

**First Unitarian Society of Newton
Board of Trustees
February 9, 2010**

Present: Dede Vittori, Pat Rohan, Adrian Bishop, Alan Cody, Jonathan Lillienfeld, Barney Freiberg-Dale, Pamela McA'nulty, Susan Bartlett, Jeannie Chaisson, Lesley Sneddon, (Clerk); also present: John Nichols, Barb Greve, Laurel Farnsworth

Meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM

Invocation/Chalice Lighting (Adrian)

Covenant

As we, the members of this Board 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 Board; to uphold the democratic process; and to lead with goodwill and faith in the work we can accomplish together.

Administrative (Adrian)

- COA weekend presentation (Linda Marks) chair of PR committee of COA: Since candidate minister and COA ceremonies are happening the same weekend, suggests presenting the weekend as a celebration with participation of both parties. Requests that BOT endorse "Celebration Weekend - rejoicing in the voices of our community". Ministerial search committee also supports this. Spread the word to the congregation – will need to be prepared to spend a lot of time that weekend. Motion to endorse the idea of the celebration weekend. Motion carried unanimously.
- Policy publication process (Pat, Adrian): Carla Erb on OC worked on process to get policies that OC and BOT have adopted where they can be easily located on fusrn.org. Posting is easy – keeping current can be more difficult. Agree to post both OC and BOT policies on fusrn.org.
- Board email (Adrian) – past action item indicated BOT would establish a gmail account so BOT can be contacted by email. Currently BOT personal email addresses on leadership list. Discussion: previous gmail account was not monitored; problem was that proposed action items were not followed up on. Distinction between BOT and OC further complicates this. We don't want to imply that a received email will necessarily be acted upon. No archiving except on personal email accounts or if on fusrn.org, then administrators – including our consultant – can read emails. Is

privacy an issue? Archiving? Those concerned about privacy should use a different means of communication. Adrian will discuss further with Greg Sullivan.

Board of Investments (Eric)

- State of the endowment; Judy Curby unable to attend. Financials are in much better position now than a year ago. Endowment is approaching the peak \$1.8 million. There are many different investments in the endowment. Going forward need to reduce expectations due to slow consumer growth. Will move out of high-yield bond fund. Interest rates will likely increase. Next year the endowment yield will likely be in the \$41K to \$50K range. Question: proposal to withdraw cash from endowment for various items (organ, etc.) Comes out to approximately \$175K; how is that cash planned? OC will make a list of items that will need cash outlays. Do not wait until May when budget is finalized to deal with this. OC will try to give 3-4 months lead time to BOI. Need answers on when different funds can be spent (memorial niches; organ). Suggest more flexibility on cash availability – maximize earning potential by keeping relatively low amount in checking account, but have the ability to move cash quickly from investments when needed. Eric's work was acknowledged.

DLRE Overview (Barb)

- Need to know compensation, job description, hiring process, search committee prior to summer. Several people on interim search may want to be on settled DLRE search committee. Barb has drafted a timeline. Barb's current job description provides a good foundation for new job description. Is there a recommended UUA process? Not as well-defined as ministerial search. What impact will this have on next year's budget?

Financial Forecast Overview (Alan)

- Alan gave an overview of Bill Duset's presentation to the OC last Wednesday: Powerpoint slides distributed at meeting.
- Assumptions: 3% annual increase in pledging; service auction every year rather than every other year. No membership director.
- We don't have a skilled accountant, should consult with one to review process, journal entries, etc. (Barney will look into getting this pro bono).
- Expenses growing, income declining.
- Expenses: utilities, building maintenance most difficult to anticipate
- "other" including prior year; effect of surplus taken out indicates negative number within several years. Past year surpluses due to deferred maintenance, keeping cell tower income from endowment, etc. Pledges

are declining. Need to know “real numbers” – actuals and projections.
Revenue is not growing at the same rate as expenses.

- Social action initiative and membership initiative can address this to some degree.
- Other expenses: UUA dues; GBIO dues (FUSN not currently a member). RE council working on a study regarding eliminating RE fees compared to pledges.

Rental Policy (Pat)

- FUSN was approached to host a fund raiser for a Palestinian organization when Eliot church declined. There were only a few days’ notice so FUSN declined. What should our policy be? The distinction is between a fundraiser and a speech. Tighter criteria for fundraisers. Fran needs clear direction. Don’t approve renting space for fundraisers until cleared with OC, who will refer to BOT if very controversial.

Board Retreat Priorities Updates

- Membership Definition (Phil / Pamela): Job description circulated at meeting. Met with membership committee; description changed from previous description, which had a number of duties reporting to minister. Description too much for a part-time position; Noreen will edit. Suggest membership support team, headed by coordinator. The challenge is keeping track of what needs to be done. But it is important to spend more time on connecting with potential members, less on database. Data becomes stale quickly. Position reports to minister. Suggested 12-15 hours/week. To pay for the position, suggestions included targeting a number of members per year (10?) and / or writing a grant proposal.
- Pamela: membership committee – current focus is on social occasions rather than recruiting new members (although this point was disputed by two committee members). Suggest new model with clear demarcation between social occasions and recruiting new members. Currently it is difficult to gauge how many new potential members there are each week. Member services could bridge the gap. Suggest that membership be on BOT agenda every month. Suggests that greeting new members be the responsibility of specific people. **Action item: OC will draft a charter for membership committee and for proposed member services.** Board members who are greeters of the week will try to talk to new people who identify themselves at the service. Nominating committee and Leadership development committee roles need clarification. Bill Horne is currently recruiting people for the nominating committee.
- Governance – policies (Adrian / Sue / Jonathan) - deferred

adjourned at 10:14 pm.

respectfully submitted by Lesley Sneddon, Clerk

Action items

Carryover Action Items from Prior Year:

1. Begin discussions of fund raising for the organ (Judy)

New Action Items from August 12, 2008 meeting

1. Keep track of conflict of interest policies developed by UUA and evaluate them for adoption by FUSN

New Action Items from September 9, 2008 meeting

1. Remind the congregation of the ability to send comments and volunteer for things to the board via the e-mail system that is in place. Publicize answers to questions. **If we know the email address, we should post in the BOT section in the hallway and close this.**

New Action Items from August 11, 2009 meeting

1. Neither Alan nor the Assistant Treasurer is bonded. Suggest that this should be done.
2. Review end of year Balance Sheet and reconciliation and get any questions to Alan.

New Action Item from February 9, 2010 meeting

1. OC will draft a charter for membership committee and for proposed member services.