

FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY IN NEWTON

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

March 10, 2015

Present: Gregg DiBiaso, Jonathan Reuman, Jacki Rohan, Lesley Sneddon, Bobbie Sproat, Cathy Morocco, Becca Lozinsky

Absent: Alison Costello

Staff: Erin Splaine, Rowan Van Ness

Member of Operations Council present: Andrea Kelly

Members of DLRE Search Committee: Jacqui James, Kim Shanks

Annual Budget Drive Committee: David Morocco

FUSN Members: James Frances, Margaret Zaleski

Clerk: Ruth Comstock

Invocation/ Chalice Lighting

Bobbie Sproat led the covenant reading and Cathy Morocco provided the inspirational reading.

Executive Session to discuss hiring recommendation for Director of Lifespan Religious Education (session called by Bobbie Sproat) at 7:35 PM.

Executive Session ended at 7:50 PM.

Motion made by Jacki Rohan and seconded by Gregg DiBiaso to offer the position of Director of Lifespan Religious Education to Rowan Van Ness - contingent upon successful negotiations with the Personnel Policy Committee. Vote to accept motion was unanimous.

Annual Budget Drive

David Morocco handed out and collected pledge forms from Board members.

Procedural

- New FUSN member applicant Joan Caplan was presented by Bobbie Sproat and unanimously approved by the Board.

- January 13th and January 27th, 2015, meeting minutes of the Board were unanimously approved by the Board.

February 10, 2015, minutes will be reviewed and approved by the Board through e-mail.

- Bobbie Sproat read into the record the following e-mail Board vote of February 18, 2015:

“The Board hereby authorizes Laurel Farnsworth, Chair of the Buildings and Grounds, to spend up to \$12,000 to have the flat portion of the Parish House roof cleared of snow, in order to protect the building from possible roof collapse due to the increasing weight of snow accumulated on the roof.” “Approved by e-mail vote received from five of the seven members of the BOT, February 18, 2015. Bobbie Sproat Chair, Board of Trustees.”

- Lesley Sneddon made and Cathy Morocco seconded the motion to appoint these 6 nominees to serve as FUSN delegates to the UU General Assembly 2015: Mindy Scharlin, Jacki Rohan, Pat Rohan, Karen Burns, Jud Leonard and Bobbie Sproat. Three additional delegate positions are still open and will be advertised again. There are also two additional members who have expressed interest in attending, but who were not ready to commit to serving. A special effort will be directed toward inviting youth and young adults to serve as delegates.

Acting Director of Lifespan Religious Education’s Update

Rowan discussed the programs and activities underway:

- The Children’s RE program registration for next year has begun.
- COA went to the Ecclesia Program.
- The Youth Group hosted the Coffee House on March 7, 2015.
- The Youth directed Service will be on March 15th.
- The Curriculum Circle is considering making the OWL program available throughout the RE curriculum.
- The Justice Circle has begun to discuss options to coordinate activities between the Social Justice Committee and DRLE.

Minister’s Update

The minister discussed the following:

- The Family Fun night had 40-50 participants.
- Erin went to 4 pledge parties this week.
- She is working with Santander Bank regarding parking.
- She met with the DLRE search committee this week.

Financial Oversight Committee Update

No report

Leadership Development Committee

Cathy Morocco, Lesley Sneddon and Jon Reuman reported an update on the Developing Leadership Team (DLT).

Several issues were discussed including:

The Committee submitted a draft handout for the congregation titled, "Recruiting the Developing Leadership Team (DLT)." The handout provides an overview of the leadership groundwork established by Jon, Lesley and Cathy and includes: A Leadership Vision and Challenges, Roles of the DLT, a Job Description for the DLT, and a Timeline for Recruitment.

Goals of the DLT for the coming year are:

- To broaden the reach and visibility of the Nominating Committee process.
- To increase member's awareness of leadership opportunities and their tools for finding their own meaningful leadership pathway.

The Board approved this handout to be shared with the Operations Council and Committee Chairs and congregation to seek their nominations for the DLT.

The Board will make nominations for the DLT through e-mail to Cathy Morocco.

Finance Committee – No update.

Board Projects

- **The Next Steps Report**- No update

- **Communications Revamp**- No update

- **FUSN Motto**- No update

- **Small Group Discussions**

- Bobbie reported on the **Small Group Discussion Summary** from Bill Horne. 46 people participated. The following themes were observed:

- Opinions on polyamory

- Reactions to Meghan's departure

- Meghan's use of the pulpit to announce her polyamory

- Meghan's announcement was premature; congregation needed more time to process

- Choice vs innate characteristic was significant distinction for some

- There was disagreement regarding Erin's role in the decision to make the announcement and her handling of the situation after; some faulted her judgment, her apology was essential and should be disseminated more broadly; her apology has led to forgiveness.

- The interest by some to amend the by-laws (though others want any such process to have sufficient time and to minimize further divisiveness at FUSN); some feel it is unnecessary, most were against the proposed bylaw; polyamory should not be a protected status.
- The issue of too little information regarding the events and how they were handled; lack of shared set of facts.
- Many wanted to know about whether there was a separation agreement
- Anxiety and loss were voiced.
- The economic impact on the FUSN community
- Board should consult professional help
- How to make the decisions of what to do next and who and how it is being planned

The Board wants to make decisions for the next steps to be taken in this matter.

Suggestions for possible next steps are:

1. Adult OWL course which would begin in next church year
2. A course or training on the subject of how we live in community with diverse views while still in support of each other
3. A course or training on conflict management and/or diversity
4. A course or training on polyamory/diverse family structures
5. Diversity and communication course or training
6. A course or training on pluralism
7. A course or training encompassing the Welcoming Congregation theme
8. Pilot summer offerings

Bobbie will make a summary of these course suggestions and give to the ADLRE to take to the Adult RE committee to discuss courses or training that could be added to the adult catalogue in the future.

- Hire Membership Coordinator

The Board approved formation of a search committee for a new Membership Coordinator. Lesley will take the lead in forming the search committee, with Board support. Bobbie will announce this to the congregation.

- Bylaw proposal made by FUSN member James Frances

The Board unanimously approved a motion to charge the Bylaws Committee to study the wording and timing of the proposed change in the membership bylaw, and to advise the Board;

including whether the principle of broad inclusivity is better served by broader or more specific wording of the bylaw regarding inclusion, and as to whether and how a bylaw amendment process at this time would affect the healing of congregational divisions.

The Personnel Policy Manual has been under review and revision for 5 years. These revisions and others will be considered as its provisions are reviewed by the PPC and then presented to the Board.

Closing

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Gregg DiBiaso and seconded by Becca Lozinsky and was unanimously approved at 9:59 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruth Comstock, Clerk

