

First Universalist Church, Unitarian Universalist
Auburn, ME
Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2023

Present: Anne Perron (President), Linda Greathouse (Vice President), David Das (Clerk), Jane Pentheny (member-at-large); Claire Hebert (member-at-large); Ed Bell (member-at-large); Rev. Jodi Hayashida (*ex officio*)

PSDI Members: Greg Whitney, Bets Mallette; Peter Floyd; Carmen Brochu; Mary Kay Weisenberger

Guests: Holly Cooney; Toby Haber-Giasson; Levesque; Angela Foss

6:36: Anne Perron called the meeting to order.

Jane read the Mission Statement and the Communication Covenant



Anne brought out the “Board Chalice” that she has created: a piece of 60-80 year old apple wood (grows slowly; dense) with hieroglyph figures to represent the Church supported by 3 legs made of oak with similar figures to represent the many members of the congregation who support the church.

Board Chalice

Brief Sharing by Board members.

Consent Agenda:

March 1, 2023 Meeting Minutes.

Minister’s Report (appended)

- Some questions about electronic copies of Bylaws and Board Policy Manual.

President’s Report

- Anne reported that she is in the church on Fridays.
- Continues to paint the former/future office area

Approved unanimously

Open Session:

- Peter:
 - Expressed concern about plan to install security cameras. Previous Boards had considered the topic and decided cameras were not necessary and an invasion of privacy. Board needs to have an in-depth conversation.
 - Peter wondered about the difference in scope of authority between an interim Board and a regular Board.
 - What action is the Board taking to bridge divides within the congregation? The Board needs to open lines of communication.

Discussion of Church and PSDI Parameters Documents:

Anne started the discussion:

- Read the motion approved at the November 6 congregational meeting
- Everyone looking for collaboration throughout the process
- A learning process for all of us
- Hard work for all of us
- We created a document that we can all work with

Comments: There was a lively conversation in which almost all attendees participated. The comments have been organized thematically in the interests of clarity, brevity, and sanity.

- Process: how were the parameters created?
 - Jodi: the two documents in front of us are the result of a long process of discernment and conversation. Most notably: discussions in which Anne, David, Jodi, and members of the Steering Committee participated; Steering Committee conversations and Board conversations.

- Awareness that some of the parameters should be general Church parameters and not specific to the PSDI. Mary Kay reminded us of the need for consistent language and consistent policy; take care that church policy not directed at any one group; that many current church policies (for example: the Disruptive Persons Policy) are in effect for everyone who enters church property.
 - Levesque: parameter #4 (abide by federal state ordinances) should read: “Church operations...” (not solely PSDI operations) and be moved to the general Church parameters list.
 - Mary Kay: parameter #32 (sharps container) should be shifted to the general Church parameters list. (used for by those taking insulin)
 - Greg: parameter #38 (replacement of damaged property) should be shifted to the general Church parameters list.

- Keypad door as entrance for PSDI (#21).
 - Bets: concern that it would make it harder for volunteers to monitor bathroom, lobby, and mezzanine. Should we try to make the main lobby door option work? (PSDI lobby volunteers have started to be more consistent in maintaining human traffic flow)
 - Mary Kay: keypad door as entrance is not going to satisfy anybody.
 - Anne: lobby congestion a general church feature. She and Jodi scoped out the keypad door lobby. Good lines of sight to outside, lobby, and bathroom. More room for volunteers to have a dedicated workspace/table. Allows for sign on door to be clear marker of PSDI open/closed.

- PSDI will work towards Saturday operations (#13)
 - Greg reported that the Steering Committee has been investigating all options. Calvary is closed for at least the month of April, if not longer. Greg is scheduled to meet with staff at the City of Auburn to discuss what may be available. The PSDI has started canvassing guests about their schedules, particularly their weekend options.

- Designated contact person for events when PSDI is closed. (#39)
 - Toby expressed general procedural and safety concerns. What happens when at an event a guest- looking for resources or fellowship- arrives outside of PSDI hours? This places an undue

burden on event organizers. How to identify guests/monitor the various spaces (lobby, bathroom, vestry) while running the event. Concern about closing up after an event; having to do a walk through while attending to money and equipment matters.

