

Unitarian Church of Montpelier

Meeting of the Board

Tuesday, November 3, 2015, 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

MINUTES

Convened: 6:29 PM

Location: Unitarian Church of Montpelier, Montpelier, VT

Present:

Amy Willis, Board President	Jo Romano, Board Vice President
Stuart Russo-Savage, Board Secretary	Priscilla Fox, Board Member at Large
Will White, Board Member at Large	Joan Javier-Duval, Minister (ET)
Melinda Moz-Knight, Board Member at Large	Nancy Read, Board Financial Officer

Absent:

I. Opening/Chalice Lighting: (6:30)

Melinda

II. More on Planned Giving: (6:32)

Dan Groberg presented an updated description of the Stewardship Committee to the board.

- a. *A copy of the draft description was provided to the board by e-mail in advance of this meeting.*
- b. *This committee is working to take a more holistic view of stewardship.*
- c. *The Stewardship Committee set up three subcommittees with the main stewardship committee made up of the chairs of these committees. This would give the stewardship committee the opportunity to better coordinate fund raising, thinking more strategically. Dan is the Chair of the Stewardship Committee and chairs the Pledge Drive sub-committee. Planned Giving is chaired by Peter Thoms. Special Gifts is chaired by Paul Ohlson. There may be a special events sub-committee as well.*
- d. *The board requested that we receive a quarterly report from the Stewardship Committee and any other updates as needed.*
- e. *Dan asked for advice from the board about the level of autonomy the Stewardship Committee has. After discussion, the Board advised that, as long as the*

Stewardship Committee operates within the Mission Statement, the Stewardship Committee has the authority to make these decisions.

III. Report on General Assembly (GA): (6:52)

Harris Webster visits to tell us a few points he picked up at GA, as well as some other larger, board-related issues that have been on his mind

a. GA Report–

- a. The moderator made the observation that the UUA is adjusting to governance change (like the UCM). An observation made was to limit what you monitor so that you can focus on something and do it well.*
 - b. The role of the youth groups was impressive. Their role was integral and vital.*
 - c. If you have a chance, go on-line and listen to the Ware Lecture by [Cornell West](#) from 2015.*
 - d. Harris attended a lecture by [Sue Phillips](#) and found it impressive.*
 - e. Joan observed that the board should discuss how actively to recruit people to attend the GA.*
- b. Harris has some thoughts about the “Serve Human Need” end statements adopted by the board. He shared a draft of what he would propose for revising the current statement. The suggestions included: 1) the identification of the individual, group within the church, and the church as a whole, 2) supporting systemic change that would help us to reach our desired ends, and 3) including greater specificity in the language of the ends statements.*

IV. Minister’s Report: (6:45)

(Joan)

- a. Joan provided the report in advance of this meeting by e-mail to members of the board.*
- b. Joan asked if we had any questions.*
- c. Joan talked about what the ET is doing. Discussion moved toward how the December joint ET/board meeting will work. It was agreed that the primary purpose of this time is to enhance communication between the two groups.*

V. The Matter of the Financial Review: (7:28)

Nancy

From the by-laws, the board (among other things) is to:

- a. (6.1.6) “Review the financial condition of the Congregation at least quarterly, and submit an annual Operating and Capital Budget to the Congregation at the annual meeting” and,*
- b. (6.1.7) “Ensure there is a financial review of all congregational policies, practice and accounts by an outside auditor at least every three years.”*

Nancy presented her observations about this language from our by-laws and how to proceed to comply with these requirements.

Nancy suggests:

- a. the board consider nominating two (?) church members who have some financial or quantitative expertise to complete a slightly revised version of the UUA's Internal Financial Review for UU Congregations to see what that process would be like and to see if it would accomplish what the board needs and,*
- b. she draft changes to the wording of the above sections of the by-laws for the board to consider for possible submission to the congregation for revision.*

Nancy will look into the history of this part of the by-laws, revise the UUA's financial review document and look into who might be willing to work on the internal financial review.

Description of Financial Roles: The board received a document from the ET which describes the roles of different positions within the UCM related to finances. The board appreciates the thoroughness of this document.

VI. Follow Ups/Committee and Meeting Reports: (7:50)

- UCM Community Lunch (Amy and Joan) – Dave Grundy is checking to see if the community lunch still needs to be a non-profit corporation registered with the Secretary of State since it is now a part of the UCM. It probably will not. The UCM Community Lunch will continue to have it's own checking account. The question about including the UCM Community Lunch as a separate line item in the annual budget is being discussed. There is a high degree of support for this program.*
- Finance Committee (Amy and Nancy) – The Finance Committee met on Sunday with Rich Pearce, a representative of the Vermont Trust Company of Vermont, about our long-term investment funds. There is a significant amount of funds not currently being actively invested. These funds are being held in cash until we decide what to do and/or the right investment opportunities arise. Everything appears on target (income and expenditures).*
- A list of board responsibilities to consider (Jo and Melinda) – A document was shared and discussed. It summarizes all of what has been discussed from the summer retreat and since. The board members agreed to review the list and send any suggested changes to Melinda in advance of the December board meeting and to identify a short list of priorities for this year to discuss at our next meeting.*
- Joan's Installation Ceremony (Jo and Joan) – Donna Russo-Savage has a large binder and will help with the process. Joan suggested that we suggest dates and try to finalize the date as soon as possible. Two possible dates are April 3 or April 24. Jo will speak with Donna to see if she is willing to*

continue to work on this. Joan will check on the dates with the Search Committee and Staff.

- *ET researching a community gift funded from the Jackman bequest (Joan) – The ET has proposed that the Board collaborate with the ET to make arrangements for a task force to gather information about potential organizations in the broader community to be recipients of a 150th UCM Anniversary gift (from the long term investment funds, particularly in light of the recent Jackman’s bequest). It was noted that any expenditure beyond \$5,000 is to be approved by the congregation. The 2020 Vision Task Force has collected many ideas on how some of the funds from the Jackman bequest could be used. Amy and Melinda expressed interest in participating. Melinda will work with Judith to draft the charge and participate in the task force. Judith has agreed to post the announcement to call for volunteers.*

VII. The Matter of Governance: (8:32)

- a. *Can we tweak things for smoother running? How? – This was discussed briefly.*
- b. *UUA Transitions Workshop January 9 (morning-early afternoon) – all board members should attend.*
- c. *“Raising the Roof”: Accommodating a bigger congregation and change in general – recommendation for all board members to read this book.*
- d. *When are we going to read and approve all policies? – all board members will read these policies in preparation for the December board meeting. [Click here](#) for a link to the policies.*

VIII. Any Other Business (AOB):

- a. *October Minutes – approved unanimously as amended*
- b. *New Members class – Priscilla Fox agreed to represent the board.*

IX. Closing: (Melinda)

Meeting Adjourned: 8:48

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart Russo-Savage

Board Secretary

Minutes Approved: December 1, 2015