

Board Meeting Agenda: September 2, 2020

Attendance:

Board Members: Hannah Hamilton, John Botts, Mark Lorenz, Susan Reese, Raj Mehta, Maggie Lum, Ruth McDonald, Sharon Williams

Finance: Adam Winter

Minister: Rev Aileen Fitzke

Check in

Finance

Budget status

1. Attrition from last year's pledges was less than the 5% that was initially planned. Last year's expenses were less than that budgeted. Consequently, we've got about \$10,000 more than anticipated to start off this year.
2. We are still getting full rent from Mizpa through December (as projected in our budget); we have notified them of potential for leaving. They are interested in renting from us if we find another location.

PPP Loan/Grant status

1. Paperwork for the PPP loan payment/loan forgiveness hasn't been issued by the SMA, so no payment is needed at this time. While this loan is likely to be converted to a grant, we are still maintaining it as a loan on our books.

Facilities Search Committee

Status

1. We submitted a non-binding offer for a new facility in Sterling that is within our budget (\$5800/month after abatements); the landlord responded with some questions and we answered.
 - This facility has approximately 4800 sq ft of space with ~1500 sq ft for the sanctuary. It has space for offices, RE classrooms and a kitchen (with fridge, sink and dishwasher). There is lots of parking space. Some minimal modifications may be needed. Address is: 21240 Ridgetop circle, suite 135/140.
 - We'll arrange for viewing by other folks in the congregation
2. Current landlord hasn't offered anything new regarding our current space. Last communication was for the two units comprising our sanctuary and the space behind it, for ~\$7000/month.
3. The committee will continue to look at other spaces, but will want to make the recommendation to the board by September 30.
4. Cost for moving is estimated to be about \$4000; storage costs will be less than \$500/month, depending on what needs to be stored.
 - We anticipate doing an inventory to assess disposition of all of our stuff. Some things will likely not move with us or be stored.
5. We will formally notify our tenants of our decision by November 1.

Cleaning our facility

1. The facility committee wanted to reassess cleaning of our facility due to our non-use
 - Mizpa currently cleans the sanctuary, but doesn't clean the chairs
 - We might be able to reduce the cleaning so that the sanctuary is cleaned every 2 weeks by our cleaning service and every month for the other spaces
2. Terry Dick will leave her position as facility manager as of December 31. We will need to find another person to do this function for the new facility. Terry provided a list of functions for this position that we can pass on to the new manager. We will wait to advertise the position until we have a plan for the new facility.

Decision: Empower the facilities folks to make decisions on adjusting our cleaning service to align with current usage.

Tax Exempt Status /501C (3)

1. The issue of obtaining an individual IRS 501(c)3 designation came up as we were denied inclusion with the GuideStar program that maintains a listing of churches in the area. We aren't explicitly covered under the UUA designation, i.e. no umbrella designation.
 - It is not required for UUCS to have an individual designation from the IRS. We can still function as a 501(c)3 non-profit church without it.
2. Mark provided a summary of benefits if we were to obtain an individual designation.
 - Some grant-making organizations require an individual IRS determination to be eligible for the grant
 - Employers with a donation-matching program usually require an individual IRS determination
 - Organizations that give away computer software to non-profit organizations usually require an individual IRS determination
 - If we were to call a minister, or hire a religious educator or interim minister who is Canadian or otherwise a non-citizen. In order to sponsor an R-1 (Nonimmigrant Religious Worker) visa for a non-citizen, the Congregation must have its own Determination Letter. (not a benefit for us at this time).
 - We'd be eligible for participation in the GuideStar program
 - This individual determination provides assurance to church leaders, members and contributors that the church is recognized as exempt and qualifies for related tax benefits.
3. If we wanted to obtain the IRS determination, we would file IRS Form 1023, Application for Recognition of Exemption Under 501c. This form is submitted along with Form 8718 User Fee for Exempt Organization Determination.
 - We would need to attach our Articles of Incorporation and our By-Laws.
 - The applications would need to be signed by an officer of the congregation.
 - There is a one-time cost of \$600.
 - We would likely not have to file an annual report, Form 990 to the IRS as churches are exempt from doing so (regardless of whether they have an individual determination).
 - There are various requirements to claim 501(c)3 status. Most prohibit (substantial) political lobbying, political activities, political donations, and require the minister to avoid making partisan comments while acting in an official church function. However, political expressions can be made as the individual (e.g Facebook), as long as they don't represent the church. There are also requirements about handling salary and housing allowances, FICA taxes. We are compliant with these requirements

