

FUSN Board of Trustees
Tuesday August 2, 2016
Children's Chapel, 7:30 PM

<p>Staff Erin Splaine, Minister, absent Rowan Van Ness, Director, Lifelong Religious Education, absent</p> <p>Board Cathy Morocco, Chair Brian Burba, Vice Chair Gregg DiBiaso Sara Fazli, Youth, absent Josie Greene Eric Haas Julianna Lakomski, Youth, absent Lesley Sneddon Clerk Kit Ryan, absent</p>	<p>Operations Council Kate Mason, Laurel Farnsworth</p> <p>Governance Panel Presenters Barbara Bates, Karen Burns, Laurel Farnsworth, Gordon Moriarty</p>
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Meeting Highlights:

Discussion of ongoing work by the Welcoming Congregation Renewal Assessment team.

Who has the Power at FUSN? A Panel Discussion of the Structures, Relationships, and "Rules" (By-Laws, Policies) that Support FUSN/s Mission.

Meeting began at 7:30.

Chalice Lighting and Reading of the Board Covenant - Sarah Fasli/All

Check-In

Procedural

- A motion to approve the May 10 and June 15th minutes was passed unanimously.
- New member applicants sharon Atkinson, Adela Miller and Cal Miller were voted and approved by email.

Board Work Update

- Cathy distributed Bill Dussett's summary of community reactions to our Black Lives Matter (BLM) banner recorded on the dedicated BLM email address and Fran Clancy's line. While a few negative comments were made on the phone line, most comments were positive. No defacing of the banner occurred.
- The Board reviewed the preliminary list of Board goals the group generated in May. The draft goals include building our own Board leadership skills and clarifying the role of the Board liaison to outside groups working on Board-generated initiatives. Currently, Gregg is working with the Financial Oversight Committee, Josie with the Developing Leadership Team, and Eric with the Welcoming Congregation Renewal Team. These roles may change as the Board refines its mission and goals for the year.
- Brian presented the logistics of the upcoming Board Retreat, scheduled for September 9/10 on Clark's Island in Plymouth Harbor, where Brian and Dana have a house. The plan includes arriving on Friday afternoon, and getting to know the island through a tour and walks. One part of the program will be using the Thomas-Kilmann Response to Conflict Assessment to stimulate discussion of our own leadership approaches. Dwight Golann has rights to the instrument and will consult with us on its use. Doug Zelinski, Erin and Cathy will facilitate the discussion sessions.

Board Report

Welcoming Congregation (WC) Renewal Steps and Issues. Eric

Eric is serving as the Board liaison to a new team that has volunteered to begin work on the implementation phase of the Welcoming Congregation Renewal. The current members include Chris Krebs (Chair), Walter Graham, Mark Lester, Suzanne DiCarlo and Linda Ross. The team has met four times during the summer and plan a fifth meeting for mid-August. They are reading and discussing a range of materials, including the report of the Welcoming Congregation Renewal Assessment team, which was presented to the congregation the previous spring, materials from FUSN's Conflict Transformation work in 2011-2012, including the Conflict Transformation Report of the Harvard Negotiation and Mediation Clinical Program (2011), and materials from the UUA and other related sources. Eric presented a number of questions the team is pondering:

What is our focus? The larger issues of FUSN as a welcoming congregation are broad and reach into the work of the Multicultural Ministry Initiative (MMI).

On the other hand, the UUA WC Renewal guidelines stress LGBTQ-related educational work. *How much should this initial working group take on?*

Will we be too constrained by the UUA WC guidelines? The former UUA WC coordinator expressed some concerns about FUSN's adaptation of the UUA WC assessment instrument beyond LGBTQ to relationship status and structure, an area that triggered our decision to engage in the UUA Welcoming Congregation Renewal. The coordinator's replacement has not been announced.

Are we the right planning group? Current group members are similar in being White, straight and mostly over 60. *At what point and how would we change our team to be more inclusive and to become a formal committee?* (Note: FUSN's WC Assessment Report recommends that a "short-term committee pass the current UUA Welcoming Congregation Renewal Process" and that the Board "create a 'Standing Committee on Welcoming' to take on the long-term journey targeting Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and taking a leading role in expanding the UUA's definition of 'Welcoming' to include Relationship Structure and other unforeseen groups in the future." FUSN WC Final Report).

What will be the current team's relationship with the Board? Can we count on Board guidance? How will we engender congregational interest? How important is this work?

What is our first step?

Although the Board did not have time for an extensive conversation about the questions, these were the major suggestions:

1. Move ahead with a clear focus on the UUA Renewal guidelines and process. It is worth doing. Brian suggested, "Don't let it become unwieldy. Lean into the UUA process. Later you can make connections with other welcoming efforts at FUSN."
2. The Board will support the work in any way we can. Talk with us further about these questions and your ideas. Let's look at what is most practical after gathering ideas from the Board, the WC Team and other members of the congregation and from other congregations.
3. Start with the committed team you have. More people can be added for various activities or to the team over time.

Generative/Strategic

Who has the Power at FUSN?

Panel Discussion of the Structures, Relationships, and "Rules" (By-Laws, Policies) that Support FUSN/s Mission

The Board's role in FUSN has transformed over the past ten years from one of full responsibility for operations and finance to one of visioning and policy making. To help the Board become more aware of our history and the rationale behind the change, Cathy invited a panel of four "veteran architects" of our current governance structure. The questions given to our panelists include:

- Karen Burns - *Why and how did FUSN transform its governance model? How are relationships important in the model?*
- Gordon Moriarty - *What By-laws support this model? Why is congregational engagement and relationships with the minister and staff critical?*
- Barbara Bates - *What is a policy? How are policies critical to our governance? How do we develop and implement one?*
- Laurel Farnsworth - *A Case: Planning an accessible ramp for FUSN. How does our governance structure/process help? Hinder?*

Through humor, story and examples, the group helped the Board feel fortunate that we share leadership responsibility with the Operations Council, a Steering Committee, many committees, and with our minister and staff, and that the election of governance leaders is the role of the Congregation. Karen's talk emphasized the late hours, resentment and overwork of the old structure. Gordon showed us the specific amendments made to our By-laws to bring our "constitution" up to date. Barbara showed how policies can help define the "tangibles" of how we get things done. Laurel's story of the ramp planning stressed the necessity of close, back and forth communication across all the governing groups and with our minister and staff. Laurel commented that our governance structure is not always well understood and that we need to make it more visible

So who has the power at FUSN? "Power" and governance are shared, which makes close communication about our vision as a faith community, and our needs and decisions critical. And while our approach is not perfect, and we'll keep tinkering, today's approach to sharing leadership represents a "tectonic shift" from ten years ago.

The Board is grateful to our speakers for stepping into this heady discussion in the height of summer and making it lively. Thank you!

Close/ Appreciations

Meeting adjourned: 9:42PM