

USH Board Meeting Minutes September 13, 2022

Present: Eve Pech, Judy Sullivan, Tina Davies, Sarah McKenzie, Peter Meny, Jon Covault, Paul, Cipriano, Dana Donovan

Guests: Stu and Bev Spence, Janice and David Newton, Laura Cipriano, Jim Venneman

Check-Ins started at 6:38

6:48 – Eve drew attention to the Community Within Report regarding our Ingathering Service this past Sunday. Worship Associates have asked that we provide a Board Moment monthly, Eve will be the first, and will circulate a signup sheet. Eve reached out to Joe Sullivan and Wren regarding a Zoom Retreat with the Rhode Island congregation, and then a dinner or similar gathering for our Board later.

6:53 – Dana read the Board Covenant

6:54 – Approval of August Board Minutes. Tina made the motion to approve, Judy seconded
Aye – 7 (Peter was out of the room, meeting with a contractor)
Nay – 0
Abstain – 0

6:55 – Tina, Dana, and Paul are working on updating the application info to post on the Search website for the minister search. They hope to have the application completed as soon as practicable.

7:07 – Meeting on the 18th regarding the proposed changes to the by-laws. It is a question-and-answer session with the Governance Committee. Eve to reach out to Rob (chair of Governance Committee) to make sure this is still on his radar; Laura can present on the 18th if necessary.

7:17 – Security Update: Paul gave us an update on security. Church Mutual offers free security equipment for fire, water, and security; order was placed and was received, we should know if we were eligible for it within 48 hours. Paul also contacted a security contact who worked with UUS:E on their security plan. He has volunteered to help our security committee develop a plan and apply for grants (which will be available this fall). Kevin G. will be replacing and upgrading emergency lights throughout the building. Paul will also look into the practicality of keypad access rather than physical keys.

7:28 – Fall Auction. Date has been set for November 13. Current Auction Team is Jon Covault, Michael Covault, Michael Michaud, Ginny Hedrick, and Paul Cipriano. A notice will need to go into the e-News late in September to solicit donations and to let people know it's coming up. Bob Hewey will be the Auctioneer; Meetinghouse is scheduled to play that week in the service at USH also.

7:34 – Council Reports (see attached). Jon gave the rundown on his experience with a spoofed fraudulent check on USH's account; it is detailed in his written report. Eve wanted to add to Community Within's report; Carolyn Carlson stepped down as chair of Membership 2 years ago but has been filling in on an as needed basis. Carolyn has suggested Laurie Kelliher and would like someone to approach her. Eve will ask Rob Spector to approach Laurie regarding Membership. Jon also asked Eve to speak to Rob regarding a chair of the Endowment Committee. The motion was made by Peter Meny to accept the council reports, Judy Sullivan seconded.

Aye – 8

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

7:49 – Guest Comments or Questions? Dana thanked Jim Venneman for the lights, and thanks to B&G for moving the project forward.

7:50 - Break for a few minutes before Executive Session

8:00 – Executive Session re: Staffing. Judy will create a gmail account for hiring purposes and give it to Paul for the UUA posting.

The worship associates would like to have more input in the upcoming interim/contract minister search. Peter will let Sue Smolski know that we agree, with the caveat that there will be some items we will not be able to discuss with a WA present, unless such person(s) is also on the board, in the interest of staff confidentiality.

We discussed the origins of, and purpose for, the Executive Committee meetings, which is to set the agenda for the upcoming Board Meeting.

8:55 – the meeting was adjourned.



Sarah McKenzie <sarah.h.mckenzie@gmail.com>

Agenda for Board meeting tonight

1 message

Eve Pech <elpech@sbcglobal.net>

Tue, Sep 13, 2022 at 9:38 AM

To: DANA DONOVAN <dedanu49@gmail.com>, Jon Covault <jncovault@hotmail.com>, Sarah McKenzie <sarah.h.mckenzie@gmail.com>, Christina Davies <daviesush@gmail.com>, Peter Meny <plmeny9@gmail.com>, Paul Cipriano <pcipriano01@gmail.com>, Judy Sullivan <jasullivan57@gmail.com>

Dear Board-

See agenda below- let me know any suggested additions-

Eve

USH BOARD MEETING Draft AGENDA -9/13/22 at 6:30pm, via Zoom

6:30pm Check in - 15 mins.

6:45pm Opening Words, Eve – 2 mins.

(“From the Board Moment “ and Board retreat)

6:47pm Board Covenant, Dana - 2 mins.

6:49pm Approval of June Board Minutes, Sarah - 2 mins.

6:51pm Status of minister search, Tina, Paul, Dana- 5 min.

6:56pm Congregational meeting September 18- 5 min

7:01pm Security at USH update -5 min

7:06pm USH Auction- 5min

7:11pm Acceptance of Council Reports, Comments, Questions - 15 min

7:26pm Guest comments – 10 min

7:36pm Executive Session- Staffing

Community Within

September 2022

We started the church year with a party after the Ingathering service. From an innocuous inquiry posed by Rick Tsukada back in July (“are we doing something to celebrate?”) to a quick huddle with Annie Witzler, to Janice Newton and Laura Cipriano’s offers to help, Kevin Girourard’s labors to scrub, bleach, and otherwise decontaminate the grills which John Bengtson then commandeered... and all the others who pitched in and contributed time, work, or food... USH pulled off a picnic-style lunch to welcome each other “back”. It was not an elegant gathering but people seemed pleased to spend time together, which was the whole idea.

