

FUSN Board of Trustees
Tuesday, April 11 2017
Children's Chapel, 7:30 pm

Staff Erin Splaine, Minister Rowan VanNess, DLRE, absent Board Cathy Morocco, Chair Brian Burba, Vice Chair Gregg DiBiaso Sara Fasli, Youth Josie Greene Eric Haas Lesley Sneddon Julianna Lakomski, Youth, Clerk Kit Ryan	Visitors Andrea Kelly, Operations Council Barbara Bates, Archive Project
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Meeting Highlights:
FUSN Activity around Immigration and Refugee Needs
Building Institutional memory through Archiving
Board Chair succession models

Invocation / Chalice Lighting/Reading of The Board Covenant: 7:32pm

Staff Updates

Erin Splaine

- Erin attended all of the parties, except for two when she had the flu. The final Pledge Party was Sunday evening April 8th. At this time, the Chairs are focusing on reaching people who did not attend pledge parties but did pledge the previous year. Josie commented that the Chairs need more Board involvement. (In subsequent weeks, several Board members took on steward roles.)
- Curt Lamb is working on the Summer Service schedule, and has invited Lois Shapiro to perform at the second service.
- Erin and Rowan are working with the Adult Faith Development Task Force on ways to on their findings for programs in the coming year.
- Members of FUSN will hold a Seder on a Thursday evening in April.
- In March Sam traveled to Milwaukee for the UU Membership Professionals Meeting.
- Anne Watson-Born and the choir are preparing for the choir tour in Southern Germany beginning at the end of May and their role as the visiting choir at the first European Unitarian Assembly in Ulm June 2 through 6.
- The Multicultural Ministry Initiative is continuing its work on white privilege.
- Memorials will be held for two loved members of the congregation in the coming

days, Betsy Williams on April 15 and Norm Doelling on April 22nd.

Procedural

The Board passed the February 2017 minutes unanimously.

Board Updates and Announcements

Immigration Activities. Handouts: "FUSN Response to Challenges Facing our Immigrant, Refugee and Muslim communities," "Preemptive Radical Inclusion."

Josie briefly reported on several immigration-related events and activities that have taken place over past weeks at FUSN. These include individual actions such as displaying Welcome signs on individuals' lawns, as well as educational events, including Dick Bail's and Lynn Holbeins's joint evening program, "Meet Your Muslim Neighbor," and an Open Mosque Day, when eighteen Massachusetts Mosques welcomed visitors. Some requests and opportunities will require Board and Minister approval. One of these is the opportunity for FUSN to join an interfaith cluster of Newton congregations, The Refugee Immigration Ministry (RIM), which provides support to refugees and asylum seekers. Another is the request that FUSN waive rental fees for an organization such as the American Civil Liberties Association (ACLU) or the Massachusetts Immigration and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) to hold "know your rights" trainings for undocumented immigrants.

A member of the congregations has asked how FUSN would respond if someone asks for sanctuary. While FUSN is not set up in such a way to house an individual or family seeking refuge, Erin was clear in her intention that FUSN be prepared to offer support to seekers such as referrals to whatever resources and supports exist in the community.

Board Sunday Introduction as a Communication

Cathy received a note for the Board from Member Services Committee asking Board members to make better eye contact with the congregation and speak the message slowly and as a communication. Board members had some fun role-playing the Introduction. As Anne Watson Borne coaches the choir, the connection to the audience matters more than the words.

The opening words have been revised again, to leave out the request that attendees pick up papers and place them in recycling. In response to the suggestion that the Beadle pick up the pews, Erin commented that she would work on who could manage this task.

The Nominating Committee seeks candidate to replace the Treasurer, and Board members should suggest candidates to Sheila Ardery.

Strategic

How do we build institutional memory? See handout for details: "Why the Purpose of an Archive Governs What and How to Store."

Since August, 2016 Barbara Bates, with Lesley as Board liaison, worked on understanding FUSN's needs for archiving FUSN documents related to governance

and conflict transformation. Barbara and Lesley spoke with a number of FUSN members with historical roles and knowledge, including Gayle Smalley, Fran Clancy, and Laurel Farnsworth. The purpose of an archive drives everything else, according to Barbara. The purpose should reflect how the archive is to be used, for example:

- Identify trends and historical information relevant to impending decisions.
- Review decisions made and policies developed, to avoid “re-inventing the wheel.”
- Orient new officers.

