

MINUTES UUCS BOARD MEETING 2022-03-09

In Attendance:

Board: Mark Lorenz, Steve Dick, Jack Hazerjian, Adam Winter, Susan Reese, Sharon Williams, Maggie Lum

Minister: Rev. Aileen Fitzke

Absent: Yvonne Centala

Agenda

6:30 Check-in

6:40 Chalice Lighting

6:45 Finance Committee Update

7:00 Stewardship Drive

7:10 Mission Vision and Covenant

7:25 Membership and Growth

7:35 Reopening

7:45 Review Board Liaison Reports

8:10 Recap

6:30 Check-in

6:40 Chalice Lighting

6:45 Finance Committee Update

Description

- Report from the finance committee about status of revenues and expenses with respect to baseline projections at the start of the year. (Adam)

Goals

1. Understand financial position

Minutes

- The Board Treasurer had earlier in the day provided a spreadsheet of UUCS's cash flow for the 2021-2022 fiscal year through February 2022 -- the first 8 months (67%) of the fiscal year. Adam noted that 67% of the total amount of monies pledged by congregants has been received, and about 72% of projected expenses had been spent.

- He commented that, over his years serving as the Board Treasurer, he has found consistency among Finance Committee members to estimate, to a reasonably accurate degree, both budgeted expenses and revenue to be raised from stewardship pledges. This is aided by the relative predictability of fixed costs related to the church building's rent and insurance costs, as well as to staff salaries and benefits, with allowance for inflationary increases (around 3% annually).
- Adam added that our reserves rose from \$50,000 last June to \$73,813.70 today.
- The dense content of the spreadsheet was questioned, in the context of whether it was possible to generate easy-to-review graphics on church expenses and income. Adam explained that illustrative pie charts and bar graphs would not be so easy to create from standardized data tables, since the formatting of columns and rows was conditioned by the accounting software that is used to generate and export the report. For example, items with \$0 values are automatically hidden from view, especially for expenses, which are mostly presented as summary subtotals, whereas the details of line items in the budget are retained for viewing. Mark also noted the difficulty in predicting the year-end actual expenses and revenues from the spreadsheet and would like to discuss other possible formats with the finance team. Adam will invite Mark to the next meeting.
- Steve made a request to have the church administrator, Jenny, assume from Terry the responsibilities for managing and scheduling of church tenants and janitorial services. Terry had recently raised with Rev. Aileen this matter of transferring duties, and Rev. Aileen will bring up this matter with Jenny.
- Adam added that the Finance Committee is rather supportive of UUCS signing up small groups for rental use of the church sanctuary space during work-day, time slots, since the income generated does help to offset budgetary shortfalls. We are currently not seeking sub-tenants so that we can get a sense of how the facility works for us. We should be able to invite sub-tenants within a few months.
- The budget for 2022-2023 fiscal year will need to be prepared by the Finance Committee for Board Review by the end of April, since the board needs to approve it prior to the annual meeting.
- Steve created some proposed changes to the by-laws related to board duties. In addition to defining duties for the at-large members, he modified the Treasurer duties to require a biannual audit of the finances vs an annual audit. The board will vote on the proposed change and have the proposed change sent to the congregation prior to the annual meeting (30 days prior).
- There has been interest expressed for UUCS to resume participation in the UUA Center East Region Chalice Lighter program. We need to select an ambassador for the program who will recruit subscribers and get the word out about the program. The Ambassador will also work with the Worship Team to have a Chalice Lighter Service during the year. Participation in this program makes it feasible for UUCS to submit an application for and receive a grant for a designated project.

Action Items:

- Rev Aileen will ask Jenny if she will assume Terry's responsibilities for managing sub-tenants and janitorial services

- The Finance Committee will prepare the budget for next fiscal year for UUCS Board approval. The budget needs to be finalized before the May board meeting. Initial submission should be by the end of April.
- UUCS will select a congregational member to be our Chalice Lighter Program Ambassador. The function of the Ambassador is to recruit donors and get the word out about the program. Congregations typically have a Chalice Lighter Sunday to overview the program, note accomplishments and generate interest. See [Central East Region Chalice Lighter Program | Central East Region | UUA.org](#) for a discussion of the program and the way for individuals to sign-ups to contribute.
- Adam will invite Mark to the next finance meeting.

Decisions:

- None

7:00 Stewardship Drive

Description:

- The annual stewardship drive begins in March. The board needs to identify a team that will lead this effort.

Goals:

- Identify the stewardship drive team and secure commitments from them.

