

October Board Meeting 10/24/17

Members present - Stephanie Briggs, Sarah McKenzie, Chris Wilt, Phil Gardner, Hank Murray, Sherry Manetta, Valerie Klokow, Rev. Heather Rion Starr & Rev. Cathy Rion Starr (ex officio members)

Guests - Virginia de Lima

6:32: Phil - Opening Words from David Brooks from "How to Engage a Fanatic"

6:34: Stephanie read the Board Covenant

6:35: Changes to agenda? Sherry adds - after Consent Agenda, Board will go into executive session to discuss Board and Committee Appointments

6:36 - Hank made motion to approve consent agenda (Attached), Phil seconded, Sherry called the vote:

In favor - 7

Opposed - 0

Abstain - 0

6:37 - Board went into Executive Session to discuss Board and Committee Appointments

6:47: Board came out of Executive Session to vote on the following slate of candidates:

Joe Rubin - President-Elect, Board

Derek Slap - Endowment Committee

Jean Groothuis - Chair, Endowment Committee

Tom Richardson - Audit Committee

Sue Tenorio - Audit Committee

Tom Richardson - Chair, Audit Committee

Hank moved to appoint the entire list of candidates to their respective committees/board, Phil seconded. Sherry called the vote

In favor - 7

Opposed - 0

Abstain - 0

6:49 - Virginia is here to assist with a Strategic Planning session. The January __, 2017 Strategic Plan - Draft Goals are attached.

There may be something MORE/BIGGER to do after the strategic plan begins to be implemented & there may be another step that goes along with a capital campaign and a bigger thing we're aiming for.

Started as a way to focus direction of USH towards a common goal. It was a way to organize chaos, and distill down to set goals as a starting point. There was a lot of congregational involvement in deciding on the direction of the goals.

Board brainstormed "In the context of our strategic goals, describe USH 5 years from now"

What will USH look like in 5 years?

Be relevant

More digital presence

Multi-cultural

More kids programming (choir)

Vibrant, find your tribe

Sanctuary/safety

Proclaiming welcoming love

Properly performing UU church

Be all you can be/called to be

Build on strengths

Be a beacon, especially on social justice

Have a spiritual basis of all we do

Be more inclusive racially and economically

Every voice heard, respected and valued

More, stronger, deeper

Arts, justice, spirit, learning

Healthy covenant with each other

Talk about more inclusive

Multi-generational, anti-oppressive center for spiritual support in 21st century

Connectedness

Building resilience

Embrace/facilitate change in larger community

Help, support and structure to focus beyond immediate issues

Reach out beyond Sunday morning

Younger and louder

Packed all the time; stuff happening

Appropriate staff—office administrator, book keeper, volunteer coordinator—adequately compensated

Attractive rental

Multiple touch points—ministries beyond building—collaborative center

Ideas from Goals flipcharts (we had just started this exercise

Goal 1:

[nothing]

Goal 4: Attract a healthy stream of visitors

Greater clarity on who we are and what we're providing

Draw from greater Hartford

Goal 5: USH will be a recognized as a leader in Social Justice

What does Hartford need at this moment?

What's new and fresh?

Are we looking outward or inward?

Identify connections

Be seen as active/how can we help?

Lead by example

Show up

Tap resources in Congregation

Get behind some visionary thinking, look forward rather than keeping to the status quo. Be relevant.

What's unique about USH? What distinguishes us from the other UU Congregations w/in driving distance?

What responsibility does our geography obligate us to, being IN Hartford?

Be seen being active in social justice/social issues in the area, not necessarily as leaders, just as doers. Lead by example.

Started a higher level conversation about the "Big Why".

7:44: Budget goals for FY 2018/2019

Rev. Cathy talked about FY 2018/2019 budget goals based on our brainstorm from a previous board meeting. Cathy sent them to Mark Ewert to see if we were on the right track. Mark Ewert indicated Budget goals don't matter that much for doing well in stewardship, and total number doesn't make a real difference to stewardship. We need to make a compelling case for the pledge drive.

Staffing is the biggest need:

- UUA's Fair Compensation (we're trying to reach minimum for everyone, or midpoint if possible)
- Floor of \$15/hr. for all staff
- Sabbatical/Study Leave funding for the Revs.

- Health Insurance for core staff
- Increase childcare staff
- STAFFING SHORTAGE/SHORTFALL - Supporting existing staff & address unfulfilled needs

Other dreams that cost \$:

- Adult OWL (Our Whole Lives)
- Anti-Racism curricula
- Roof
- Invest in rentals, putting energy into expanding, make improvements, marketing, etc...
- Intern Minister

What is the general guidance we want to give stewardship, and then how does the board want to envision the budget?

