



**Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
Zoom; September 22, 2020; 6:45 pm – 9:21 pm
Approved Minutes 10/27/2020**

In Attendance: Carrie Kotcho, Kari Alperovitz-Bichell, Heather Millar, Jane Carrigan, Peter Morse, Rev. John Crestwell, Stan Haavik, Rev. Anastassia Zinke, Jenn Pollitt Hill, Linda Mundy. Guests from the Best Use of Land Committee: Joi Howard, Jackie Heimbuch, Scott Eden, Diane Ratcliff and Evelyn Spurgin

Chalice Lighting and Opening Words: Linda

6:45

Check-in: Reflections on our Saturday discussion with BBC: All

Approve Minutes for August 25 Board Meeting: Carrie

Motion made by Jane and seconded to approve the minutes for the August 25, 2020 Board meeting as posted on 9/22/20. Discussion. 8th Principle was considered.

Approved.

Best Use of Land Committee (BUOLC): Jane, Diane Ratcliff, Scott Eden, Jackie Heimbuch, Joi Howard, Evelyn Spurgin

The BUOLC walked the Board of Trustees through their process for creating the report they submitted as well as its forms and attachments. They interviewed and interacted with many of the church's groups. They listened to Congregants' ideas, hopes, concerns about UUCA's use of its land and distributed surveys to the groups and the entire Congregation. Survey responses are reported on a spreadsheet shared today. 9/22/20. Those surveyed overwhelmingly thought the land was important to the church, that a wooded buffer was important to them, and leaving land undeveloped was important to them as was having parking available for members and guests. The importance of income generated by sale of land was split with a slight majority saying it was not important, followed by those who thought it was important, and then those who were in the middle.

Diane noted that we have a UU/Friends Meeting trail system that runs through both properties that some may not be familiar with.

Evelyn noted that BEEC2 have not worked out how the church would offer parking if the land in question was sold.

Heather expressed thanks to the BUOLC for providing the Board with the full set of comments from the interviews as they include many interesting ideas and uses for our property that were unknown to some of the Board.

The Board asked questions and engaged in conversation about the results of the surveys and data gathered from group interviews.

The property assessments for UUCA and neighbors was attached as reference information. Diane noted that the numbers on those documents do not indicate actual value.

Each Board member shared their take-aways from the report and thoughts on how to resolve the current question. There was agreement that the survey was clear the Congregation is not ready to sell, and that we should use this BUOLC work in the future when we decide to start a more intentional conversation with the Congregation about what we do want to do with our land.

ACTION Motion made by Peter to stop consideration of the Hogan purchase offer based on the feedback of the Congregation as reported by the BUOLC. Seconded. Discussion. 8th Principle was considered. **Approved.**

Heather proposed to write an article in the *In the Know* this week, that summarizes the report and decision. Heather will write the prospective buyer this week about the Board decision. Discussion included issues of privilege that initiated this entire process and what threshold the Board should use before it escalates future offers to a full committee for intensive work.

The BUOLC will finalize the report document with a conclusion that includes the Board's decision. The Board will then share information with the Congregation.

The Board will use the information gathered by the BUOLC to inform continued discussion about how the Church uses its land.

Jane and Scott noted the energy from interviewees to further discuss and recommended finding ways to get the Congregation involved in a larger conversation about how we think about our land and how we use it.

Board and BBC: Kari, Jenn, Carrie, Linda, Heather

The BBC/Board Subcommittee met last week to discuss creating a Board 8th Principle Accountability checklist. The group examined the BBC's checklist and began adapting it for BOT use. The subcommittee will continue editing the checklist before its next meeting. Once complete it will be presented to the Board as a draft to consider.

The BBC met on Sunday to discuss plans for facilitating the October 4 Middle Hour focused on the Church's summer read "Subtle Acts of Exclusion" (SAE).

The Board looked over the SAE Model.

ACTION: Motion made by Peter for the Board of Trustees to adopt the SAE (Microaggressions Model) as presented to the Board 9/22/20 to guide the way it conducts its work and to commit to promoting it throughout the Congregation. Seconded. Discussion. 8th Principle was discussed. **Approved.** The SAE Model is attached to these Minutes.

Each BBC lead facilitator will reach out to a partner Board member to work out how they will work together to lead discussion about SAE Model as presented in The Subtle Acts of Exclusion summer reading with Congregants. We have 8 pairs to lead discussions of

45 minutes to an hour. Board members are asked to share why they support the SAE Model. The BBC and Board ask that the members attend the 8th Principle middle hours starting next week.

Board Reports:

Finance Officer Report: Kari

Kari reported that our cash available for operating is \$67,000 not including PPP loan which is comparatively good for the end of summer. Pledge commitments in August were lower than July – which is typical for August. Total contributions are about the same as last year. Kari said the Finance Committee would like to see contributions about \$75,000 higher in order to meet our expenses for the year. Share the Plate was up a bit from July. We are considerably behind in contributions than we should be. The Finance Committee is continuing to explore socially responsible investing.

