

MINUTES UUCS BOARD MEETING 2022-12-14

Zoom Meeting Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/717188360?pwd=b1lvWGpvd01ibGVLNTJWQ3pGTFhmQT09>

In Attendance:

Board: Mark Lorenz, Bill Roman, Jack Hazerjian, Adam Winter, Jackie Mills, Mary Metheny

Minister: Rev. Aileen Fitzke

Agenda

6:40 Action Item Status	1
6:50 Finance Committee Update	1
7:10 UUCS Auction Outbrief	2
7:25 Listening Circles, Town Hall Meetings, and Visioning Meetings	3
7:45 Open Leadership/Committee Positions	4
8:05 Program Calendar	7
8:15 Review Board Liaison Reports	7
Parking Lot (as time permits)	8
Video Engagement Strategy with Peter Bowden	8
Subtenant Rentals	8
UUCS Website Improvements	9

6:40 Action Item Status

Description

- Review open action items from previous meetings and provide status

Goals

- Maintain tracking and accountability of assigned actions (see table below). Closed actions will be noted in current minutes and then drop off the tracker in the minutes.

Minutes

-

Decisions

-

6:50 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

- Understand financial position so as to make informed decisions that impact UUCS finances.

Minutes

- Mark Lorenz provided an updated overview of UUCS's finances for this fiscal year, nearing its half-way point. Roughly, \$81,5000 has been the cumulative expenses, with \$89,500 has been the cumulative

income, inclusive of the revenue from auction item payments made by those who were more prompt in settling their accounts since the November 19 date of the event. Some of his other observations:

- The amount of money in cash reserves to meet operating expenses has not been dropping as quickly as had been earlier forecast, even with the \$53,000 pledge amounts up through this time period in the fiscal year falling quite short of projections (\$77,800). Expenses through November 2022 have been running slightly under what had been *forecast* (\$82,800) while a *projected income* of \$81,000 through this date has been outpaced by more than \$3,000. Overall budget variance is about 98.5% income to expenses.
- A contributing factor to this better-than-expected financial picture is the receipt of \$7,200 during this fiscal year of 2021-2022 pledges that had been expected before July 2022.
- Another contributing factor to the smaller than expected expenses appears to be, from what is listed in the financial report, that the RE Coordinator, Archana Asrani, has not been paid her monthly salary for the past two months or more; this will necessitate further research.
- Also requiring a closer look is the overage of \$2,462 spent on facilities than what had been planned to date; this could be explained, perhaps partially, on the need for regularly-scheduled housekeeping services since the church building has returned to full usage since the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions in April 2022.
- Mark concluded by reporting that the landlord has annually offered a 50% discount on the \$7,162 monthly rent in December; this once-a-year savings of \$3,581 on the rent, however, is not factored into the annual budget.

Action Items:

- Confirm that the RE Coordinator has been receiving her monthly salary
- Find the cause for extra costs of more than \$2,400 that have been incurred under “facilities” line item

Decisions:

- None

7:10 UUCS Auction Outbrief

Description:

- UUCS held its annual, fund-raising auction on Saturday, November 19, 2022. There was a one-week period of online bidding for more than 240 silent auction items just prior to the event, which continued until noon the following day. These same silent auction items and 62 live auction items were also open to bidding during the live auction event.

Goals

- The auction was conservatively budgeted to generate only \$2,500, which was the amount that had been earned two years ago during the early phase of COVID-19. Last year, the auction earned \$12,500.

Minutes

- Jack Hazerjian, who led the organization of the auction with Jackie Mills and Nancy McCormick, prepared a PowerPoint presentation for the Board. [See attachment]. Some of the main points:
 - Over **\$18,033.09** was grossed:
 - \$ **444.20** (2.5% of gross) = \$10 admission ticket proceeds
 - \$ **215.00** (1.2%) = Raffle ticket sales for \$100 Amazon gift card
 - \$ **11,850.00** (65.7%) =Winning bids on dinners and social events
 - \$ **2,830.00** (15.7%) = Winning bids on physical items