8:16: Co-Minister's Report

The board and ministers discussed sabbaticals and planning for those. Also - they do not need to take their sabbaticals at the same time, there are a lot of logistics that would need to be worked out if they decided to take separate sabbaticals.

8:22: Phil and Chris will be leading the Under The Stairs conversation 10/29, maybe talk about changes on the board (new president-elect, new committee members, chairs), Pitch the superhero auction & encourage people to think about their superpower. Talk about Meeting House Presents.

Look at the calendar Sherry sent around and respond to questions

Meeting House Presents (Chris) - Paul and Laura have been marketing heavily. They would like the following things from the board:

- Put up posters
- Talk it up
- Come and bring a friend

8:31: The Board went into Executive Session

8:47: Closing Words (Phil) from Albert Einstein

Consent Agenda

USH Board meeting October 24, 2017

1. **September board minutes:** Approve September board minutes.
2. **Budget allocation change:** Approve \$520 increase in budgeted compensation to accommodate parental leave for Crystal Cruz Acevedo, USH Sunday Sexton. The incremental cost of a substitute Sexton is for a shift from 9am-2pm each Sunday, for 8 weeks, or 5 hours x \$13/hour = \$65/Sunday x 8 Sundays = \$520.
3. **Garvais gift transfer to the Endowment:** Approve the additional amount of \$9,532.54 that was received in July 2017 from the Garvais estate be transferred to the Endowment, as recommended by the Finance Committee at their meeting on 9/28/2017. The gift is unrestricted.

Unitarian Society of Hartford

Nourishing spirit, building community, working for justice

Strategic Plan – Draft Goals

January __, 2017

By June 2020 (in some cases, sooner) we expect to accomplish the following specific goals

Nourishing Spirit

Goal 1: USH will offer a comprehensive, lifespan religious learning and growth program in order to support the spiritual needs of the USH community.

Potential Objectives/Initiatives for achieving the goal

1. Develop a plan based on strategic goals to strengthen professional ministerial support.
2. Offer a comprehensive, lifespan religious learning and growth program.
3. Ensure appropriate and comfortable space for religious learning and growth.

Building Community

Goal 2: USH will be a congregation that maintains relationships based on respect, understanding and safety.

Potential Objectives/Initiatives for achieving the goal

1. Adopt a congregational covenant outlining how we expect members to interact with one another.
2. Adhere to a clear, transparent and manageable governance and administrative structure.
3. Increase the percentage of congregational members who express that they feel “connected” to USH in ways beyond Sunday services.
4. Increase the number of individuals who serve in a leadership role.

Goal 3: USH will commit to an innovative financial model with stronger and more diversified revenues.

Potential Objectives/Initiatives for achieving the goal

1. Assess the feasibility of renting the meeting house as a venue for events.
2. Assess the feasibility of producing one or more event series that would generate a stream of income.
3. Review and consider the appropriate size and ongoing role of the Endowment.
4. Acknowledging that there is more to deciding than dollars, perform cost/benefit analyses of capital and operational expenses for scenarios including a) modernizing and retaining the current building, b) replacing the current building on site and c) selling the current building and moving the congregation.
5. Assess the feasibility of monetizing the building (*i.e.*, selling it to and renting it back from a developer).

Goal 4: Attract a healthy stream of visitors.

Potential Objectives/Initiatives for achieving the goal

1. Increase the annual number of first time visitors to Sunday services to three times the membership number certified with the UUA the previous year.

2. Increase articulation of Unitarian Universalist identity and values to enhance awareness in the outside community.
3. Develop a branding and marketing strategy.
4. Undertake value-based initiatives such as obtaining certification as an Accessible & Inclusion Ministry (AIM).
5. Make the facility more welcoming and attractive to prospective members by bringing the physical aspects of the sanctuary into the 21st century.
6. Foster congregational diversity to broaden the appeal of USH in the community.

Working for Justice

Goal 5: The Greater Hartford community will recognize USH as a leader of the community's social justice initiatives.

Potential Objectives/Initiatives for achieving the goal

1. Establish a moderated social media clearinghouse where the community can post and learn about social justice events and initiatives.
2. Establish a clear method for members of the congregation to provide the Social Justice Council with feedback and suggestions regarding prioritized and potential social justice initiatives.
3. Adapt and consistently use the E-News, website and Facebook page to update the congregation on the progress of prioritized social justice initiatives.
4. Leverage relationships in the larger community to effectively accomplish objectives
5. Secure press coverage of USH's social justice activities.
6. Ensure appropriate and comfortable venues for community-based social justice meetings and events.