

USH Board of directors meeting on April 4, 2017

Board members present:

Rev. Heather Rion Starr
John Brancato
Katharine Ann Anderson
Gloria Mengual
Phil Gardner
Christopher Wilt
Martha Bradley

Guests Present:

Virginia DeLima
Janice Newton
David Newton

At 7:02 John called the meeting to order, followed by a reading by Rev. Rion Starr.

March minutes will be sent out when Margaret Leicach returns from New Mexico, and will be reviewed and approved electronically.

Donation Policy (7:10)

In light of the past deadlock on the proposed donation policies, the finance committee rewrote the policies and came to the board with a modified proposal that kept elements of both policies. The new policy included language to put all unrestricted donations smaller than \$10,000 directly into the general fund, and to put all gifts of \$10,000 or more directly into the endowment, and solicit a recommendation of the congregation as to precisely what should be done with the donation. The proposal also included language that would allow the \$10,000 and \$100 amounts specified in the policy to be updated "from time to time" which was deemed too vague, so the original motion was amended to use the words, "as deemed appropriate".

The original proposal, along with the edit, are in Appendix A.

Katharine Ann Anderson motioned to approve the modified policy, seconded by Martha Bradley.

Vote results:

In favor: 5

Opposed: 0

Abstain: 1

Safer Congregation Proposal (7:19)

It was noted that USH needed to have a policy as to what to do, so the safer congregation committee drafted a proposal based upon models obtained from the a UU congregation in Westport and a UU congregation in Ridgewood. These policies were presented as good models by the UUA. The committee took elements from both policies, and as well as making additional modifications to make the policy appropriate for USH. In particular, as a congregation with a significant number of older members, the issue of elder abuse came up in the committees discussions. It was also noted that some congregations have significant policies surrounding safety, including not only issues of abuse but more mundane things like fire drills.

While not absolutely necessary, it was posted as a goal that this plan be approved and be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting. In addition to that, it was deemed desirable to let the congregation know that the board is aware of the issue, and is taking appropriate steps to address the subject.

Rev. Rion Starr expressed concern that she had not yet had the opportunity to review the policy, and requested that no action be taken until she had a chance to review the precise details of the policy. Rev. Rion Starr requested the opportunity to review the policy in detail because the policy makes demands upon the minister, and she felt that without sufficient time to review the document, she would not be able to offer comment on the proposed document.

The original intent was to note that the policy was introduced to the board at the last meeting and to hold a vote on the subject at this meeting, but in light of Rev. Rion Starr's point about the policy being new to the minister, it was decided that deferring an actual vote to adopt the policy was a reasonable course of action.

Nominating Committee (7:32)

The nomination committee presented a slate of candidates for the open board positions. The following are open positions along with the individual nominated to fill the role.

President-Elect: Sherri Manetta

Chair of the sub council on spiritual life: Stephanie Briggs

Secretary: Sarah Harmon McKenzie

Chair of the sub council on social justice: Valerie Klokow

The slate of nominees will be put in the e-news, and posted in a manner consistent with what is in the constitution and bylaws.

In addition to making recommendations for who to nominate to the board, the nominating committee is also responsible for making recommendations for people to nominate to the endowment committee, where two slots must be filled. The two seats are currently occupied by Jim Venneman and David Newton.

On behalf of the nominating committee Virginia DeLima requested that the board provide advice regarding a general philosophy surrounding who to nominate. Both

David Newton and Jim Venemann have agreed, if nominated, to continue to serve on that committee, however it was noted that the committee could also be served well by having an influx of new people and some turnover. Virginia requested that the board, at its next meeting, provide the nominating committee with a general direction to go in so they can make recommendations that are appropriate to the board's overall desired direction.

The board elected to discuss this informally over the next month, and take an action at the next meeting.

Stewardship Consultant (7:54)

John reached out to Mark Ewert, a consultant who meets with churches to help define and meet financial goals, to arrange a possible meeting with USH. The focus of the weekend is to review church finances, income, potential income, new income, capital campaigns, the endowment, and other fiscal issues.

Mark offers a "next steps weekend" where he visits a church and meets with leaders and members on Friday and Saturday, and makes a presentation to the board on Sunday. Within two weeks, Mark presents a full report of his findings to the board.

Mark presented John Brancato with a simple contract that includes expenses, disclosures, confidentiality among other issues. The cost is to come from the endowment, comprises \$2,000 for the workshop and approximately \$1,000 (likely less, depending on precisely what he requires, exact airfare, car rental, etc) for travel and incidental expenses.

The target weekend is Friday May 5, through Sunday, May 7.

Martha moved to motion to formalize the contract and finalize the logistics.

In favor: 5
Opposed: 1
Abstain: 0

In light of this motion, it was agreed that John would sign the contract and return it to Mark. In consultation with Mark and John, Martha Bradley will schedule and gather people to fill the available time slots with Mark.

The high level schedule begins on Friday in the evening with a dinner with the board. On Saturday, Mark will meet with various members and groups within the congregation and take a tour of the facility. These meetings will be scheduled by Martha in conjunction with John. On Sunday, Mark will be available during coffee hour to discuss his finding with the congregation, and later that day he will present his preliminary findings to the board.