ACTION: Motion made by Kari that the Board name Liz Yoder as the new Investment Officer and appoint her to the Endowment Committee effective immediately. Seconded. Discussion. 8th Principle was considered. **Approved**

Ministers/Executives Report: John, Anastassia

Start Up Plans – In Rev. Anastassia's contract says the Congregation will hold a "Start-Up", which is a UUA facilitated series of conversations to get her ministry started on a strong foundation. These "Start-Up" sessions are scheduled for October 17, 18, 22.

Faith Formation Update – Julie has begun her reduced hours and adaptation of the Faith Formation program during COVID-19.

Rev. Anastassia reported on work we are doing with consultant Mark Ewert on stewardship. We will ask Mark to gather data to assess and improve our pledge program, help with Congregational education about stewardship, assess pacing for a Capital Campaign and make recommendations about Long term Stewardship. Rev. Anastassia is assembling a Stewardship Team that will work on all of this and the necessary work beyond the scope of our consultant's contract with us.

As we continued our meeting, we took time to consider our work in light of the 8th Principle to accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

BEEC2: Peter

Some of the bids for the building improvements came in higher than anticipated, so BEEC2 is adapting the statement of work to keep within budget.

Expectations for October Board Meeting:

1. Opening and Closing: Heather
2. Budget
3. BEEC2
4. October 4 Debrief
5. Covenant
6. Board Policy Review

Check-out: All

Are we living up to our commitments to the Congregation and to each other?

Closing Words and Extinguishing the Chalice: Linda

9:21

Submitted by: Carrie Kotcho, Secretary

The Subtle Acts of Exclusion (Microaggressions) Model

Jana, T. & Baran, M. (2020) *Subtle Acts of Exclusion: How to Understand, Identify, and Stop Microaggressions*.

The 7th principles and the 8th principle resolution of our UU faith must guide our interactions to: increase feelings of inclusion for people who are not part of the dominant identities, increase trust among each other, increase collaboration within UUCA, improve our ability to give feedback on any issue, and create a culture of transparency, interpersonal civility, and accountability. Therefore, we will adopt the following model when Subtle Acts of Exclusion (SAE's) occur.*

The following definitions will be used in this framework for communication: (p. 24)

The person or group that is excluded by the SAE is the subject.

The person who says or who nonverbally does the SAE is the initiator.

Anyone who overhears or sees the SAE will be called an observer.

Once an observer speaks up, they become an ally.

An observer who chooses not to speak up is a bystander.

Guidelines for Speaking up as the SAE subject or observer (p. 44)

Pause the Action

- We will interrupt the SAE by saying, "I want to pause for a moment"
- We will speak up when we hear an SAE

Assume good intent

- We assume good intentions on the part of the subject, the observer, and the initiator.
- We assume good intentions because we believe in our UU principles
- We assume good intentions because we are in relationship with each other.
- We assume good intentions because it is part of our spiritual growth
- We assume good intentions because we are committed to changing our world

Explain why the action was paused

- We are committed to the 8th principle to accountably dismantle racism in our institutions and especially ourselves
- We are committed to ensure all people feel included and fully welcome in our community
- We aspire to be a vibrant, welcoming, inclusive, caring and diverse congregation, guided by the purposes and principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association and our 8th Principle Resolution.

Have patience but expect progress

- We will be patient and see feedback as a gift and expect progress in return
- We will understand that growth can be uncomfortable and that the best learning can come when we are uncomfortable.
- We will remember that we are all learning and will make mistakes.

Guidelines for Responding as the SAE Initiator (p. 44)

Acknowledge the feedback with gratitude

- I will accept the feedback as a gift.
- I will learn to sit with my discomfort.

Replace defensiveness with curiosity and empathy

- I will take the feedback as an opportunity to grow both spiritually and personally.
- I will be aware of my orientation and move away from defensiveness to humility and growth.
- I will focus on the impact of my words and actions and not my intent.
- I will understand that we all make mistakes.

Follow through and follow up

- I will take responsibility for my own learning moving forward.
- I will seek clarity if I'm unclear about the SAE I committed and learn from it.

Direct Benefits of Adopting the SAE with the UUCA

- Increased feelings of inclusion for people who are not part of the dominant identities.*
- More trust among everyone.
- More collaboration across organizations.
- Improved ability to give feedback on other issues.
- A culture of transparency, interpersonal civility, and accountability.

***From the UUCA Bylaws: This congregation declares and affirms its responsibility to promote the full participation of persons in all of its activities and endeavors including**

membership, programming, hiring practices and the calling of religious professionals without regard to age or the social constructs of race, color, gender, gender identity/expression, neurodiversity, disability, affectional or sexual orientation, class, economic status, or national origin and without requiring any particular interpretation of religion or to any particular religious belief or creed.