4. We are eligible for tax-free purchases of items for the church regardless of whether we apply for an individual determination. Adam provided the letters that he has used in the past.

Decision: Board approves the motion to submit application to the IRS for 501(c)3 designation and pay the \$600 fee. Mark agreed to prepare the submission and Paul agreed to review it prior to submission.

Social Justice

1. We held the event, Living My Truth, on August 21st.
 - The program was excellent. The speaker, Ray Eck, shared his story and answered questions from the attendees. There were approximately 20 participants; with some not from our congregation.
 - There was a potential intruder in the zoom meeting. The waiting room functioned appropriately and the person was denied entry into the program
2. Social Justice Committee meet after the service on August 23rd
 - Christian and Janine spoke about their initiative to provide a clearinghouse of social justice information, events, and for “taking a stand.” Jenny and Christian are discussing how to do this on our website.
3. Adoption of the 8th principle
 - We desire to start discussion with the congregation on this topic on adoption of the 8th principle.
 - We’d like to also inform the public of this activity. One way would be to advertise solidarity and commitment with Black Lives Matter using banners in the windows of sanctuary
 - Denise Ditmar volunteered to create artistic work regarding our commitment to adopt the 8th principle and support BLM
 - We will check with the lease (and landlord) about placement of banners on the windows inside the facility, but facing out.
4. Taking a Stand
 - There was considerable discussion around the topic of UUCS providing some public notice of us taking a stand with the BLM movement and other social justice concerns. Rev Aileen sent out a letter to the congregation (from her and the board) expressing our commitment to social justice and for condemnation of racism and violence.

Decision: The board agreed that the Social Justice committee should prepare a letter (or other statement) from the board that expresses the appropriate sentiment regarding UUCS taking a stand publicly. The board will review the letter and approve it for release.

RE update

1. Rachael is working on hosting a Zoom hour for kids that she will facilitate on Sunday.
2. Our Youth group will meet with those from UU Loudoun in a consolidated group
3. Rev Aileen is advertising the proposed Children’s choir with other local UU congregations

Staff Update

1. Rev Aileen is very pleased with the staff. She held the first staff meeting of the year this past month.
2. Julia is creating multiple recorded hymns to support our services. Other congregations have been asking to use them!

3. Rachael is working on ways to engage the children; however she plans to wait until school starts before implementing, as plans are currently fluid for many parents.
4. Jenny facilitating Christian's clearinghouse for 8th principle materials

Music Program update

1. Julia has proposed leading a children's choir for a 10-week program with weekly rehearsals and some Sunday performance(s).
2. We are advertising internally and participants and advertising with other local UU congregations. We would need a minimum of 4 participants.

Decision: The board approves the \$500 increase to Julia's salary for leading this program.

Committee Reports

1. There was discussion around having UUCS committees provide monthly reports to the board. This would also facilitate preparation of the annual report.
 - We need to decide on which organizations to do this
 - Mark will meet with Rev Aileen over this next month to detail the UUCS organization and identify the committees that would be subject to reporting

New Member Welcome Letter

1. Hannah suggested that we issue a welcome letter from the board to new members. The board thought this was a good idea.

Parking Lot Items

1. There are several activities that are planned for this year. We didn't discuss them during the board meeting, but wanted the board to think about them over the next month:
 - UUCS covenant creation
 - Mission and Visioning
 - Right Relations
 - Congregational Covenant