

OPERATIONS COUNCIL MINUTES Final

Tuesday, November 17 , 2020
Via Zoom online

Attending via Zoom: Susan Bartlett, Laurel Farnsworth, Jud Leonard, Karen Bottar, Sharon Sisskind, Eric Haas, Ted Hess-Mahan (BOT), Amanda Graff, Erin Splaine, Linda Ross (asst clerk);

Called to order 7:00 p.m.

Invocation/Chalice Lighting/Reading - Eric

Covenant

As we, the members of this Council and staff, gather to serve this congregation in leadership, we commit to ourselves and to each other: to be present and prepared for the work of this meeting; to listen well and contribute respectfully; to balance both our short and long-term visions with fiscal responsibility; to support the decisions of the Council; to uphold the democratic process; and to lead with goodwill and faith in the work we can accomplish together.

Approvals:

- By email – there were 3 activities previously approved via email; Healthy Baby, Healthy Child; Guest at Your Table; outdoor activities
- October minutes - Eric moved to approve the minutes; Karen seconded the motion, unanimous approval, motion passed.

Staff Update

Amanda

- First (typical Sunday programming) and Third Sunday (racial justice) well attended by families
- They are in the final stages of rolling out the pageant for this year
- Regina has just hit 3 months of employment, and is doing a good job
- Their latest racial justice day for 4th – 8th graders focused on the Day of Mourning – a protest of Indigenous People in Plymouth on Thanksgiving Day. Families would like ways to actually do racial justice instead of just discussing. Amanda raised the question of whether FUUSN families could be involved in the Day of Mourning (Amanda may attend).
 - The topic was discussed. The protest starts at noon with a march and then speeches.
 - The consensus was to make the event known to families, but not have Amanda do the organizing. RJM should be notified of the event; they can notify the rest of the congregation.
- CRE committee has not been able to help with outreach calls due to time constraints

Erin

- She has received the new curriculum of racial justice ministry (online). This probably will roll out after the new year.
- Holiday plans are underway, including a movie starring children of FUUSN.
- Christmas Eve – there will be a 7 p.m. service on Zoom similar to the usual one. She would like to have something on the front steps at 11:30 p.m. The consensus was that

this was OK. She would also like an outdoor commemoration of solstice on December 20; this was previously approved.

Report on October BOT Meeting -Eric

- Most of the meeting was taken up with discussing the retreat.

Financial

- Review October expenditures – Karen
 - Pledges still continue to come in as do prior year pledges
 - Some income categories have been reduced due to COVID (e.g. building use, Holiday Fair, trees)
 - All of this takes about \$17,000 out of expected income; about \$27,000 for special activities
 - Expenses in order
 - Small negative in net income for October (\$20,000)
 - Projected \$149,000 loss for the year
 - Some funds are being held by the Board of Investment. There is plenty of surplus so things are OK; no need to think about reducing expenses.
- Review on-line platform for plate collections – Sharon
 - So far, for 3 weeks, 28 people have texted donations.
 - About \$1,000 donated via text during those 3 weeks (about the same as during an in-person service).
 - There has been only one donation by regular mail
 - There was a large response to donations for Minister's Discretionary fund, so people do know how to navigate the system.
 - Will try to put text number and instructions in many places, including the order of service.
- Use of donor-advised charitable giving accounts for pledge payments – Susan
 - Refer to document emailed ahead of meeting. There has been a recommendation from Tom Bean to not consider pledges to be binding contracts.
 - Consensus was that pledges are not binding.
 - Discussion of topic and pledges for Legacy Circle.
 - Cannot do multi-year pledges with donor-advised funds
 - Suggestion that there be a written statement that pledges are not binding (as legal backup)
- Idea of buying medical debt – Laurel
 - Hospitals sell medical debt for pennies on the dollar; debt collectors then try to collect and make money.
 - Can be purchased ahead of the debt collectors and then forgive debt (good will gesture)
 - The UCC has an ongoing project doing just this.
 - Discussion of topic – Laurel will find someone from UCC to see if FUUSN could join their effort

Review decision to close building and gather via Zoom

- Nothing has changed substantially
- No one was in favor of reopening

Update: Committee activities

- Holiday Fair
 - Laurel has received few responses to her email about the fair
 - Has 5 people signed up to work on the day of the fair
 - She will be sending individual emails to ask for help
 - No response for baked goods to date
- Christmas tree sales – Eric
 - Trees are arriving on Sunday November 22 about 10 a.m. – needs help unloading
 - Working on protocols to make sure people are safe
 - Masks are mandatory
 - Other measures are being worked on
 - There will be a separate table for money
 - Only selling on Saturdays and Sundays; probably will start Thanksgiving weekend.
 - Discussion of logistics re safety and access to building
- RJM and Allen window
 - Erin has the email from RJM, will send out to congregation this week
- Healthy Baby/Healthy Child –Susan
 - Will be happening
 - Will be done primarily through Amazon wish list
- Other possible fundraisers
 - Suggestion to consider some type of silent auction in conjunction with Services Auction
 - Perhaps some version of Trader Jackie's?
 - Amanda – some youth are interested in doing a version of youth coffee house
- Outreach to congregation-membership & lay ministers leading – Susan
 - Everyone agreed that those contacted were happy to get the call
 - Some of those contacted who had moved away were interested in re-connecting via Zoom

Thank yous – Greg Sullivan, for all his work over the years.

Meeting adjourned 8:35 p.m.