

First Unitarian Society of Newton
Board of Trustees
March 13, 2012
Alliance Room

Present: Board: Susan Bartlett, Conrad Buys, Alan Cody, Pamela McA’Nulty,
Gordon Moriarty, Strom Thacker,
Bruce Henderson and Margaret Costello arrived at 9pm
Staff: Erin Splaine, Barb Greve,

Absent: Barney Freiberg-Dale, Carl Metzger, Ann Woodbury

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM
Susan shared a reading from William Henry Channing

Chalice Lighting

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.

Administrivia –Susan

- Approval of Minutes
Motion: To approve December, January and February minutes
Vote: Approved unanimously by email votes and in person votes

- Vote on new Members
New member bios were reviewed for Adam and Ashley Epstein and Tobias and for Paul Antonucci
Motion: Alan moved to approve above new members. Strom seconded.
Vote: Approved unanimously

- Budget adjustment vote to re-allocate salary and housing for FUSN Minister. The total was the same, the allocation was readjusted to \$47,702 and \$39,934 respectively.
Motion: Pam moved to approve the re-allocation. Strom seconded
Vote: Approved unanimously

Staffing Update –Erin and Barb

Barb: Beth Walton, Assistant Director of RE has agreed to stay on another year while the new DLRE gets oriented. COA class has completed the OWL portion of

the program, and are now attending the Comparative Religion classes. On March 25th will be the Youth Service, which the COA class will attend. The younger grades are focusing on immigration. There will be a 10 Question Survey sent to the congregation to get their feedback on the adult RE program. This will be sent via email and be printed as well.

Erin: Expressed her amazement at all the functions going on at FUSN and at the work of the congregation. She is currently working with the Youth Group on their upcoming service which will focus on Identity, and is working with the COA group on their credos. There are 4 finalists for the DLREM position. Has an interview on Saturday and more will be coming regarding that! Erin noted that Ann Bancroft's ordination was splendid and everyone agreed it was a great healing moment. Alan wanted to know if there are other ways the BOT can support Erin and her staff? Erin was thankful. She did say she wants to attend as many canvass parties as possible that are coming up in the near future.

Update Leadership Development Committee- Susan

New members for the committee are Jonathan Lilienfeld, Linda Rinearson, and Adrian Bishop. They will be reporting to the BOT. Their first line of business will be to figure out the function and goals of the committee. It is helpful that they are all past Board Chairs and they will initially follow up with former members Barbara Bates and Jeff Baker. Their goal is to help define its functionality rather than to run the committee going forward.

Motion: Pam moved to accept the new members. Gordon seconded

Vote: Approved unanimously

Financial -Alan and Susan

- Quarterly financial report
Was reviewed with the group. Noted that less amount of money needed for snow clean up this year. No unidentified expenses. Hope to pull in the outstanding pledges owed. Also noted Pine Village renters are paying timely now. There were no questions on the quarterly financial review.
- Annual Budget planning process
The process was distributed and reviewed. It was noted that the process supports the Ops Council doing much of the operational work with the BOT setting priorities, which is good. The discussion then settled around getting priorities to the finance committee earlier. The current process had the BOT formulating priorities for the year and forwarding them to the Ops Council and Finance committee in January. Strom felt it was helpful to start earlier and develop a list of priorities ahead of time. Alan noted the finance committee would like to fold the budget priorities into the annual retreat and have an idea of what they are as early as September when they prepare the forecast for the year. Everyone agreed that they would like to update the process such that the BOT will provide a preliminary draft of priorities to the Finance committee by November or December.

Status of Donautal partnership working group- Pam

Pam has one person already interested in working on this and is working with Rebecca to identify a youth member. Alan Cody is interested and she is looking for one more person if anyone has an ideas. Hopes to hold a meeting at the end of March.

BOT size and tenure discussion- All

Susan had provided 2 articles to read.

“Determining Ideal Board Size” by Susan Beaumont and “The Size and Shape of Governance” by Rev. Stefan Jonasson UUA Director for Large Congregations.

Key components and questions of the discussion included:

- Need for enough members to provide good representation
- Enough to go to other committee meetings as needed
- Does the treasurer need to be on both Ops Council and BOT-seems it serves as a good connection
- Youth representation- currently youth delegate gets chosen by youth group with input from youth group advisor
- Alan wondered, if there is a need for a financial representative on the BOT, could it be someone from Board of Investments?
- Pam would like to decrease fiscal focus of the BOT and increase visioning
- Need to make sure the BOT is involved in the budget –could a BOT audit committee meet that need, especially if the Treasurer is not on the BOT? Alan referred to UUA checklists useful in forming such an audit committee.
- Would the LDC be able to help with selecting and developing BOT members?
- Is there a UUA recommendation on size of boards?

The discussion also was around the tenure of the Board Members.

- Is 3 years too long or too short? Just getting the hang of it at two years.
- Maybe have one term and one renewable ?
- Currently there are 3 slots that need to be filled each year
- 2 years may be too short and more than 3 could be hard to commit to

Alan asked Erin what she thought. She is not sure if size vs. tenure is more important. Looking at the board numbers right now the goal is that the boards be diverse. Also maybe need to look at the Role of the Nominating Committee as well as the Leadership Development Committee. Alan felt it is helpful to have former members of the Annual Budget Drive Committee (ABDC) be on different committees as they have a sense of the history involved and may have fundraising experience. It would be good to have former members stay involved to mentor others, such as on the OC, LDC and others.

Since not everyone was at the meeting Susan will put this on the agenda to discuss again with the entire board. The non-binding consensus of those members present was in favor of six adult members and a youth rep member.

BOT and Annual Budget Drive-All

Susan asked if the BOT wanted to take a stand or state a position regarding the BOT members' participation in the annual budget drive. For example: The Board of Trustee members agree to all increase their pledges this year. Most agreed that would be difficult not knowing everyone's circumstances. They did agree to state that the BOT aims for 100% participation at the beginning of the pledge drive. Bruce would like it if all the Board Members could attend some of the pledge parties to support the party hosts and to wear the green stickers on the name tags saying "I am proud of my pledge." Pledges can be made at the events, which is convenient. The BOT agreed they will support Bruce and Josie as requested.

Open Questions- Margaret

Susan wanted to know if they could add a question that tied back to Alan Hartman's idea of changing FUSN's name. Susan will get the exact information to Margaret.

Would like to help gauge if there is interest in changing the name. The Open Questions will be held at 12noon 3/18/12 after Coffee Hour. Barney, Carl, Susan and Gordon will be there to help. They will need easels and scribes, paper, tape and markers. Ann is sending out notices to publicize it and Barney is making an announcement at coffee hour. It is in the newsletter already and Margaret will send out the announcement to the list serve.

Executive Session was called.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Wendy Atamian, Board Clerk.