

First Universalist Church, Unitarian Universalist  
Auburn, ME  
Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes  
January 17, 2024

Bonnie Soper Room

Present: Anne Perron (President), Linda Greathouse (Vice-President), David Das (Clerk), Jane Pentheny (member-at-large), John Spruill (member-at-large), Claire Hebert (member-at-large) via Zoom, Reverend Patrick McLaughlin (*ex officio*).

Invited Guest: Mary Kay Weisenberger (via Zoom)

Guests: Esther Tucker, Angela Foss

**7:05:** Anne Perron called the meeting to order.



**Board Chalice**

John read the Mission Statement.

Jane read a section from the “Covenant for Auburn UU Board of Directors” from the Board Policy Manual.

Anne lit the chalice; she called on all of us to work together to create and strengthen community.

Brief sharing by Board members.

**Minister’s Report:**

- Started work on job descriptions and contracts. Some are at least a decade out of date. Looking to create a standardized template. Will investigate whether we have an employment policy.
- Where do church policies live? Policies should be gathered in one, central location.
- Questions about the Stewardship Campaign: what is the process? Dates? His role? Patrick will contact Toby.

- Gave a brief overview of Policy Based Governance.
  - Strengths:
    - Allows Board to focus on the broader issues of policy and vision. To be forward looking. To escape the daily muck and mire of church life.
  - Challenges:
    - Old habits die hard.
    - Realities of congregational life rear their ugly head; especially when rebuilding from the ground up; when not enough members to address basic committee work.
  - Should we look to a re-implementation of Policy Based Governance? So that the congregation has a (fuller) understanding?
  - PBG does have an impact on the role of Minister and staff.

### **President's Report:**

- Some facilities and rental updates.
- Attended January Finance Committee meeting:
  - Finance willing to find monies to fund a business/office administrator for one day per week.

### **Board Member Communications:**

- Linda:
  - Plans for the All-Church Birthday on January 28. Take the place of the potluck between service and Town Hall. Linda will reach out to committee chairs.
- John:
  - Relayed Worship Associates' frustrations regarding work load. Fewer worship associates; slightly larger workload given the number of 5 Sunday months.
  - *Board: asked Worship Associates to come up with a dollar figure to cover guest ministers for the balance of the fiscal year.*

### **Consent Agenda:**

- January 3, 2024 Minutes

Motion to approve: Jane

Second: John

Unanimous approval.

### **Open Session:**

- Esther:
  - She has contacted several people who have not been attending.
- Mary Kay:
  - Breeze implementation still a work in progress. Working with Angela.

### **Committee on Ministry Update:**

- Mary Kay:
  - Committee on Ministry developing the covenant creation process; to create a short statement as to who we are as a congregation.
  - Logistics:
    - Mid-January to mid-April:
      - Small group meeting (8 people)
      - Relaxed events at private homes and on Zoom:
        - Food
        - Open-ended questions to start the conversations:
          - Why do you come to church? Or not?
    - January 21 Service:
      - Introduce the small group model.
      - Ask for volunteers to create at least two groups
      - Bill Frayer and Holly Cooney will facilitate the first two groups.
    - Once initial groups have met:
      - Temperature check
      - Adjust as needed.
  - An 18-month process: June 2025 as the target date for a congregational vote on the covenant.

### **Printer Issues:**

- Patrick able (perhaps) to use Paula Mikkelsen's printer.
- Wi-fi connection to copier still a mystery.

### **UUA Certification Update:**

- Due by February 5, 2024.
- Need to confirm with Anne Kinney (Denominational Affairs representative) her role in the information gathering and reporting process.

### **Town Hall Planning:**

- What is your connection to church? What can strengthen that connection? What excites you? What fires you up?
- Open-ended request to congregants to tell us how they would like to be engaged.
- Incorporate request from Charles Nero for feedback on Adult RE programming: past and future.
- Easels at the front of the Sanctuary – Anne to record ideas. Linda will monitor Zoom chat entries – record on second easel.
- Congregation has opportunity to sticky-dot vote on the various ideas.
- David to contact Toby re: email announcement to the congregation.

### **Covid Policy:**

- Discussed a draft policy based on wastewater data.
  - Questions and concerns about:
    - What do the numbers mean?
    - How to link numbers with categories (Very High, High etc.).
    - How to link numbers/categories with actual policy (No in-person activities; required masking etc.).
    - Back-up data source in event that primary source is unavailable.
- No decision; another round of torture awaits.

### **9:12 Adjournment**

Respectfully submitted,

David H. Das (Clerk)