Barbara and Lesley explained that any initial effort in this area should be limited to supporting the Board of Trustees’ “working memory,” since a full effort to support the Ops Council’s working memory and the Society’s history was beyond the Board’s responsibility. Nevertheless, archiving approaches that the Board develops might at some point offer an example for other FUSN archiving projects.

The users might be Board and or Operations Council members, Clerk or the Board of Council, FUSN staff, congregational members or outside researchers. Some guiding questions and issues include:

Who will maintain the archive? Enter information?

Who will have access?

How easy will the archives be to search?

What kind of orientation material will be needed?

How will materials be organized and formatted for storage?

Will the archive mainly be for historical items (Governance change documents, Conflict Transformation documents were the original impetus for the idea) or also for future documents (ongoing Board minutes and reports, future Annual Meeting reports)?

Barbara proposed that she and Lesley form an ad hoc committee to pilot an initial, small selection of documents as a proof of concept. Board members could use this pilot to provide important feedback to them. Barbara also proposed that she draft a “starter charter” that specified scope of work, reporting process, and limitations on the ad hoc committee to avoid misunderstandings and to make the Board’s work on the charter more efficient. The Board would review, revise and approve any final charter.

Brian responded to the presentation with hearty thanks that *anyone* was willing to take on such as effort. Cathy clarified that the idea of an archive began with a fairly narrow need to store and make accessible the documents from FUSN's 2008-2009 governance transformation work, and the later Conflict Transformation work. Storage and accessibility were the goals, and the Board had not considered the idea of a searchable archive. Nor had the Board considered this a way to archive Board reports and minutes, and Annual Meeting reports, though these are intriguing ideas to consider.

The Board very much appreciates Barbara and Lesley's thinking, and the Power Point presentation brought tonight and will bring up the topic at a meeting of the FY18 Board at a later meeting (Note: This further discussion will take place in the fall of 2017 with the new Board).

Generative Conversations:

Board Chair Succession Models: What is the ideal?

Cathy and Erin brought up the subject of what is an "ideal" succession model. Cathy commented that, while most Chairs currently serve for one year, a two-year Chair would better reflect the learning curve of the Chair role. Learning the roles, procedures, and responsibilities of other governance groups it takes a year and a lot of mentoring time by other officers. In addition, a Chair may guide new initiatives that would benefit from follow up.

Erin explained that a two-year chair has been the desired model for some time, because of the advantages of a more experienced set of officers and the amount of learning required by a Chair. The Operations Council has had the same Chair for a few years, while the Board Chair has turned over almost every year as Chairs have moved away or found the role particularly demanding.

Cathy added that she feels she owes the Board an "update" on her own situation. In the spring of 2016, it became apparent that none of the continuing members was able and/or willing to serve as Chair in FY17. The Board and Minister asked Cathy to consider serving another term (three years) and serve as Chair. She agreed to serve for one year, and to leave it open whether she would then resign or stay in the Chair role for a second year, which would then be her fifth year on the Board. Cathy said that she found the role demanding but exciting and was willing to stay on a second term if the Board decided to re-elect her.

Some Board comments:

- The board might benefit from the input of four new members soon to be elected who would be electing the officers.
- The Board needs to come to June officer elections knowing whether someone is at least willing to serve as Chair, because the Board is not "legal" without officers.
- While a four-year succession from member, to Vice Chair, to two-year Chair, is ideal, a four-year term is likely to discourage candidates.
- Should the Board engage in any type of self-evaluation as part of the succession planning and nominating process.
- The role of Vice Chair is key for preparing a Board member to step into the Chair.

The Board will continue discussing succession models in a later meeting.

How is the UUA leadership crisis important to FUSN's future? Erin. Handouts: 1. "April 10, 2017, Letter from the UUA Board of Trustees," 2. "What is white supremacy?" 3. "Teaching tolerance: On racism and white privilege" 4. "Overt/Covert white supremacy," 5. "Why Talk about Whiteness."

Because the discussion of Board succession went overtime, Erin had time only to describe the documents that she handed out, and to emphasize the importance of the UUA leadership struggle to FUSN's mission. The Board will continue this discussion in a later meeting.

Appreciations/ Close: 9:57PM