Minutes:

- UUCS's stewardship drive, to be run by Bonnie Lepoff, is scheduled to run three weeks from March 13th through April 2nd. This is a truncated schedule in comparison to past years' drives, so as to reduce stress on the stewardship team in these difficult times.
 - This year will feature the launch of the stewardship drive on March 6. For the next two Sundays, the service will include ministry minutes or testimonials from congregants. On March 13th, we will have a town hall meeting, where Bonnie will present a Powerpoint discussion on the budget and continue to solicit congregation's pledges. On March 20th, the stewardship drive will close.
 - During the drive, congregants will receive a letter and stewardship brochure urging them to pledge. Pledge cards and return envelopes are included so that the pledges can be sent in.
 - Likely, there will be some congregants that don't respond. The stewardship team will contact them separately to ask them to submit a pledge card or submit a waiver.

Action Items:

- None

Decisions:

- None

7:10 Mission Vision and Covenant

Description:

As part of our strategic planning, we want to initiate and plan the work to revise (or affirm) the Mission, Vision, and Covenant.

Goals:

Complete plans for the activities for defining the new Mission, Vision, and Covenant.

Minutes:

- Rev Foley suggested we seed various small groups with questions to prime the future discussion on Mission Vision and Covenant. Mark and Rev Aileen will meet separately on how to issue these questions.
 - “Who were we (as a church) before the coronavirus pandemic?”
 - “Who have we become during this pandemic?”
 - “Who should we become hereafter?”
- As documented in the report on Megan Foley’s meeting with the UUCS Board with plans to revise its mission, vision, and covenant statements, work on this front will be suspended for the immediate future.

Action Items:

- Mark and Rev Aileen will determine the method by which the above three questions are posed to various groups in the congregation.

Decisions:

- Delay any action for the next few months until UUCS congregants can be more effectively engaged in refining UUCS principles and values.

7:20 Next Year’s Board Composition

Description

- Steve, who volunteered to serve as UUCS Board’s interim Vice President, will be leaving his post at the end of the fiscal year. As Standing Members with two-year commitments, Sharon and Susan will be completing their second year on the Board, whereas Yvonne Centala would like to step down after serving one year and Maggie will be moving out of town to attend college starting in the fall

Goals

- To replace current Board members who will be leaving their positions by end of June.

Minutes:

- Recruitment of new members for the UUCS Board is managed by the church's Nominating Committee, which is independent of the Board and currently comprises Jean Ault, Kim Cleland, and Lisa Winter.
- Mark drew up a list of potential candidates to serve on the Board next year and sent it to the Nominating Committee.

Action Items:

- Mark will consult with the Nominating Committee on its efforts to recruit replacements to fill expected Board vacancies.

Decisions:

- None

7:25 Membership and Growth

Description:

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Goals:

- Identify means by which to sustain and attract interest in UUCS from, respectively, current and new members.

Minutes:

- Rev. Aileen suggested that informal gatherings in the UUCS sanctuary, like coffee hour listening circles, might be attractive to current and potential church members; with no set agenda, conversation would be free-ranging and possibly reinvigorating for those who have felt socially isolated during the pandemic. Music concerts would also likely draw people to UUCS. In fact, such events might be more attractive if held outside, especially for those who are not yet church members.
- UUCS's spring picnic is being organized by Terry Dick, and it is planned to be held on June 5th, immediately following, the church's annual meeting. A return to Claude Moore Park was proposed, and Maggie said that she and her sister, Molly, would be interested in providing musical entertainment. The suggestion was made that the pavilion and grounds be booked without too much delay for the 02:00-05:00 pm slot.
- UUCS members residing at Ashby Ponds complex had expressed interest in social activities organized by UUCS, but they have little willingness to attend them at the UUCS sanctuary itself. As such, these activities would need to be held virtually, since organization of events on the grounds of Ashby Ponds is not possible.
- Mark will ask the membership team (in concert with the stewardship team) to perform an inventory of our members and friends of the congregation so that we can have an accurate understanding of our congregation.

Action Items:

- Booking for an outside pavilion at Claude Moore Park for Sunday, June 5th, from 02:00 to 05:00 pm, needs to be done without too much delay.
- Mark will contact the membership team and ask them about conducting the inventory.

Decisions:

- None

7:35 Reopening

Description

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

- Discuss lessons learned during reopening. Any adjustments needed?
- Provide guidance for other church operations as needed
- Discuss Facility Improvement Committee progress (Rev. Aileen)

Goals

1. Ensure the Task Force, Tech Team, 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

- Acknowledgement was made that the Re-Opening Task Force Committee, scheduled for the following day on Thursday, March 10th, would raise the matter of whether children would be allowed back into the sanctuary during church service, and whether RE would be held concurrently with church service, rather than subsequently.

