

**First Unitarian Society of Newton  
Board of Trustees  
September 14, 2010**

Present: Jonathan Lilienfeld, Barney Freiberg-Dale, Pamela McA’Nulty, Gordon Moriarty, Margaret Costello, Carl Metzger, Phil Davis, Susan Bartlett, Jeannie Chaisson, Conrad Buys; also present: Erin Splaine, Barb Greve, Barbara Bates

Meeting was called to order at 7:32 PM

**Invocation/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.

**Administrative (Jonathan Lilienfeld)**

- Pine Village lease signed: individual owners of Pine Village are assuming responsibility for lease shortfall. FUSN will get ½ of \$38K this year – so we’ll be short by that much in our budget.
- Potential Conflict Study: Harvard negotiation and mediation program; discovered by Barbara Bates. Process whereby a group of students are assigned to an organization. Client gains management recommendations. FUSN still needs to be interviewed; will learn whether we are selected later this year. Application in process. Assess what we need; interview people; we want a mechanism to deal with conflict. Look at our governance structure.
- Fran and Wendy’s service celebrations: Fran’s was last Sunday, went well. Sept 26 is Wendy’s 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.
- Updating the job description for the Assistant to the DLRE: Re-define Wendy’s role and title. Re-evaluate job description.
- Search is beginning for Membership Coordinator. Job description was drafted by Membership Committee; still to be refined. Position will report to Erin. Governance decision is that final decisions are to be made by the Minister. Erin will become involved following initial round of interviews.
- Board coverage at services – schedule distributed. Susan will put on Yahoo calendar site. Erin – may tweak the order of service, involving a Board member at the beginning.

### **Retreat Planning (Barbara Bates)**

- Proposed agenda distributed prior to meeting. Rationale: designed to get to know one another as Board members – group dynamics are different with new members. What are we here to do together? Most of agenda focuses on being a visionary Board. Develop Board priorities for the year; may include priorities for the congregation. Now that day-to-day tasks have been delegated, what is the vision? For example, what are the respective roles in relation to growth? When clarified, develop goals for the year based on this. Will include more engaged conversation with congregation. Last section: Pat Rohan from OC will join to determine relationship between BOT and OC. What are joint activities, and who is in charge? What is clear delegation? Refer to policies in decision making. This was a trial year for policies – we must determine what needs to be adjusted. Develop a plan for those issues not addressed at the retreat. Differences between old BoT structure and new visionary BoT. Jonathan will distribute all the governance documents. Governance primer powerpoint can be made available.

### **Master Building Plan (Laurel Farnsworth)**

- Discussion of next capital campaign. Last campaign quiet phase had a wish list with no documentation, etc. Not visionary. This time – walked through the building and looked at what could not be done last time, and potential for new projects. Could develop a good marketing tool for quiet phase of next campaign. Summer 2012 will need an independent capital needs assessment. Would get more value from the assessment if we could give them a list of needs to start. Result will be a list of needs and what they will cost to address. Marketing tool will be backed up with basic research. The capital needs firm will confirm costs, then FUSN can move to active phase. List developed with Tref LaFleche was distributed at the meeting. FUSN has an anonymous donation to pay Tref's firm to fund the first level of analysis. Tref's firm did drawings for last campaign, so they are very knowledgeable and would bring much more to the table than would another firm. How was this list developed? Some were projects that were identified but not addressed from last campaign. Some projects will have ripple effects (e.g. handicapped accessibility; elevator would displace storage). Quiet phase is a random survey with wish list of 30 people – to determine what can be raised. Anonymous donation of \$13K. Motion to accept the donation to fund the study by Tref's firm and proceed without competitive bid. Motion passed unanimously.

### **T-Mobile Fiber Upgrade for the cell tower (Laurel Farnsworth)**

- Operations Council issue – for BOT information. Proposal to provide access through parking lot to tower. Can be done in one day. This upgrade reflects the investment in our tower by the company.

### **Social Action Update (Barney Freiberg-Dale)**

- Social Action Development Committee Timetable: three committee meetings have already been held. Now prepared for congregational meetings Oct 24 and 27. Encourage congregational participation. Conforms with BOT's directive to submit plan by March meeting. Will begin implementation at June annual meeting.

### **Update on the DLRE search and discussion of potential timeline changes (Erin)**

- This week's service was developed by FUSN staff, shows the importance of staff team. Given the importance of the DLRE position, should we delay the search for another year? Can FUSN go forward and have a successful search? Yes. However, FUSN has been in transition for two years. Now Erin has begun; we are starting a visioning Board. Gives us an opportunity to concentrate on having a conversation about what we want for that position. Director? Minister? What credentials? Conversations with families, youth programs, what we can afford, and how congregation would be best served. Bring to GA in June – puts us in a strong position for candidates. Can be prepared this year, but will be better prepared next year. Search committee is on board with this. Need intentional work around RE program. Structural piece would precede recruiting piece. Barb delivered brief remarks: (how well is structure functioning? Much focus over past two years has been on ministerial search. There are RE directors watching to see what FUSN wants. We are a flagship program; but we are behind the curve right now), then exited the room to allow forthright discussion. With new scenario, new DLRE would start June 2012. What is position of DLRE search committee on this recommendation? Erin and Concetta met on Sunday; the committee does not appear to object to a delay. The question of delay is Erin's, did not arise from the committee. There has been some discussion by phone among members. But since they are empowered with the search, they should be allowed to deliberate and make a recommendation to the BOT about whether to postpone. Conversation with RE council and with Wendy has not happened yet. Other issues: is it allowable for Barb stay another year? Yes. DLRE search packet must be assembled for the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA) conference at end of October. Would need to re-charter the search committee to engage the congregation, etc. Current committee was charged as a search committee, not to research the entire RE program, may need to reorganize. Time is short – what is the process? Committee is meeting on Sept. 23. Erin will be speaking with RE council this week. Erin would like to be able to raise the question at the service on Sept 26. 1) can Barb stay? 2) would he stay? Need to be answered before Board votes. Also need feedback from RE council. Need more information, but consensus of Board is that the delay in search should be pursued. Erin will find out about the third year possibility for Barb's position. Susan, who is on RE council, will write up a proposal for the council meeting on Thursday. Then BOT can vote.

Needs to be by email so the decision is made prior to Sept 26. BOT needs talking points for congregation reaction.

Meeting adjourned at 9.55 pm

Respectfully submitted by Lesley Sneddon, Clerk

The following vote was held by email:

Given the need to have this matter settled before our next BOT we discussed an email vote. The question before us is "Should FUSN postpone the DLRE search for one year to allow time to assess our RE program, goals and needs?" A "Yes" vote is to defer the DLRE search and a "No" vote is to continue the search this year.

The vote was unanimous in favor of delaying the DLRE search until next year.