



**Board of Trustees
January 18, 2023**

Present: Terry Palin (P), Heather Hedquist (VP), Deb Loya (TR), Polly Noël (SC), Danielle Bess (AL), Oscar Solis (AL), Betty Burgner (AL), Emmanuel Garrido (AL), Rev. Nell Newton, Rev. Mark Skrabacz

Absent: none

Guest(s): Bridget Laflin, DLRE

Gathering

The board met via Zoom. Having established a quorum, Terry Palin called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Terry asked Betty to serve as process observer and Deb to serve as timekeeper. Rev. Mark shared the opening words and lit the chalice. Heather read the Board's covenant. Terry read the Ends statements. After brief check-ins, the consent agenda was finalized and members agreed to allow Bridget to present the DLRE report before moving to old business.

DLRE Report: Bridget provided an update on RE classes and activities during her first six months. She also reflected on desirability of better integrating RE youth and families into the congregation, lack of Wi-Fi in YRE classrooms that makes it challenging to access online reference materials, recent pandemic that may have affected social development of RE youth, renters may be leaving messes or trash in classrooms or on grounds, and the need to better educate people coming from an unchurched background on how to "do church." Bridget also requested consideration of sick leave and possibly vacation time for longer-term hourly employees.

Consent Agenda Approval

The December Board meeting minutes and other items on the consent agenda were approved as submitted.

- December Board minutes (Polly)
- President's Report (Terry)
- V. President's Report (Heather)
- Treasurer's Report (Deb)
- Minister's Report (Rev. Mark)
- Coordinating Team Notes (Rev. Mark)
- COSM Meeting (Rev. Mark and Terry)
- LDC Report (Emmanuel)
- Trust Fund for the Endowment Report (Danielle)
- CREF Report (Betty)
- Stewardship Report (Oscar)
- Financial Report (Deb)
- Capital Campaign Report (Terry)



OLD BUSINESS

Monitoring (Ends, Limitations, Linkage, Governance) and other aligned items: Members reviewed the following:

- Limitations: none this month
- Linkage: 3.3 Delegation of Senior Minister - No changes
- Governance: 4.6 Board Members' Code of Conduct – No changes
- Board Goals: Champions provided updates on action items, including plans for reviewing and revising Ends statement.

Organizational Chart: Polly summarized changes to the Organizational Chart discussed with Rev. Mark. Board members suggested a few minor adjustments. Polly will make final edits, circulate, and submit for approval at the February Board meeting.

Widening the Circle of Concern: Terry led discussion on Chapters 3, 4, and 5. Comments included the need to continue to educate each other and the congregation about diversity, and highlighting our partnerships. Even though some members may not be comfortable with exploration, the burden shouldn't be placed on marginalized groups to be patient. We want to be a beloved community and move in relationship. The importance of involving youth was also discussed – an intergenerational service in February will talk about Article II.

Interim Process: Rev. Nell spoke with Keith Kron. It was agreed that Rev. Nell could take Interim Training so she will be able to support the future Interim Minister. Because Rev. Nell will not be serving as the Interim, she would still be eligible to apply for the settled search.

Membership Policy: Tabled until February.

Selling microwave and washer/dryer: Heather reported that the people she had reached out to have not been able to help.

NEW BUSINESS

Revised Copyright Policy: Terry reported that Carolyn Wright had suggested additional edits on the copyright policy based upon her legal expertise. **Polly moved and Oscar seconded that *the Board approve the revised Copyright Policy, as presented. The church administrator shall post the policy to the church website and shall disseminate the policy to all committees of the church, the music department, and RE, all within a reasonable time, but no later than January 31, 2023.*** The motion passed; Approved: 7; Against: 0; Abstained: 0

Terry moved and Betty seconded (accepting an amendment suggested by Deb that clarified the timeframe for the licensing agreements) that the Board authorize the purchase of four Copyright licenses from CCLI, CVLI, and CCS in the amount of \$938 to be taken from General Reserve account #339. These licenses will run from January to December 2023 for one year and will need to be renewed in January 2024. The motion passed; Approved: 7; Against: 0; Abstained: 0



Another motion regarding budgeting for these licenses (i.e., that the Finance Committee include amounts in the yearly budget beginning January 2024 to cover purchases of licensing for videos, print, and music; this budgeting is to continue indefinitely until changed), was retracted at Deb's request.

Letter to Congregation: Members reviewed the draft finalized by Terry, Heather, and Deb. After accepting a minor edit, **Terry moved and Polly seconded that the Board of Trustees approve the Interim Notification letter to the congregation, as presented, with the understanding that we will need to further explain the procedure of searching for an Interim Minister and the timeline involved. The motion passed; Approved: 7; Against: 0; Abstained: 0**

Budget and Priorities: Deb requested input on board-level budget priorities (basic or aspirational). Suggestions included increasing hours of Creative & Digital Manager; payment of UUA dues; funding for copyright licensing; \$2,000 for board retreats and training; \$10,000 for Unity consulting for discernment work and help with Mission, Vision, & Values; and \$25,000 budget for tech improvements for sanctuary, including sound board and additional screen.

Congregational Certification: Rev. Mark reviewed plans to gather information needed for the UUA Congregational Certification.

Social Activity Committee: Oscar reported that he has committed to serving as Social Activity Chair for two years. He would like to organize a volunteer recognition event. Polly suggested that this be coordinated with the LDC. As reported to the Coordinating Team, Mary Wright is developing a prototype for an on-line volunteer clearing house. Other plans include a Mardi Gras party in February. Cindy Daughtrey is also working to re-start game nights.

PR Video: Terry played PR video that had been finalized after a long delay. The video will be posted on the First UU website and help with the upcoming minister search.

Congregants resigning memberships: Rev. Mark reported that the church office had received letters from 4 couples who resigned their membership. Although they did not provide a reason, some of these individuals have previously expressed discomfort on different occasions about the proposed 8th principle. Rev. Mark called all 4 and will follow up with letters. Although some individuals may be uncomfortable with anti-racism discussions, First UU will continue conversations and education around the upcoming Article II revision.

Way Forward with UU Houston: Tabled until February meeting.

Closing: Betty observed there was a lot to discuss, but that the board got through most of the agenda. Rev. Nell read closing words. Terry adjourned the meeting at 9:15 and briefly reviewed upcoming events:



Upcoming Calendar Events:

- Sunday, January 22 – Board Listening Session – 12:15 to 1:15 pm (~~Danielle~~ leading)
- Thursday, February 9 – Executive Team meeting
- Tuesday, February 14 – Board Listening Session (ZOOM) – 6 to 7 pm (Polly leading)
- Wednesday, February 15 – Board meeting (ZOOM) – 6:30 to 8:30 pm