

MINUTES UUCS BOARD MEETING

2021-10-06

In Attendance:

Board: Mark Lorenz, Steve Dick, Jack Hazerjian, Susan Reese, Yvonne Centala, Maggie Lum
Minister: Rev. Aileen Fitzke

Absent:

Board: Sharon Williams, Adam Winter

Agenda:

6:30 Check-in

6:40 Chalice Lighting

6:45 Finance Committee Update

6:55 Reopening

7:10 Social-Racial Justice Ministry

7:25 Congregational Communications

7:40 Big Hairy Audacious Goal

7:45 Board Retreat

Board Vice President and Secretary (Unscheduled topic - no discussion)

Committee on Ministry (Unscheduled topic - no discussion needed)

7:55 Recap

Check-in

Chalice Lighting

Finance Committee Update

Description

- Report from the Finance Committee about the status of revenues and expenses with respect to baseline projections at the start of the year. (Adam)
- Confirm update to Rachel's contract (Mark)

Goals

1. Understand financial position

Minutes

- Detailed quarterly budget had been sent out to the Board by Adam Winter earlier in the day (Wednesday, October 6th), but his work-related absence from this meeting precluded a formal review. The board posed questions to Adam over email after the meeting and all concerns were addressed without need for further action.
- Last month, an internal audit was undertaken by Alyssa Lum and Al Swett, who detected no major problems and offered but a few minor, recommendations, including the value of having such an internal review conducted biannually; Mark had asked the finance team to report to the board on their progress of implementing the audit team's recommendations.
- Over the past month, Mark and Rachael signed her new employment agreement, thereby completing the assigned action.

Action Items

- Mark will forward the internal audit report to the Board.
- Mark will forward questions on the budget report to Adam, who will provide a response.

Decisions

- None

Re-Opening

Description

Summary of September Task Force meeting. Decide on questions raised by the Task Force (Rev. Aileen & Mark)

- Consider the topic of having limited seating for Sunday services along with online broadcast. Develop an initial workflow for a fair means to sign-up
- Provide guidance for other church operations as needed (e.g. Auction)
- Discuss Facility Improvement Committee progress (Rev. Aileen)

Goals

1. Ensure the Task Force and Facility Improvement Committee have the tools and resources needed to accomplish the reopening.
2. Ensure accommodations, as identified through the survey, are in place for in-person Sunday services.
3. Act with flexibility and compassion.

Minutes

- Mark noted that the decision to open up the sanctuary to members of the congregation for worship must also take into consideration the technical operations that need to be run simultaneously to ensure digital streaming of Sunday service.

- Brian George has been spearheading this effort to prepare UUCS to meet the challenge of re-opening.
- Jack Hazerjian suggested that a manual of procedures be written for setting up and managing simulcasts of Sunday services. Mark reported that this is planned to be done by the tech team.
- Attendees of Sunday service in the sanctuary – who will need to be vaccinated and will be asked to wear masks – will also need to be capped in number; The board agreed on a limit of 35 people, including worship team members.
 - We will not be asking congregants or visitors to show vaccination cards. However, we will post signs indicating that vaccinations are required to attend the service. Similarly, attendees will need to wear face masks. Masks will be made available for those that don't have one.
- Mark also noted the need for a registration process to manage attendance at UUCS church service. This process would allow for congregants to “reserve” seats for a given service. We will also need to create some “rules” to ensure fairness and allow for technology-challenged folks to sign up.
 - Mark looked into the use of the free version of “Sign Up Genius” as a means for registering those interested in attending church service in person, although this app and computer literacy in general may be exclusionary for some of the UUCS congregants.
- With regard to UUCS’s auction on November 13th, it will be limited to 40 attendees in the sanctuary and be livestreamed for at-home viewing by others, with the planned use of Zoom to support the proceedings of the live auction.
 - The past practice of offering served hors d’oeuvres at the auction will be replaced with the distribution of food boxes,

Action Items

- Jack to develop a plan of action for Board review to explain the various methods he will use to effectively and equitably compile information from UUCS congregants on their preferences for attending Sunday services in person; this is an interim measure until restrictions on live church attendance are lifted.

Decisions

- UUCS will ready itself to resume, on a limited attendance basis, live church services and other in-person events in the sanctuary, with a limit of 35 participants.