Action Items

- Board to be advised on decision made by the Re-Opening Task Force Committee

Decisions:

- None

7:45 Review Board Liaison Reports

Description:

Review board liaison reports.

- Committee on Ministry – Jack Board-COM-Rev Aileen Evaluation
- Institutional Vitality Ministry - Adam
- Worship & Arts Ministry - Mark
- Justice Ministry – Sharon – Poetry Slam issues
- Lifespan Faith Development Ministry - Susan
- Care & Connections Ministry - Yvonne
- Welcome & Engagement Ministry Steve

Goals:

- Understand activities of these ministries, their issues, and solutions

Minutes:

- *Committee on Ministry:*
 - Rev. Aileen shared with members of the *Committee on Ministry* the advice of Megan Foley on using more social-interaction, and less church-business, scenarios when engaging with UUCS members during these first months of uncertain return to on-site, church activities.
 - She also related that she has been in conversation with other UU churches in the area (Reston, Fairfax, and Loudoun) about a shared interest in organizing a public gathering to show support for Ukrainians suffering from the Russian invasion launched two weeks ago. In fact, there is a shared interest in having a collective identity forged, a 'Northern Virginia Social Justice Council.' Furthermore, the ministers have already agreed to institute a "pulpit exchange," whereby they would lead the service in each other's churches.
- *Institutional Vitality Ministry*
 - Nothing to report
- *Worship & Arts Ministry*
 - UUCS members who are painters and, over the past years, have paid for use of the sanctuary a few hours per week as studio space, have decided to reinstate this practice. They are also interested, as a way of expressing support for the Ukrainian people, to create and display images of sunflowers, perhaps made out of crepe paper, as a group activity with children, or with adults and children.
- *Justice Ministry*
 - The poetry slam, which was held in the UUCS sanctuary on Sunday, February 13th, was a success in generating a lively event, with projected images of the poets adding visual snap to their vocal energy. One local poet was instrumental in assisting Sharon with the event, and he has been successful on repeat occasions in winning local government grants to help subsidize the poetry slam.
 - Sharon reported that proceeds from the event exceeded costs by six hundred dollars, although past years debts have been a lingering concern for those managing UUCS finances. According to Adam, this year's surplus from this event cannot be applied to past years' under-performance since budgetary carry overs from one year to the next are not accommodated by the accounting system in use.
 - Sharon mentioned that she was asked to write a how-to-guide for those interested in organizing a poetry slam hereafter, but she felt uncomfortable in doing so, since she believes that poetry slams have been organized by UUCS "in different ways" over "the different years."
 - UUCS contributions of \$400 were pooled with contributions from those of other UU churches in the area to match a \$6,000 grant that resulted in a recently-arrived, Afghan woman refugee being able to purchase a car to drive to work; her past commutes on public transportation had impractically required more than 90 minutes each way.
- *Lifespan Faith Development Ministry*
 - During the past few weeks, with the monitored return of church members to the sanctuary for worship and other UUCS activities, religious education has been offered to young children after the end of church services. Mark reported that, since then, with modest improvement in most coronavirus disease indicators, there could be allowance

for a slightly greater relaxing of restrictions on in-person attendance. As such, he said that one could argue for religious education to be organized concurrently with church service, and that inter-generational service could be held once a month, as had been done during the last two months of 2021.

- Susan explained the concerns of air circulation in the two rooms designated for either holding religious education sessions with children or for providing nursery care for infants. Perhaps, she reasoned, depending on those in attendance, older children could remain in the larger, central room (with the back exit door left open for more incoming air), while the door to the self-contained, nursery room could likewise have its door left open. She also explained the need for maintaining a minimum ratio of children to teacher/nursery worker, and that Maggie, whose offer to volunteer in assisting with religious education/nursery duties was welcomed, would still need to be paired with an adult, since she is less than 21 years of age.
 - Susan recounted that, some years ago, there had been hired an adult, part-time nursery worker, although seeking her out again is unlikely since the quality of her services has been questioned by some. Adam did note that there remains in this year's budget an untouched allocation for a part-time worker to support religious education, so hiring someone is financially possible.
- *Care & Connections Ministry*
 - Nothing to report
 - *Welcome & Engagement Ministry*
 - Unwelcomed news was shared that Raj Mehta had resigned from UUCS, and joined Cedar Lane, since he was frustrated by the limited progress in growing the size of UUCS congregation.