- \$ 1,505.00 (8.3%) = Winning bids on services
 - \$ 750.00 (4.2%) = Donations in lieu of bid purchases
 - \$ 75.00 (0.4%) = Bar tips
 - \$ 363.89 (2.0%) = Payment of surcharges on bid purchases with credit card
- **\$310 expenses** were submitted and paid, and **\$358.51** is projected as ***surcharges to be borne by UUCS*** on credit card purchases that were not paid by bidders; as such, ***\$668.51 is maximum total expected expenses***
 - As such, net revenue is estimated to be **\$17,364.58 (\$18,033.09 — \$ 668.51)**
 - **\$12,323.24** in auction bid payments have already been made by December 13
 - **41** households among UUCS members (roughly 64 households in total) participated either at on-line bidding or live auction bidding. The median amount paid by a household on auction bid items was **\$418.29**, with 24 households each having spent less than that averaged amount and 17 households having spent more
 - The range of revenue generated individually by the 27 dinners and social events (which collectively garnered **\$11,850**) was from **\$70** to **\$2,700**

Action Items:

- None

Decisions:

- None

7:25 Listening Circles, Town Hall Meetings, and Visioning Meetings

Description

- We will conduct a series of listening circles and town hall meetings to discern next steps with regards to our situation.

Goals

- Discern next steps for our congregation around finances, new minister, facility, resource sharing, merging, who we are/what we want, visioning, etc.

Minutes

- To encourage all UUCS members to share their thoughts and concerns on the looming financial uncertainties of the church, which has already led Rev. Aileen to begin seeking a new ministerial post after June 2023, three listening circles were organized after the September 25th Town Hall meeting: on September 29, October 2, October 19. Input was also collected from those who had emailed their responses (mostly during September). Most of the offered ideas centered around solutions regarding the search for a new minister, expenses required to maintain UUCS’s current facility, and ways to increase church income. It was added that only the more vocal members, representing less than a majority of congregants, had contributed to one or more the past discussions.
- A follow-up Town Hall meeting was also held on October 23rd, with Rev. Megan Foley in attendance. During the meeting, suggestions that had been made over the past two months were summarized for her, but she thought UUCS’s search for solutions was premature, especially since fewer than half of

UUCS participated. She asked if door-to-door visits to solicit the ideas of the others would be warranted.

- Additionally, Rev. Megan Foley thought that this focus on solutions was premature since there remains ample time to plan for the upcoming changes, given that Rev. Aileen remains in place until mid-2023. She counseled, instead, that UUCS spend time to explore what it wants to be as a church, what its values are, and how we should communicate to others what UUCS can offer to new members. “What is your story?” Rev. Megan Foley suggested a set of online visioning conversations, which she would lead. The first one was scheduled for Sunday, December 11 at 1:00 pm, which had as a framing question for participant responses: “What Makes UUCS UUCS?” The compilation of responses is found here: [What Makes UUCS UUCS - Google Docs](#)

Action Items

- Follow with Rev. Megan Foley after the year-end holidays to schedule a second, online visioning session
- Publish in “Illuminate” the weblink to the recorded session with Rev. Megan Foley, along with a prepared form for completion by those who wish to document their responses to “What is your story?” and “What makes UUCS UUCS?”

Decisions

- **None**

7:45 Open Leadership/Committee Positions

Description:

- Identify open positions in the UUCS organization and make plans to fill them

Goals:

- Fill open positions with interested people. Identify training and/or mentoring needed for that person to be successful

Minutes:

- Open Positions within UUCS that remain:
 - **Committee on Ministry:**
One or two members still need be recruited to join Kim Fitzgerald and Denise Lorenz
 - **RE Teacher**
We are still in need of someone to fill this position
 - **Nursery Care Worker**
We need volunteers or paid worker (e.g. high school) to help in the nursery with the younger kids; currently, there are 2 teenagers who have helped out with this (e.g., Isabelle Freidson)
 - **Live Stream Operator**
Tim George had to leave the group. Bryan would like another person to replace him
 - **Stewardship Drive Lead:**
Steve and Terry Dick have agreed to lead this activity this year, while Nancy McCormick will join them. It would be preferable to have younger UUCS members learn how to take up this role for future years

- o **Membership Committee:**
We need to grow this committee

Action Items:

- Need to advertise these positions and approach people individually

Decisions:

- None

7:55 Social Justice Kick off/Brainstorming

Description:

