

UCM Board Meeting

December 8, 2024

Attendance: Jeremy Beaudry (President), Ansel Ploog (Vice President), Brenda Bean (Financial Officer), Jen Matthews (Secretary), Steve Gold, Steve Grunewald, Rev. Joan Javier-Duval

Welcome & Check In

Chalice lighting and reading

- Brenda read an excerpt from a UUA press release from resources Rev. Joan shared with the Board

Climate Resilience Study Group (Brenda Bean and Steve Gold)

- Meeting to be held 12/9 at 5pm
- Expecting 12-14 people to assist with study
- There is a pledge that members will sign.
- The study group will ask the ET and Board to sign the pledge as well.
- Critical points of the pledge - remain objective and to keep an open mind

Approve Minutes

- Minutes approved for October 6, 2024 - Brenda Bean moved to approve, Steve Gold seconded, all in favor
- Unable to approve minutes from November 3, 2024 as Jen has been unable to add suggested edits to draft.
- Approval of November 3, 2024 minutes will be added to next meeting

Minister's Report

- Discussion around Committee on Ministry
- Question around whether the Board needs to provide approval of Committee on Ministry members. Board determined that staying informed of members is sufficient.
- Donna Russo-Savage is editing a document from Committee Structure and Guidelines.
- Discussion turned to annual evaluations of Rev. Joan. Suggestion made that 360 degree evaluation be completed every 3 years and during the other years feedback would come from the Board and Committee on Ministry
- Question about when Rev. Joan's last 360 evaluation occurred.

Policy Monitoring

GP-1 Value of Good Governance

- How do we get the congregation involved in governance in order to have candidates interested in taking leadership positions? Suggestions:
 - Workshops
 - Interpersonal relationships, mentoring, could be at the Board table in the vestry on Sunday mornings
 - Keep the congregation aware of UUA opportunities. Rev. Joan reminded us of trainings available through the online UU Leadership Institute as well as a UU course on Leadership training
 - Steve Gold can discuss opportunities during Committee of Chairs meetings

GP-5 Board Roles and Responsibilities

EL-5 Asset Protections

- Reviewed EL-5 Monitoring Report
- Board noticed a typo and suggested adding a ZERO at end of value for Blanket Building and Property
- A question was raised about coverage for church piano, organ and new AV equipment. The Board is requesting further information about insurance coverage for the organ. Rev. Joan agreed to follow up about this information.
- Discussion turned to building maintenance and need for volunteers especially without an active Property Committee or Sexton. Joan shared that UCM is closer to filling the Sexton position as the ET is working on getting the position filled. Currently it is unclear if the Property Committee will be reinstated as there isn't anyone interested in being the committee chair. Someone raised the question "What can the Board do?"
Response: consider a different model - facility manager v. Sexton

Kitchen Renovations (Brenda)

- Awaiting bids then bids will be brought to the ET.
- There is money left over for flood recovery as well as a \$10,000 grant.
- There was a concern raised about what if the renovations exceed what money is available
- The Board in agreement that getting the kitchen back online is flood recovery.

December 15th Budget Meeting Planning

- The Budget Planning meeting for the Board with Rev. Joan is scheduled for 12/15 from noon until 1pm.
- Rev. Joan is requesting everyone consider: high level goals, visions for next year, what's important for next year as well as budgeting implications.
- Some members felt it was important to consider Stewardship and fundraising during this meeting.
- Preliminary discussion about the budget meeting included: staff compensation and UUA standards, there were questions if the Board wants to use these standards, Rev. Joan explained UUA guidelines were linked to the GEO Index. Rev. Joan agreed to send/share a table from the UUA with fair compensation guidelines.
- Questions posed about current UUA program funds request as well as UCM's current contribution.
- Question also raised about UCM's contribution to VIA (Vermont Interfaith Action) funding.

Fundraising and Stewardship

- Art Auction Update
 - Brenda is reaching out to members who are willing to help, but as of yet, no team has been assembled.
 - Brenda is learning and setting up online auction space
 - Auctions will occur in February, dates to be finalized.
 - Questions about hanging artwork for display, vestry? Discussion about keeping the auction online only.
 - Kate Latz is willing to help and would like a photographer to help with photographing artwork for the online auction.
 - Jim Phinney has offered to help with strategic planning.
 - A suggestion was made to have laptop setup on Sunday in the vestry so members could bid on artwork.
 - Brenda will advertise in the enews.
- Stewardship Update
 - Pledge Drive begins February 23rd
 - There will be a stewardship meeting on December 10th.
 - On February 21st there will be a kick off event to the pledge drive. It will be called "Pie & Democracy". There are plans to have speakers and examples of different organizations and their role in democracy.

- The Stewardship Committee plans to dive into UCM's giving data as well as review the UUA Report on Giving
- Stewardship Committee needs new members

By-Laws Revisions

- In the interest of time, all agreed to postpone By-Laws discussion.

Post-elections Discussion and Response

- Steve Grunewald has agreed to formulate a letter of support for organizations that may be directly impacted by this incoming administration. Rev. Joan and Jen agreed to review.
- A few organizations that were suggested potentially in need of support: Migrant Justice, CVRAN, Pride Center of Vermont (Burlington), Outright Vermont, TRUUuT (Transgender Religious professional UUu Together)
- Some discussion of specific support UCM could potentially provide: space, offer support, review pouch recipients
- Rev. Joan reminded the group of UUA post election resources

Strategic Planning Process

- Discussion about asking the congregation about input referring to the ends. Suggestions about ways to solicit input included: small group setting, workshops, survey, the Board table on Sundays in the vestry
- Further discussion as to if we need to create new ends statements, does the language need to be updated
- Discussion about the need to engage the committee on Ministry about the ends statements as well as questions about how we measure the ends statements.
- The board agreed we needed to map out a plan for the next 6 months to solicit feedback.

Other Business

- Jeremy requested the Board address the request from Judith Hinds and UCM's Racial Justice Group's recommendation that the UCM Board find opportunities to make clear to the world at large that UCM is an anti-racist congregation.
 - Jeremy will respond to Judith's email and let her know we ran out of time for discussion and that the Board is requesting more specific language about being anti-racist.
 - Agreement to invite Judith and the Racial Justice Group to the January 5th meeting

Close Out

- Brenda shared a second reading.