Heather noted that there are other activities going on that Sunday, and it is important to

find out precisely what kind of time and attention Mark will require on Sunday, and to make sure that everything can be scheduled.

Budget Review (8:14)

A summary of the budget review is included in Appendix B.

Most of the “fundraising” funds came from the Autumn request. The general maintenance line is higher due to one broken window and tree trimming.

The mailing of giving statements was delayed, per Heather’s request, so as not to collide with the pledge drive. Heather and John will work together to draft something to include in the quarterly statement that will be uplifting and provide a reminder of all the important work going on at USH.

Building and Grounds (8:26)

A letter to the board from Building and Grounds was distributed (Appendix C). This letter detailed the problems with the roof, and the need to address those problems. Also included was a proposed motion (Appendix D). The proposed motion was edited to read as follows:

The board approves the expenditure of approximately \$1,800 for hazardous material identification. The board recognized that the replacement of the roof will be a significant expense to the congregation (motivating a possible capital campaign, targets fundraising, or a possible draw on the endowment) and approves the initial steps in the process, and looks forward to period reports including projected expenses as the project moves forward.

A motion to adopt the edited policy was made by Katharine Ann Anderson, seconded by Phil Gardner.

In favor: 6
Opposed: 0
Abstain: 0

Rev. Rion Starr also brought up that it is important to not only react to immediate problems like holes in the roof but to keep in mind a broader strategic mission, and to be mindful of possible alternatives.

It was noted that the building is insured for \$9 million replacement value, and while precise estimates as to the end cost of fixing the roof are only estimates at this point, they are likely to pale in comparison to the \$9 million the building is worth.

On behalf of the building and grounds committee, David Newton presented their current draft of their capital plan, included in Appendix E.

Annual Meeting (8:58)

The annual meeting is to be held on May 21, 2017. Items on the agenda include:

Vote on the new members for the board
Budget Drive
Highlights from the last year
Congregational Photo
Safer Congregations

It was noted that this coincides with the flower communion, and as it involves staying significantly past lunch, should involve food in some capacity.

Regional and General Assmebly (9:01)

Cathy and Braden are planning on going to General Assembly.

General Assembly is on June 21-25. USH is allotted 5 lay delegates, and it is important that all 5 delegates be used. This can be by people who want to travel to New Orleans, or by people who want to participate electronically. Only members may serve as delegates.

At this year's general assembly a new president is going to be elected. It is possible that the congregation may elect to endorse one candidate, in which case the delegates would be provided with instructions that the congregation they represent supports a particular candidate. In the ending comments David Newton pointed out that in the past, the congregation was involved in preparing the delegates by discussing the items on the GA agenda prior to sending the delegates to GA. It was suggested that the board under the stairs meetings might be a good venue for soliciting congregational input for the delegates.

Board Under the Stairs

Martha Bradley and Gloria Menguel volunteered to be available on April 30 under the stairs.

Ending comments

Janice requested that items to be posted in connection with the Annual Meeting be posted using blue tape because it comes off without leaving a mess.

Gloria solicited responses and comments to her email.

No closing words.

John Brancato adjourned the meeting at 9:21.

A

Proposed Donation Policy Recommendation from Finance Sub-Council

Donation Policy

The following policy adopted by the USH Board of Directors applies to all gifts and donations to USH which are not otherwise restricted as to their purpose. The disposition of all donations and gifts to USH as well as the expenditure of funds from the General Fund or the Endowment is a responsibility given to the Board of Directors under the USH Constitution and By-laws. In receiving donations and gifts the following procedures shall be used.*

Unrestricted Gifts and Donations under \$10,000

The gift or donation shall be deposited into the General Fund. If the gift or donation is in excess of \$100 USH staff shall inform the Ministers, the Board Chair and the Chair of the Finance Sub-Council. An acknowledgement of the gift will be sent to the donor or the family of the deceased in whose memory the gift or donation is made. These gifts may remain in the General Fund and used as the Board of Directors determines.

Unrestricted Gifts and Donations of \$10,000 or more

The gift or donation shall be deposited into the General Fund. The Ministers, the Board Chair and the Chair of the Finance Sub-Council shall be advised of the gift. An acknowledgement of the gift will be sent to the donor or the family of the deceased in whose memory the gift or donation is made. The donation shall be transferred to the Endowment. The Finance Committee shall recommend to the Board whether the gift or donation, or any portion thereof, shall remain in the Endowment or be used for a special project or for existing, pending or planned capital improvements. If the gift or donation is in excess of \$10,000 the Board shall solicit comments from the USH membership on the proposed disposition of the gift or donation.

as deemed appropriate

- The numbers set out in the Donation Policy shall be adjusted ~~from time to time~~ by the Board of Directors to account for changes in the rate of inflation.



