

Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
Via Zoom; January 26, 2021
Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/92252637488>
Meeting ID: 922 5263 7488
6:45 pm – 9:15 pm
Approved Minutes

In Attendance: Carrie Kotcho, Kari Alperovitz-Bichell, Heather Millar, Jane Carrigan, Peter Morse, Rev. John Crestwell, Rev. Anastassia Zinke, Jenn Pollitt Hill, Stan Haavik, Linda Mundy **Guest:** Lois Findlay

Accountability Observer: Linda Mundy

Chalice Lighting and Opening Words: Carrie

6:45pm

Check-in: All

Hopes for our country and/or Hopes for our church

Approve November and December Board Meeting Minutes: Carrie

- Motion made by Kari and seconded to approve the Minutes of the November 24, 2020 Board Meeting as posted on 1/26/21. Discussion. 8th Principle considered.
APPROVED
- Motion made by Jane and seconded to approve the Minutes of the December 22, 2020 Board Meeting as posted on 1/26/21. Discussion. 8th Principle considered.
APPROVED

Finance Officer Report: Kari

Kari reported that our finances are looking good. It looks like we may be 90k ahead for the year including the 78k PPP loan. December was a good pledge month. 560k was our annual budget and 559k is the actual as of this date. Kari reminded us that we have not yet closed the books for 2020 and more may come in. Cash available for operating is sufficient. We are waiting on the Small Business Administration to give final approval on our PPP loan forgiveness.

She also reported that the end of year appeal brought in almost 20k and we'd budgeted for 15k.

Kari walked us through the Finance Committee recommendation for a Prior Year Surplus Fund and Operating Reserve Fund policy dated 1/19/21. It was created when UUCA received a gift to establish a "rainy day" fund (now known as the "reserve fund"). If there is a prior year surplus, we need a policy to handle it.

ACTION: Motion made by Heather and seconded to approve the Prior Year Surplus Fund and Operating Reserve Fund Policy* as posted on January 26, 2021 on the Board Drive in the folder for this meeting. Discussion. 8th Principle considered. **Approved**

Kari is to follow up on what portion of these funds are invested versus in cash.

Ministers' Monthly Report: John, Anastassia

Rev. John emphasized that the ways we communicate the words and ideas of our Ends Statements are critical to come to a common understanding of them and move them from words and ideas to actions. He and Rev. AZ met to look at the words we use and discussed developing a common interpretation and communication.

Rev. AZ picked up by highlighting that we are striving to do things that are in tension with each other and important. She stated that we need to clarify and simplify our messaging AND honor the nuance, wisdom, and learning that embodies the interpretation of our End. A key to this is sharing common understanding of key terms like "Beloved Community." The Ministers feel a communication plan is needed.

She acknowledged that UUCA is both working towards building Beloved Community within our church and towards a model we bring forth to the external world. In asking people to describe when they feel they are experiencing Beloved Community helps us better define and articulate it. The Board also addressed the need to define "who" is the congregation or the community as important elements to any communication of our Ends Statements.

The Ministers/Executives asked for the Board's help to shape the vision and language so that they can provide a focused interpretation of Ends Statements for the BOT to approve. Rev AZ is also asking the Board to help them to focus very specifically on the Beloved Community and a few other points in their report.

Heather clarified that the Executive Committee of the BOT will support the Ministry/Executive team in exploring the Executive Limitations Policy regarding this work.

Both Rev. John and Rev. AZ asked the Board to greenlight their work to further explore the direction they presented in their report regarding Beloved Community bullets and aspirations. They asked the Board to reflect on the Global Ends Statement for the church and provide them feedback/input on it. They invited the Board to collaborate and be completely in step with the Ministry/Executive team on this. Discussion then focused how we are all working on building the relationship and working rhythm between the Ministers/Executives and the Board. This is not an issue that needs a vote, but the members of the Board unanimously agreed to greenlight the work as presented in the Ministers/Executives report and discussed at this meeting.