Action Items:

- None

Decisions:

- None

8:10 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
2022-01-02	Ask the Membership Team to create a plan for facilitating the recruitment, organization,	Mark Lorenz	Completed; awaiting response

	and promotion of the church's social engagement activities		
2022-01-03	Explore possibilities of linking a future poetry slam as a fundraiser for one of UUCS's causes	Sharon Williams	Ongoing; perhaps pursued at time of mid-February poetry slam contest that is already scheduled
2022-01-04	Prepare for organizing online presentations on either artists/art history or foreign films for adult recreation at UUCS	Jack Hazerjian	Ongoing
2022-01-05	Assist with advertising UUCS activities to new and active church members	Steve Dick	Ongoing
2022-01-10	Prepare and submit to UUA Ministry Fellowship Committee an evaluation of Rev. Aileen	Board, Committee on Ministry, Rev. Aileen	To be completed before July 2022
2022-01-11	Assist Janine Straubhaar-Jones with plans to lead discussion with congregants on UUC's new, eighth principle	Rev. Aileen	Ongoing
2022-01-12	Follow up with UUCS administrator to ensure that biographical updates of Board members and new congregants are uploaded onto pages of the UUCS's website	Steve Dick	Completed
2022-02-01	Organize the stewardship town hall meeting	Mark Lorenz	Complete
2022-02-02	Incorporate the proposed by-law change in with the package sent to members prior to the annual meeting.	Jack Hazerjian	Ongoing
2022-03-01	Rev Aileen will ask Jenny if she will assume Terry's responsibilities for managing sub-tenants and janitorial services	Rev Aileen	Ongoing
2022-03-02	The Finance Committee will prepare the budget for next fiscal year for UUCS Board approval. The budget needs to be finalized before the May board meeting. Initial submission should be by the end of April.	Adam Winter	Ongoing
2022-03-03	UUCS will select a congregational member of be our Chalice Lighter Program Ambassador.	Mark Lorenz	Ongoing
2022-03-04	Adam will invite Mark to the next finance meeting.	Adam Winter	Ongoing
2022-03-05	Mark and Rev Aileen will determine the method by which the above three	Mark & Rev Aileen	Ongoing

	questions are posed to various groups in the congregation.		
2022-03-06	Mark will consult with the Nominating Committee on its efforts to recruit replacements to fill expected Board vacancies.	Mark Lorenz	Ongoing
2022-03-07	Booking for an outside pavilion at Claude Moore Park for Sunday, June 5th, from 02:00 to 05:00 pm, needs to be done without too much delay.	Terry Dick	Ongoing
2022-03-08	Mark will contact the membership team and ask them about conducting the inventory.	Mark Lorenz	Ongoing
2022-03-09	Board to be advised on decision made by the Re-Opening Task Force Committee	Mark Lorenz	Ongoing

Board Decisions

Date	Decision
12/1/2021	UUCS Board voted and authorized the use of an additional \$1,100 from the Building Fund for the purchase of electronic equipment for UUCS's meeting room, and the additional funds (~\$1000) for the TV and cart.
12/1/2021	We will continue to schedule services where young unvaccinated children may attend at least monthly
3/9/2022	Delay any action for the next few months until UUCS congregants can be more effectively engaged in refining UUCS principles and values.

Parking Lot Topics (Deferred to Future Meetings)

Owner	Topic

Next Meeting: April 13, 2022 @ 6:30 pm

Action	Disposition	Assigned
To encourage involvement of more UUCS congregants in the work of UUCS		

ministries/committees, four suggestions were raised:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> committee “fair” could be organized and held, during which committee members offer an in-person opportunity for others to speak with them about the scope of activities of their church work group 	Consider this for Spring. Mark will schedule discussion at a later meeting	Mark
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “ministry minute” announcement could be made by the minister during Sunday service in order to inform congregants of needs, news, and successes of committee work “leader lab” sessions could be organized for strengthening management and communication skills of ministry and committee heads, as had been offered nationally by UU Leadership School 	<p>We should do Ministry minutes once or twice a month as a means of informing the congregation of activities</p> <p>Look at leader-lab offerings and select useful sessions</p>	Rev Aileen and Mark
Other Ideas		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UUCS Board should consider newer ways to count the number of individuals served by UUCS, beyond those registered as members of the congregation, since there are some external individuals who attend group activities that are offered by a UUCS ministry. 	Work with the Committee on Ministry to identify metrics of interest and then collect them on a recurring basis	Steve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UUCS Board should help promote ways to encourage engagement in church activities among all its congregants, as well as ways to ensure that church newcomers feel especially welcomed, with greeters playing an important role. 	Refer this to our Welcome and Engagement Ministry	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UUCS Board will organize a future session for its members on stewardship in the UU church. 	We will take up stewardship in January	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UUCS Board will need to plan out for the steps to produce its annual report and budget, which covers the period from July through June; a budget meeting will need to be presented to the congregation as part of this process. 	These items will be captured in the board calendar	Mark