Social-Racial Justice Ministry

Description

We would like to be able to respond to emerging situations related to social and racial justice such as:

- Afghanistan Refugee Settlement support (Collections via Lutheran Social Services or other, Sponsor Refugee in partnerships with UUCS UUCR)

- Haitian refugee treatment at the border and asylum

However, the Social-Justice Committee is fractured and needs leadership

Goals

1. Identify a leader for the Social-Racial Justice Ministry
2. Relaunch the Social-Racial Justice Ministry; provide board support as needed
3. Develop a plan for UUCS's support for the Afghanistan Refugee Resettlement and address options:
 - a. Partnering with UUCF/UUCR
 - b. Providing donations of items of need and/or funds through Lutheran Social Services, Ellen Chaddha (?? Group), or other
4. Decide on UUCS response to Haitian refugee treatment at the border and asylum
 - a. Endorse Rev Abhi's statement or issue our own

Minutes

- Rev. Aileen recognized that, while the desire for UUCS work to promote social-racial justice is great, the associated committee does not have a lead and there isn't an apparent successor.
- Currently, UUCS financially supports the Loudoun Backpack Coalition and Mobile Hope with our split-plate offering. Offerings have diminished over recent months. Rev. Aileen admitted that she was not surprised by this development, given the many months of limitations imposed by the coronavirus.
- Rev. Aileen has been in conversations with UU ministers from Northern Virginia (Rev. Alice King) and Fairfax County (Rev. David A. Miller). The latter minister indicated that there are two issues that his congregation is working on: assistance in resettling the Afghan refugees in northern Virginia and defending the teaching of critical race theory in Fairfax County's public schools.
 - Rev. Aileen expressed her strong support for members of UUCS to engage with the UU Church in Fairfax County – which may have already entered into some form of collaborative arrangement with Lutheran Social Services – to help out with Afghan refugees. We agreed that we would like to participate with UUCF in this project with them.
- Rev. Aileen also encourages UUCS congregants to speak out and work to resolve other, local issues, such as discrimination faced by those in the LGBTQ+ community. In short, she said that we need a more firm commitment from UUCS congregants to expand on what the few among us are already doing. Maggie Lum noted that she, like others in her age cohort, needs to devote time to community volunteer work in order to fulfill high school requirements.

Action Items

- Mark will notify Ann King of UUCF that UUCS is interested in participating with their Afghan Refugee Settlement project.

Decisions

- None

Congregational Communications

Description

Communication with the congregation is important for transparency of our activities. Also, it is important to inform the congregation of upcoming events or gather input on topics of interest. Currently, we use The Illuminate and Special Announcements both by email, and spoken/written announcements during services. Is this effective?

- Recently, Dave Lum has looked into an alternate email service that seems to have a better effectiveness in delivering messages. It is in test mode now.
- Jenny has upgraded our internet plan. She has also created a board calendar that we'll look at during the retreat

Goals

1. Determine if this current mode of communications is sufficient
2. Is the frequency or content sufficient?

Minutes

- Steve asked how effective "Illuminate," UUCS's online newsletter, is as a means for internal communication. Other Board members gave responses suggesting that it was not as widely consulted as it could be; there are no metrics kept on its access by congregants.
- Steve also suggested that Mark make a personal appeal to fellow church members to refer more often to this information source, and recommended that, as board president, he should re-start the custom of writing a "President's Message" for "Illuminate" once a month; Susan suggested that its length be kept to within 500 words.
- Jennie Wolfer, UUCS Office Administrator, provides content on a weekly basis for "Illuminate," and according to Rev. Aileen, she has solid experience as a webmaster; she is currently redesigning UUCS's website. Past problems have been resolved for some church members with accessing UUCS's website while using certain browsers and operating systems.
- Jennie, David Lum, and Jackie Mills serve as members of the Communications Committee, and they have undertaken a number of activities to strengthen electronic communications and file storage for UUCS:
 - reactivation of a Board ListServ by which documentation and communications can be stored collectively
 - upgrade of UUCS's data plan
- Nonetheless, the question remains as to how to have UUCS members and non-members become better informed of "what is going on."

Action Items

- Mark will re-start the custom of writing once monthly a “President’s Message” for “Illuminate.” Through this way, the Board can collectively communicate to fellow church members and make direct appeals to them, such as for their more active engagement in social-racial justice activities.
- Explore ideas with the Communications Committee on improving internal and external information flow and messaging.