The Ministers and Board discussed Emergent Strategies and agreed to add it to the retreat materials for the new Board during its May retreat.

BEEC2: Heather, Anastassia

Heather and Anastassia reported on the status of the work. BEEC2 is in the final stages of negotiating with the County on permits. The kitchen can proceed without costly improvements; it will be a catering kitchen. They are still waiting on feedback from the

County on the waterline issue. The Committee estimates it will be 4-8 weeks until permits are all in hand. BEEC2 would then be prepared to quickly revise the RFP based on that information. They asked the Board for clarity on what we will want the RFP to include. They want welcome and hospitality to be improved by whatever we do with this project. They are suggesting moving ahead with improvements to add the ADA shower in the lower level restroom, a ramp to make the chancel accessible, open up the lobby and expand the entranceway. The last part is a new recommendation. The Committee and Rev. AZ feel that changing the narrative of the entry to say “you are stepping into something big, welcoming, light filled” is in alignment with our Ends Statements. The additional costs required to do this are expected to be about 300k more than the Board has authorized. Rev. AZ presented some options to fund the gap. She also added that this work could potentially be done before reopening in the fall. It’s about a 2 month construction job according to BEEC2.

1. Financial Options to “Close the gap”
 - a. Fund only using current funds
 - b. Mortgage ---what Rev. AZ recommends.
 - c. Small campaign to fill the gap

The Board discussed these options and the vision.

Rev. John added that our credit is impeccable and UUCA carries no debt (based on his meeting with the bank.) Opening a line of credit that would fill the gap. Then the bank (Black owned) can finance over a certain number of years that we would then pay back. The collateral would be a lien on some of our property to guarantee. Potentially 2-3k per month loan payback estimated.

Heather recommends that the Board discussion be followed by discussion with the full Congregation before the Board takes action on the loan. Jenn proposed gathering our banking details to include as part of our Congregational Conversation.

Jane brought up the 8th principle to address whether this loan issue is more important to the Congregation than other issues. She asked if there is a way to do this project AND do something programmatic in tandem. Carrie added that it would be important to articulate the connections between the Ends Statements and this additional building work and asked if this project could be a physical manifestation of other programmatic work of the church.

Board members expressed deep gratitude for the work of BEEC2 and an openness to explore this expanded scope of work and financial needs. Kari added that UUCA’s building needs may be very different in the post pandemic world and that any future phases of the BEEC2 project as stated may not be the same when we are ready to enact them. Several Board members expressed concern about adding 3k/month onto an already ambitious budget for next year.

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: Jane

Jane walked us through the BBC/Board status report of 1/4/21 and we have a retreat with BBC: Saturday, February 6, 9:30 to noon. She reiterated the need to establish and nurture our Board/BBC relationship.

Accountability Observer: Linda

Linda's observations included: A need to acknowledge and introduce persons observing the meeting to be inclusive. She noted in the accompanying reports to the Board there are mentions of hiring organizations and consultants and that they were both white men and asked the Executives to consider our commitment to seek to do business with businesses owned by People of Color. Rev. John committed to rechecking these to make sure they have considered all. Jenn suggested and Board members agreed that it is helpful for the Accountability Observer to have the Accountability Checklist on hand during the meeting.

Due to the late hour, Heather proposed that we adjourn at 9:25pm and schedule another Board meeting to finish the work instead of pushing it to February. Board members agreed to meet to complete the agenda of this meeting on January 31 at 7pm. Heather agreed to put notice in *In The Know*.

Stewardship (not on original agenda)

Rev. AZ reported that the Stewardship Team met today and is developing a pledge drive in March/April and asked if each BOT member would commit to facilitate a conversation as part of this drive. She sent an email with details. Mark Ewart will provide some training on March 6.

Expectations for Part 2 of our January Board Meeting

- Accountability Observer - Jenn
- Opening/Closing - Jane
- Widening the Circle?
- Congregational Conversations

Check-out: All

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

Closing Words and Extinguishing the Chalice: Carrie
Submitted by Carrie Kotcho, Secretary

9:25pm