In the Programs area:

- A six-week yoga class started Monday 9/12; it seemed to be well-received.
- Second Saturday Sing-A-Longs have begun singing for the year.
- Book Group is highly popular and stable.
- Lunch Bunch is temporarily stymied, as the venue is no longer accepting large groups. A new situation is being sought.
- Friday Night movies are scheduled to begin October 14.
- Still working toward getting some interested potential Connection Circles (Small Group Ministry) organizers to put together a program for the year, possibly using material from former SGMs.

Membership — Since Carolyn Carlson stepped down as chair two years ago, she has continued to fill in as needs arise and as health permits. However, we definitely need a member who is able to take some time with newcomers, getting to know them and introducing them to the varied aspects of USH (and Unitarianism, if they are new to the belief system). We are beginning to see some newcomers, and it’s important to have a primary contact for them. Any suggestions will be appreciated here.

Christina Davies
Chair, Community Within

Social Justice Council

September, 2022

Judy Sullivan

The Social Justice Council did not meet in August and the September meeting is moved from the 20th to the 27th due to a scheduling conflict with GHIAA research team training.

This month was the start of the new Good Neighbor Offering practice of the month-long 50/50 sharing of donations. Each Sunday's offerings, unless otherwise designated, will be shared equally with the chosen GNO recipient. At the end of each month the total raised for the GNO will be published in the enews to acknowledge and thank the congregation.

We are joining UU The Vote campaign and starting a postcard writing campaign this month. UU The Vote is joining non-partisan groups to target key states to get out the vote. The emphasis is reaching out to registered but infrequent voters.

We are also combining efforts with other CT UU congregations to focus attention to the Early Voting Referendum on the CT ballot this November.

Spiritual Life Council Report September 2022

Worship Associates

The summer worship series was very successful. Attendance was consistently good (around 40-50) and feedback from the attendees was very positive. The WA's have planned services through the end of December. The theme for this period will be 'Love in Action'.

An orientation session for new WAs will be held on October 2. There will be another general invitation to the congregation for anyone else who would like to be a WA in this week's eNews.

Due to lack of attendance the Time for All Ages portion of the service has been discontinued temporarily. After October 2nd, we will re-evaluate restarting TFAA and singing children off to their classes in Sunday Worship. There will be several children at In Gathering including some new ones. We hope this is a trend which will continue.

There WILL be another Winter Solstice service on Dec 21st. Michael Michaud is highly motivated for this to happen and will be the WA for it.

The service on the third Sunday of each month will include a 'Board Message' I recommend it be titled "Board Message" and be part of the Welcoming section of the service.

Sue asks that she be notified whenever a guest presenter is scheduled so it can be added to the Online Worship Calendar which is a pivotal document in planning worship.

SpiritLife

UU SpiritLife has offered spiritually focused programs to the three Hartford CT area Unitarian Universalist churches for almost 5 years, helping UUs to develop and deepen meaningful spiritual lives.

Continuing in that tradition, SpiritLife will be offering monthly online conversations from September through December on a variety of topics. Anyone can participate on a drop-in basis without preregistration. Participants are asked to read, make notes, and reflect on the session topics in advance and come prepared to share their reactions and reflections.

R.E.

Annie is going to be processing background checks and finalizing all RE materials for the first half of the year this week. RE kickoff Sunday will be this weekend. The youth group is making soup and the younger children will be meeting downstairs for the chalice clubhouse for the first time since June. We had several new and returning families come last Sunday.

Music Ministry – Sam reports that the first rehearsal for the choir is scheduled for September 22. He's hoping to do weekly rehearsals and start incorporating the choir back into the service once or twice a month. He aims to have a consistent group of 15 people by the end of the church

year but realizes that this is a re-building process that will take some time. He also hopes to reinstitute the choral scholars program.

Chancel Art

Paula Bleck has volunteered to chair the Chancel Arts team this year.

Treasurer's Report – September 2022

Financial Status/Cashflow

The USH financial status and cashflow remains positive. As of August 31 (17% of year) 24% of annual pledges have been completely fulfilled.

Checking account closed and new M&T Bank checking opened. On September 1, the office received a call from Bank of America asking if a check with appearance similar to ours for \$27,985 deposited August 26 by a Mr. Hutchinson Brooklyn NY was accurate. It was not and we informed Bank of American it was a fraudulent check, they indicated the deposit availability to Mr. Hutchinson was pending and would be withheld. People's had received the check for clearance on August 29th and unfortunately processed the transaction from Bank of America deducting the amount from our account. The undersigned spent 6 hours with People's to close this account, open new account, issue bank checks for several checks pending being mailed and complete attestation about the issue to pursue refund to our account from Bank of America which I was told will happen in 2-3 weeks. To complete the process, I met with a Hartford policeman on September 2 to file an incident report. The officer (and banker prior day) thought a recent check(s) we had mailed had been intercepted (organized groups fish mail out of older style mailboxes) to provide our account number, current check number range and image of signature. Consistent with this, at least one vendor contacted us stating their check mailed August 22 had not arrived. Actions have been started to update vendors and affiliates (eg. Vanco, Payroll Matters, UBS and Schwab) with our new account information. New printed checks have been obtained and are in use to pay bills. Thanks to Buffie and our new bookkeeper for help in this process as well as church officers who came to People's promptly to sign necessary documents.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jon Covault, USH Treasurer