Decisions

- None

7:40 Big Hairy Audacious Goal

Description

A member approached John, Mark and Terry Dick about concern with UUCS’ viability because of drop in membership, loss of facilities and inadequate children’s RE space. Proposed BHAG to purchase property to build the space we need to reinvigorate and grow. If no BHAG, consider merging with neighboring UU churches. The member is willing to donate substantially toward a capital campaign.

Goals

1. Board comments.
2. If BHAG positive, form a committee to explore the pros and cons of property purchase and report recommendations to the board.
3. Inform the philanthropic member of the board’s plans.

Minutes

- Mark proposed that discussion on this topic be postponed until UUCS has completed its work on Mission and Vision, and after creating our Strategic Plan. That way, we will have a better sense of how or if this fits with these plans. Note, the last Strategic Plan was written in 2015 or 2016.
- Megan Foley is UU’s Regional Representative, and she will serve as facilitator for the Mission and Vision work. .

Action Items

- Mark will notify the member that suggested the goal of the board’s decision regarding pursuit of this goal.

Decisions

- The board agreed to postpone considering this goal until after our Mission, Vision, and planning activities are concluded.

Board Vice President and Secretary (Unscheduled topic - no discussion)

Description

We need to fill two board positions: Vice President and Secretary. John Botts will need to resign from the Board as President due to family illness. He made a plea for help last Sunday. Per Section 6.3 of the By-Laws these positions can be filled by a majority vote from the Board members (in consultation with the Nominating Committee) and serve for the remainder of the year.

Goals

1. Consider input from the Nominating Committee and others. Vote if we have candidate(s)
2. Decide how to proceed if candidates are not forthcoming.

Minutes

- Over the past month, at the advice of the Board, Jean Ault contacted Steve Dick and Jack Hazerjian regarding their willingness to serve on as Vice President and Secretary, respectively. They both agreed to serve. The Board approved their selections via email.

Action Items

Decisions

Committee on Ministry (Unscheduled topic - no discussion needed)

Description

Roshan Chaddha's resignation effective September 1. Per the Section 9.2 of the By-Laws, this position is a Board-appointed position and will join other CoM members Kim Fitzgerald, Mary Matheny and Albert Pucio

Goals

1. Identify Board liaison for COM who will approach qualified members.

Minutes

- Over the past month, at the advice of the Board, Mark contacted Denise Lorenz regarding her willingness to serve on this committee. She agreed to serve. The Board approved her selection via email.

Action Items

Decisions

7:55 Recap

1. Review decisions and confirm commitment
2. Review actions assigned and gain commitment for completion. Ascertain if any assistance is needed
3. Outline next steps, as needed
4. Review parking lot items
5. Reflect on the meeting process

Action Items

Action Item	Action	Assigned	Status
10-01	Mark will forward the internal audit report to the Board	Mark	
10-02	Mark will forward questions on the budget report to Adam, who will provide a response.	Mark	
10-03	Jack to develop a plan of action for Board review to explain the various methods he will use to effectively and equitably compile information from UUCS congregants on their preferences for attending Sunday services in person; this is an interim measure until restrictions on live church attendance are lifted	Jack	Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review two on-line app options: "Sign up Genius" and "RSV.church" for compiling congregants' preferences of dates for attending church service in person Discuss with Jenny Wolfer, Church Administrator, on implementing this data collection process
10-04	Mark will notify Ann King that UUCS is interested in participating with UUCF in the Refugee Settlement Project	Mark	
10-05	Mark will re-start the custom of writing once monthly a "President's Message" for "Illuminate."	Mark & Jenny	
10-06	Explore ideas with the Communications Committee on improving internal and external information flow and messaging	Jack	
10-07	Mark will notify the member that proposed the BHAG of the board's decision to postpone consideration until after the Mission, Vision, and Planning work	Mark	

Board Decisions

Date	Decision
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10-01	UUCS will ready itself to resume, on a limited attendance basis, live church services and other in-person events in the sanctuary, as of October 24th, latest October 31st
10-02	The board agreed to postpone considering this goal until after our Mission, Vision, and planning activities are concluded.

Parking Lot Topics (Deferred to Future Meetings)

Owner	Topic

Next Meeting: November 3, 2021 @ 6:30 pm