

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF HARTFORD
Board of Directors' Meeting
Tuesday, September 08, 2015
Meeting House

Members Present: Virginia de Lima, Louise Schmoll, Martha Bradley, John Clapp, John Brancato, Tina Davies, Margaret Leicach, Vanessa Gonzalez Rivera, Gloria Francesca Mengual, Rev. Heather Rion Starr

Members Absent: Rev. Cathy Rion Starr

Guests: Janice Newton, David Newton

Call to Order: President Virginia de Lima called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

SUBJECT	DISCUSSION	ACTION/DECISION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S), BY WHEN
<p>Opening Remarks:</p> <p>Opening Words by Rev. Heather Rion Starr</p>	<p>Rev. Heather read #89 in "Lifting our Voices", a supplement to the readings section of our hymnal. It is by Albert Camus, translated by Justin O'Brien. We discussed the possibility of editing and/or streamlining the Board covenant which we inherited from the previous Board. Vanessa shared that son Josh is now happily ensconced in school.</p>	<p>Martha will take the comments/suggestions made by Board members on the covenant, edit, and share the result via email with the Board for further discussion at the next meeting.</p>	<p>Martha Bradley prior to the October Board meeting.</p>
<p>Comments from Guests</p>	<p>None</p>		
<p>Approval of Minutes</p>	<p>John Clapp questioned whether there had been a decision made at the last meeting to have him work with Green Sanctuary to come up with a proposal regarding potential electricity savings that respect our Green Sanctuary commitments. Virginia shared that Jeff Howard from Green Sanctuary had sent her an email - which she forwarded to John Clapp - regarding some ideas that he has.</p>	<p>The minutes of the August meeting were approved.</p>	<p>John C. will discuss with Jeff, possibly others, and report back by the October meeting.</p>

Reports Votes & Discussion	DISCUSSION	ACTION/DECISION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S), BY WHEN
Change in Ministers' Housing Allowance	<p>The proposed change makes no change in the total compensation to the ministers, but merely shifts some of the compensation from 'salary' to 'housing' to reflect their increased housing costs as a result of their purchase of a home. The housing line item will increase from \$14,400 to \$15,600 per year, effectively an increase of \$400 per month and a decrease of the salary line item of \$400 per month for the remainder of 2015.</p>	<p>Louise moved approval of the amended motion, John C. seconded, approved unanimously.</p>	
Ministers' Report	<p>Our co-ministers are enjoying heading into their 2nd year with us, doing things for the 2nd time. They have recently spent much time working with Brian M. & Linda in the office to adapt to Brian M's sick leave and the reduction in his hours. Rev. Heather has been elected to the position of Secretary of Clara Barton District's Minister's Association. Rev. Cathy is busy getting Surg CT launched; all are encouraged to attend this Thursday evening's event. Participation in the National Surg organization has tripled since they first started, which is exciting news. Both ministers met with Rev. Len DeRoche, the Interim Minister from the Fern Street church, showed him around the Meeting House. He will be at Fern Street for the next 2 years. We have been getting a lot of visitors from Fern Street in recent months and have the challenge of sorting out their the reactions they share about the current situation at Fern Street. How can we collaborate with Fern Street to minimize the flow of members back and forth between the two congregations in response to challenges within the respective congregations?</p>		

Discussions:	DISCUSSION	ACTION/DECISION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S), BY WHEN
Report from Council Chairs regarding Council Reports, Fairs, etc.	Auction scheduled for October so Fair moved to February 13 or 14 (snow date). Virginia reports that Peter Meny requested no big fundraising event be held during the Stewardship drive and that this is his last year as Chair of Stewardship. Council Chairs haven't met as a group as yet regarding a schedule/plan for reports to the Board. Spiritual Life will have a Fair at coffee hour in October, Social Justice in November. Administration might not have one and Tina will talk with Community Within SubCouncil chairs about it.	Council Chairs will meet and work out reporting schedule in the next couple of weeks and report out at the next meeting.	Martha, Vanessa, Gloria, Tina, John C. by the October meeting.
Board Goals	The Goal of this discussion was to choose & articulate one big and perhaps a couple of smaller, more concrete goals that we commit to accomplishing this fiscal year. We worked from the brainstorming ideas from the August meeting. After some back-and-forth discussion, some ideas were combined and we used dots to prioritize what we felt were most important and/or do-able.	The goals selected were: (1) Develop a long range financial strategy, (2) increase collaboration with our two sister congregations, and (3) develop and try out the use of a 'dashboard' of key indicators of congregational well-being.	John C., Louise, Rev. Heather and Gloria will work on (1). Virginia, our ministers, and our Social Justice Chairs will reach out to their counterparts in the other congregations regarding (2). John B. and Margaret will begin working on some ideas for (3)
What Would Energize	We discussed what concrete steps we might take in response to the brainstorming we did on this topic. We acknowledged the following cautions: adding too much to Board members' time commitment; remembering that some of us thrive on more time together, others with more time alone. The possibility of doing more board business on line so we could use more meeting time for sharing seemed to have both advantages and disadvantages. Gloria offered to craft topics, readings & questions for a 3-session SGM.	We will all ponder the possibility of a brief SGM, probably starting in 2016, and make a decision at the October Meeting.	

Closing Remarks:	DISCUSSION	ACTION/DECISION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S), BY WHEN
From Board Members	None		
Review Decisions and Follow-Up Actions	See columns 3 and 4.		
Closing Words by Rev. Heather Rion Starr	We read sequentially #183 from "Lifting Our Voices". The selection is adapted from a writing by John B. Wolf on the theme of why we join a Unitarian Universalist Church.		

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Leicach, Secretary