- Denise Dittmar has agreed to co-lead this group. The group held a brainstorming session on December 5th, at which 10 people attended

Goals:

- Live by UUC principles

Minutes:

- UUCS needs to catalyze interest in its members to participate at events like Sandy Hook Remembrance and the MLK March; UUCS's website page on social justice must be updated and provided with a calendar of upcoming activities, which will be a priority action item
- Attendees at the brainstorming session held on Monday, December 5 generated ideas on 20 different social justice activities; a narrower list would help focus attention and channel energies more effectively
- At the Board meeting, other social justice pursuits were raised:
 - o Organize a "Help Portrait," where free group portraits are offered to disadvantaged families; this had been done in the past, and was highly appreciated by the beneficiaries
 - o Get involved with "Community Table" in Loudon County
 - o Support Sharon Coviak, UUCS member, who is significantly involved with activities run by "Women Giving Back"
 - o Partner with Epiphany Church to support the local homeless shelter
 - o Collaborate with other churches or organizations, rather than UUCS trying to dauntingly undertake community support activities on its own
 - o Mark Lorenz offered to contact Michelle Saville, President of UUC/Loudon, to explore opportunities for such collaboration on social justice activities
 - o On the other hand, charitable events run by others who are unfamiliar to UUCS should be reviewed and vetted before UUCS makes any commitment, as in the recent example of the Ukrainian Bake Sale"

- UUCS will again host the Poetry Slam, and has been asked to financially contribute to the Poetry Slam's organization through split plate offerings during the month of the February, when it will be held
- The November 2022 distributions for split-plate:

Mobile Hope	\$122.24	November Justice Allocation payout
BackPack Coalition	\$122.23	November Justice Allocation payout

Action Items:

- Mark Lorenz to contact Michelle Saville, President of UUC/Loudon, to explore opportunities for collaboration on social justice activities

Decisions:

- None

8:05 Program Calendar

Description:

We are reinstating the online program calendar to log events and inform the congregation of them. This calendar stopped being published and used because of the pandemic

Goals:

Ensure organization among the growing number of activities at UUCS and promote them via online viewing.

Minutes:

- The calendar is located at:  Program Calendar 2022-2023
- What items should be captured here? Who is responsible for capturing the information?

Action Items:

- Reinstate program calendar in UUCS's Google Docs file

Decisions:

- None

8:15 Review Board Liaison Reports

Description:

Review board liaison reports.

- Institutional Vitality Ministry — Adam
- Worship & Arts Ministry — Mark
- Justice Ministry — Jack
- Lifespan Faith Development Ministry — Jackie
- Care & Connections Ministry — Mary
- Welcome & Engagement Ministry — Bill

Goals:

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

Minutes:

- Jackie Mills asked whether UUCS should re-instate a Communications Committee.
- Bill Roman suggested that UUCS should return to having a booth at Sterling Fest to raise UUCS's profile in the county
- He also noted that there is dire need for more volunteers to serve as church greeters and ushers and to have visitors recognized during the service and chatted up with at coffee hour.

Action Items:

- None

Decisions:

- None

~~Parking Lot (as time permits)~~**~~Video Engagement Strategy with Peter Bowden~~****~~Description:~~**

- ~~Peter Bowden has developed a 5-part series on this topic of effectively engaging with people online. See [Video Engagement Strategy 131 – UU Institute](#). This would be especially focused on bringing in the younger folk.~~
- ~~This might be useful for the board and membership team to take, perhaps two ½-hour sessions a month.~~

~~Goals:~~

- ~~In an effort to broaden our appeal and reach into the community, especially the younger people, we might benefit from this learning~~

~~Minutes:~~

- ~~Exchange during this past month highlighted “Meeting Gen Z where they’re at.” This implies meeting them online. Not sure how you might entice them to get offline to meet people in person.~~
 - ~~Bill suggested the use of Discord for connecting with the younger folks. While we have a Facebook UUCS Community page, Gen Z doesn’t tend to use Facebook.~~
 - ~~Adam would be able to create the technical solution and be the Community Manager, but we’d need someone to manage content and to moderate it.~~

