned to Good Will and Ikea for lighting, additional seating, and a rug. John Monahan will work with the youth on some wood construction as soon as he is able.
 - We now have 15 high schoolers on our Youth Group roster, and 13 of them are regularly active.
 - Moving forward with our five goals for the year, we are scheduling a Youth/Adult Chaplain Training to be held in February. We're working with Jennica Davis, the PNWD youth consultant, and we will host the chaplain training at Westside.

Administration Updates

- Web Site –
 - Bert and I are collaborating to update and improve the web presence for music and RE, including a joint page that integrates both and features multigenerational music opportunities.
 - I am exploring the potential development of an online registration system for RE. Rob Fenwick is putting together a cost estimate for this.
- Safety Policy –
 - While we continue conversations about how to best shape the safety policy for our Westside culture, I am implementing it in a variety of settings to learn more about what seems to be a good fit and what needs to be adjusted. For example, I met with Coming of Age parents to discuss the section regarding social media and ensuring that RE leaders don't meet with kids in one to one situations. After good, in-depth discussion, we agreed that we want to support the opportunity for our youth to connect with RE teachers and mentors in meaningful ways, but we also want to ensure that others are in

the loop of those communications. As a result of this discussion, we are crafting a covenant that parents, teachers and youth will sign to be clear about how we will support youth and teacher/mentor interactions in the most reasonable and safe ways possible.

- Reflection on Westside's RE Program Staffing –
 - It's been a full and rich program kick-off, filled with positive connections with and between our kids, our teachers, our parents, and our RE volunteers and supporters from the congregation. I have deeply appreciated the assistance of Gabbie Guncay, whose capabilities have been applied fully as we put new data management systems and teacher support systems in place. I have also been grateful for the committed help and support of a core of RE volunteers who offer time as needed and when they are available, through each week. This group includes Shannon Day, Stina Lane-Cummings, Marie Kaz, Lorelei Amato, Dana Del Monte Townsend, and Madalyn Mincks among others.
 - I feel well supported, and it feels like our RE program is well supported with intention, positive feedback, and great spirit. Still, there is an obvious need for more hands consistently carrying tasks from week to week. As I become more involved in working with families, in developing programs and curriculum, in helping our new teachers to offer high quality RE experiences, in the music and worship ministries of our church, in developing an online presence and communications that align with the size and robustness of our RE programs, and in creating systems that will more efficiently support our RE growth, I am seeing more clearly where additional and consistent weekly help can make a significant difference. I won't try to maintain the pace of my first autumn kick-off. I will try to find solutions that can effectively sustain the vibrant and impactful ministry for families that continues to grow as a hallmark of the Westside community.

DRE Professional Growth Updates

- Renaissance Modules –
 - I am participating in the Philosophy of Religious Education Ren Mod that is being offered three days prior to the LREDA conference this month. In preparation, as requested by the instructors, I am reading the book "*Essex Conversations: Visions for Lifespan Religious Education.*"
- LREDA Fall Conference –
 - I'm looking forward to participating in my first conference experience with the religious educators professional association. It's being held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and I will have the opportunity to network with DRE colleagues from around the country, and will attend a variety of sessions and meetings. I look forward to reporting new learning!