- Anne: separate keypad door could be helpful in showing that PSDI is not open for resources.
 - Anne: can we provide volunteers to help address these issues?
 - Jane: perhaps create a whiteboard with contact info for a given event.
 - Peter: what happens with rental events? Do we need a paid rental coordinator?
 - Esther (via email) responding to #21: in case of a wedding or funeral, the PSDI should not operate on that day.
 - Jodi: general issue of how to support a parameter. Make a list of parameters that need specific procedures to make them work.
- General Conversation about Behavior and Consequences
 - Greg: reiterated that when Narcan is administered, 911 is called. (two instances so far; one within the church, one outside)
 - Greg: if a guest uses drugs in the church, there will be a conversation. Repeated offenses would lead to a behavioral agreement and possible banishment from the PSDI.
 - Bets: purely punitive measures are not effective for anyone.
 - Broader conversation of what it means to have a low-barrier shelter within a low-barrier church. Above items not limited to guests. (Related to above discussion of relationship between general parameters and specific parameters).
- Parameter tweaks:
 - #4: Levesque: add **laws** so that it reads: “in accordance with federal, state, and local **laws** and ordinances....”
 - #13: Anne: “The PSDI will **investigate working** towards Saturday operation...” Replaces: “will work.”
 - #24: Jane: should read: “There **will** be an open/closed sign....” Replaces: “needs to be.”

Miscellaneous (but no less important) topics:

- Toby: I am not aware of the protocols in PSDI Training Manual
 - Led to a discussion of church communications. Linda described planned website changes: each committee to have a home on the website with committee specific information; a Google Docs folder to be the repository for policies and procedures.
- Angela: reminder that this discussion is a prelude to comprehensive review of policies and procedures. Need to be careful not to compromise that process.

Next Steps:

- Draft minutes to be circulated to all participants
- Final parameters documents to be created and circulated to all participants
- Documents to be shared with congregation
- Board to meet next week to approve final documents

Check out:

- Anne: this has been an important and hard process to figure out how we can all live together under one and the same roof.

8:30 Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

David H. Das (Clerk)

Minister's Report

4.5.23

This report is for informational purposes only. I am not requesting action on any items at this time, with the exception of hearing from you any additional resources you'd like me to leave for the interim

I don't want to take up too much space in this report with non-business writing, because the business piece is long enough! But I do want to express my gratitude to all of you for stepping into leadership at an incredibly hard time in the life of this congregation. It takes not only courage but also a fierce love for this church to accept such a role at a time when it will certainly bring with it more than its share of hardness.

I wish for all of you more gentleness than you expect, love that appears and grabs hold in places both expected and not, more times of hope and satisfaction than struggle and fear, joy in at least some of the work and the ongoing rediscovery of joy in one another, grace offered when you stumble, grace *to* offer when those around you trip and fall, the courage to be vulnerable and tender with one another, and an absolute certainty that you showing up over and over and over matters. I'm grateful for every one of you and I will carry each of you in my heart.

Completed preparations for the time between my departure and the interim's arrival:

Pastoral Care: the PM has created a calendar clarifying who will be the point person and when. Claudia will direct anyone who is in need of pastoral care to that PM member. Claudia, Anne, and Linda all have that Calendar

Worship: The worship calendar is partially filled with guest worship leadership by statewide colleagues (who will be paid the UUA recommended honorarium and mileage reimbursement), and worship associates. Claudia has the calendar and necessary documents to ensure guest preachers have the information they need, including contact info for staff, to prepare to lead worship here. Worship associates themselves are prepared to cover still open Sundays, if need be, by showing videos, either in the sanctuary or over zoom, of fully prepared worship services from other congregations or to research which congregations have said they will welcome other churches to their zoom worship.

Committee on Ministry: The COM has sorted out how to be available and how to function during this intermediary time, especially given that anxiety may rise during this intermediary time. They will be sharing their plans soon.

Resources for Interim: In the googledrive attached to the new professional email address Cynthia set up for the new minister (auburnuuminister@gmail.com) I have stored resources for the interim. Because some of them are confidential I will not include the password in this doc, but I will include it in sealed welcome letter I leave for the interim. But so you are aware of what they will have immediate access to upon their arrival, this is what is in the drive:

Guest preacher info doc
Zoom worship training
Committee on ministry rolling notes
Church access code procedure
Pastoral Ministry Rolling Notes
Pastoral notes on recent needs
Notes on challenging relationships/dynamics
Staff rolling notes
Maine UU and multi-faith community notes
Personnel Policy Manual
Board Policy Manual
Bylaws
Doc on disruptive persons with behavioral agreements or no trespass orders
Sample Christmas Eve doc
Month by month breakdown of church life/activities
Copies of all policies