~~Action Items:~~

- ~~—~~

Subtenant Rentals**Description**

- ~~Subtenant rentals of our space is a reasonable painless way to increase our income. We might consider advertising our space through our webpage and Facebook page~~

Goals

- ~~Increase income without compromising our ability to use our existing space~~

Minutes

- ~~We would need to create a tab/pull down on our website to advertise. We’d put Jenny’s phone number and contact info on it. Also, a brief description of the available space and available dates/times. Photos would be helpful along with text describing available space(s). We’d want to include the application form and perhaps a brochure with rental fees included.~~

Action Items

- ~~None~~

Decisions

- None

UUCS Website Improvements

Description:

- The UUCS website needs to be revised to improve user experience, particularly among people searching for a spiritual home.

Goals:

- We want the site to be engaging and informative for visitors and members/friends of the congregation

Minutes:

-

Action Items:

-

Decisions:

-

Action Items

Action Item	Action	Assigned	Status
2022-07:04	Coordinate with the Live Stream Operators and Worship team regarding use of the large TV for Coffee Hour. Required new webcam. Later we discovered that the speakerphone was not sufficient for cutting through ambient noise in the sanctuary. We will try running the Coffee Hour sound through the sanctuary sound system.	Mark	<p>Sent message to the LSOs asking for thoughts on design of this capability. Webcam was purchased and set up. Conducted meetings and realized speakerphone was not powerful enough to cut through ambient noise. Need a different one.</p> <p>We tried running sound through the house system. It works but required a LSO to be present. Let's identify a likely device that would work and see if we want to purchase it.</p>
2022-07:09	Issue Semi Annual Chalice Lighter announcements based upon board calendar entries. Locate UUA information on the program.	Mark	Proposed announcing in October and May (different months than other fundraising activities). Tabled pending more certainty on our future
2022-07:10	Create announcement for a date to agree on split plate beneficiaries. Hold the meeting and agree on beneficiaries based upon attendee inputs	Jack	Not yet started

2022-07:15	Ask the Membership Team to create a plan for facilitating the recruitment, organization, and promotion of the church's social engagement activities. Explore approaches to attract younger members	Bill	In work
2022-07:16	Prepare for organizing online presentations on either artists/art history or foreign films for adult recreation at UUCS	Jack	Not yet started
2022-08:03	Request that the Committee on Ministry review the draft charter that was previous prepared to ascertain whether it is still applicable and whether it needs adjustment.	Mark	In work; CoM is aware of the need to create their charter. Kim F. did a ministry minute on 11/6/22
2022-08:05	Broad announcements will be during the service for open volunteer positions within UUCS, as well as promotion of its annual auction in November. Also, post volunteer positions on peg board. Current positions are: o Committee on Ministry: One or two members still need be recruited to join Kim Fitzgerald and Denise Lorenz. o RE Teacher: This is a paid position o Stewardship Drive Lead: We need someone to fill in after Bonnie Lepoff stepped down after many years performing this role o Endowment Committee: Two individuals are sought to help manage the particularly tenuous state of these set-aside funds.	Mark	In work
2022-10:01	Obtain support from Administrator to update web site to include information regarding facility rental; Also place notices on Facebook, Marketplace, and/or Craigslist	Jackie and Mark	
2022-10:02	Contact UUCL president to establish communications, understand each other's challenges, find areas of common interest to work together, identify if sharing resources are of interest/benefit, and see if we can have cross congregational visits	Mark	Made initial contact with their president, Michelle Saville. We will talk more this month. First to gain some trust.
2022-10:03	Contact John Monroe to assess his interest in serving as part-time minister	Mark	Contacted. John said he is interested and will help with the transition via 1/4 to 1/2 time. Completed.

Board Decisions

Item	Decision
2022-07:01	Board Liaison assignments are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committee on Ministry —no assignment needed anymore• Institutional Vitality Ministry —Adam• Worship & Arts Ministry —Mark• Justice Ministry —Jack• Lifespan Faith Development Ministry —Jackie• Care & Connections Ministry —now Mary• Welcome & Engagement Ministry —Bill
2022-07:02	We agreed to hold the board retreat on August 26 and 27.

Parking Lot Topics (Deferred to Future Meetings)

Owner	Topic

Next Meeting: January 11, 2023 @ 6:30 pm