Summary of Budget Review through February 2017

Income Items

1. Pledge amount received at \$211,801—ahead of past years at 76.9% of pledges received for 66% of year completed. Average of past 4 years is 72.5%.
2. Identifiable non-pledge giving at \$9,064
3. Estimate total stewardship income at \$275,687 vs. budget of \$273,000
4. Fundraising tab—raised to date \$7,575 vs. budget of \$15,000
 - a. Other fundraising activities account for \$3,194 and generally no budgeted income for these items
5. Solar panel--first ZERC refund for \$1,156 for period July-Sept '16
 - a. Next payment estimated at \$600
6. Total estimated annual income for year at \$409,803 vs. budgeted amount of \$387,050.

Expense Items

1. Decrease in estimated expenses electric and natural gas expenses by \$2,000 vs. budgeted amounts
2. Decrease in some personnel expenses to reflect current time spent of \$3,476
3. General maintenance budget is at \$11,674 year to date and estimate \$17,500 with a budgeted amount of \$10,000.
4. Total annual expenses estimated at \$415,893
5. If ends this way would take the \$6,091 difference from prior year carry over amount
 - a. This would make a total of draw on carry over of \$11,341
 - b. Total currently in the carry over is \$21,100
 - c. Improvement in deficit from Dec '16 budget review



Date: March 23, 2017

To: Board Members, Endowment
From: Stu Spence, Building and Grounds
Sub: Sanctuary Roof, Significant Expense

Folks,

As you know, we have been maintaining the Sanctuary portion of the roof for many years. The last time we asked the roofer who had done some of the side slopes of the roof to consider bidding on recovering the center, he refused. He recommended we keep on with current maintenance measures.

And, we have for many years.

At this point, the original very old EPDM (rubber (ethylene propylene diene monomer (M-class) rubber)) covering is simply deteriorating because of excess age. After some preliminary discussion with John Brancato, Hank Murray, and Hugh we have decided to pursue the project as follows:

1. We have received a quote on a standard procedure for checking the proposed roofing project for toxic elements in the existing structure such as asbestos, or similar materials. The purpose of this step is to have this information at hand when we put out an RFP so the subsequent work by the winning bidder will not encounter expensive surprises. The estimate on hand suggests, with some minor adjustments, a cost in the order of \$1,800.
2. Following the results from the testing outfit, Hugh Schweitzer, USH member, and Architect with experience in such matters, has agreed to help us along with this project by creating an RFP and seeking input from contractors who may have some frontline familiarity with alternative methods of dealing with a moving, circular, cone shaped, roof, suspended with numerous penetrations to support the underlying structure with four somewhat compromised drains.
3. We would not be taking steps one and two if we had not determined in the first place to find the probable expense knowing the job needs to be done.

My reason for writing is to give appropriate notice that we expect the project to be of considerable expense and, therefore, there will be a significant draw for this project on the Endowment probably mostly falling into FY2018.

The Board may wish to take formal notice of this matter, approve the outlined approach and anticipate there will be further information along the way and significant expense before the project is completed. In short, it is appropriate to line up the governance aspects of this matter.

Your thoughtful consideration and action is solicited. (See back side for proposed motion)

(D)

Proposed Board Motion:

The Board understands the portion of the Meeting House EPDM roof over the Sanctuary has not been recovered for many years. Because of the number of structural elements that pass through the roof, maintenance of the existing EPDM has been the preferred option to reduce leaking for many years. That procedure is no longer adequate. Accordingly, a plan for replacement has been initiated including inspection for any hazardous materials associated with the current structure, preparing an RFP and seeking bidders on the replacement of the roof EPDM.

The Board recognizes the project will be a significant expense with a draw on the Endowment, approves the process, and looks forward to periodic reports including projected expenses as the project moves forward.

The replacement of the roof

Motivating

to the congregation

(via a possible capital campaign, targeted fundraising, or a possible draw on the endowment)

The board approves ~~initial~~ the expenditure of up to \$1800 ~~to assess the needs of the roof~~ for ~~initial fact finding~~ hazardous material verification.

Sent to Dawn Nepton

(E)

Developing Capital Plan FYI

Capital Plan - Stu, David and Hugh met with John Brancato and Hank Murray to discuss the attached working document. A good deal of discussion was directed at obtaining estimated costs for replacing the roof over the Sanctuary and getting firm estimates rather soon in order to move the work along before next winter, if possible. At this meeting, discussion of the project and others continued. Three pending projects are of considerable congregation-wide interest. In order, they are a) fixing the Sanctuary roof, if possible, (b) improving Sanctuary lighting levels, and (c) finishing off carpet in areas not yet addressed with the product used elsewhere, GameTime Carpet, while it remains available. Bill LaPorte-Bryan representing AIM supported getting something done about lighting levels in the Sanctuary as soon as possible. It is a complicated business as a balance needs to be obtained between preserving aesthetics while improving light levels and using existing, we think, wiring in the ceiling. Sarah Cassidy and Bill Simmons noted something in the order of 20 lumens/square foot would be desirable in an appropriate spectrum using LED fixtures. There is also general interest in improving the sound system.

Bill also noted appreciation for the work John and Kevin have done in looking after safety issues which can be addressed based on the report from Larry Lunden. Our building will remain under the code requirement existing when it was built. By its nature, most rooms have direct egress to the outside. However, we do need to look after the working of doors, exit lights, extinguishers, etc., as appropriate and are doing so.

Work Day April 8 9-12