

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Board of Trustees Meeting

Thursday, March 18 , 2010, 6:30 p.m.

Board Members present (absent): Jill Andersen, Tim Balke, Dan Berg, Kathy Coskran, Nancy Gaschott, Judy Goebel, Jane Johnson, Barry Johnson , Candace McClenahan, Jim Santelli, Doug Smalley, Kimon Swarts

Clergy present: Justin Schroeder, Kate Tucker

Others present :

Agenda Item	Presenter	Discussion	Action, if any
Opening Words/ Meeting Preparation		6:30 call to order. Confirm meeting objectives and agenda	
Consent agenda		Approve February minutes as amended Approve new members	Approved
Senior Minister Report	Justin Schroeder	Justin offered some additional comments on the Senior Minister Report sent to Trustees in the March Board Packet (page 4). Justin recently attended a conference for senior ministers of large churches. At that event he learned that the collective growth across all the UU churches of 550 or more members was 3 people. In spite of that statistic, Justin thinks First Universalist can grow, and that as UU's we have a moral obligation to share our message of love and hope. Our governing documents (the mission, vision, etc.) use the term "growth", and he takes that term to mean both spiritual and numerical enlargement. The church staff is weighing the impact of changing the times of worship services in the fall. At this point, they are not sure they will change these times, but they hope to find a schedule that will encourage a greater balance of attendance between the early and late services and relieve some of the pressure on our facility. Another recent action aimed at improving the Sunday experience for congregants has been that the choir and church staff who are working on Sundays, including the ministers, are not parking in the church lot, leaving more room for visitors, people with physical challenges and families with very young children. The staff has been considering having another raffle as a fundraiser. If the staff decides to do a raffle, they will keep in mind lessons learned from last year's raffle. The current canvass campaign is going well. Details are published in the board packet.	
Financial Monitoring Report	Nancy Gaschott	The detailed Financial Monitoring Committee meeting minutes are published in the March Board Packet (page 14) . The committee has set itself an ambitious set of goals for remainder of year. They request time on Board Meeting agendas every month for rest of the church year. Next month they would like to address the topic of church reserve funds.	
Second Question of the Month Update	Kathy Coskran	The second report from the Community Connection committee is published in the March Board Packet (page 15). The committee continues to want reports from board members who have been visiting groups within the church..	
Congregational Survey	Barry, Justin	The board was asked, prior to the meeting, to complete two draft versions of the proposed congregational survey and to come to the meeting prepared to select one of the two as the survey to be deployed to the congregation. These two versions differ in the structure of the first section. One of these is lengthier, while the other asks essentially the same questions in a more condensed way. There was discussion of the merits of each version, with the shorter version finally being selected. There was discussion of the validity of data collected on the basis survey questions based on the current church Ends Statements if the board decides to reword the Ends Statements in the next year, It was decided that even	Approved

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Board of Trustees Meeting

		<p>with different Ends Statement wording in the future, the words selected will still touch on the same issues, so there will probably be some historical value to the data we collect in this year for future Boards of Trustees. There was discussion of what will be done with the data collected. Some of it will be very valuable feedback to the staff. The staff or board, as appropriate, will follow up on areas with negative feedback. High satisfaction areas probably will not get so much attention. It was requested that minor changes be made to the survey in Section II to allow the congregants to report satisfaction with the music & visual arts areas separately. It was also requested that satisfaction with the upkeep of the building, use of space be handled separately.</p>	
<p>Space Issues Feedback – Decide next steps</p>		<p>Barry published some thoughts on three main threads of discussion from last month’s meeting regarding feedback on facility space issues. This can be read in the March Board Packet (page 19). It served as a beginning for discussion.</p> <p><u>Long Range Planning:</u> There was discussion of whether it would be useful for the board to nominate a Long Range Planning committee, composed of church members with one Trustee committee member serving as liaison. It was suggested that the role of such a committee could be information gathering, looking at demographics, and local and national trends that would influence church growth and also thinking about things that the Board as a whole does not have time to consider. It was suggested that the group do a combination of fact finding and dreaming the future and provide direction that will lead us to have the wherewithal to achieve our dreams. A different scenario would be to task the group with researching related to existing dreams and goals. A Long Range Planning committee could put together a few scenarios that would illustrate the sort of future we might experience as a church. The Board could then do strategic planning based on these scenarios. It was proposed that the committee would have limited lifetime with its deliverables done by midyear next year. The Board could take the committee deliverables and to Long Range Planning in conversation with the congregation. There was discussion about the role of the staff in long range planning and whether a Long Range Planning committee should be informed and guided by Justin. There was discussion of another UU church that has a permanent Long Range Planning committee and has found it very valuable. It was felt that a planning committee will need a very strong leader. Barry felt that the Board should direct the committee to focus on church growth. Kate Tucker suggested that “growth” is a flat word, and something like “vitality” would be a better focus. There was discussion of process and roles for the board in planning under Policy Governance. If the Board thinks about the future at too high a level, its role is meaningless. Somewhere between high level planning and micromanaging the staff is probably where the board role should be. In order to achieve our long range goals, there must be buy in by everyone in the church. It was decided that Nancy Gaschott will write a paragraph discussing her vision of how to do long term planning in a church environment and send it to the Board prior to its next meeting. In preparation, she will meet with Justin who will bring input from staff. The Board will discuss this issue again in the future.</p> <p><u>Immediate Building Issues:</u> There was discussion of the appropriateness for the Board ask staff to include in its 2010-11 Budget the use of some reserve money to address building issues</p>	<p>Nancy Gaschott tasked with writing a paper on her vision of how to do long range planning in a church environment. Motion approved regarding staff inclusion of use of reserve funds to address immediate building issues in 2010-11 budget.</p>

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Board of Trustees Meeting

		that are larger than minutia, but less than major construction. While the Board does not want to micromanage, it wants to open up possibility for staff to use reserve funds to address building issues. Motion: The Board asks the church staff to prepare a proposal for use of reserves in an amount staff would recommend for capital improvements they determine necessary to be included in 2010-11 budget. Approved with 2 nay votes. <u>Growth:</u> Discussion of growth was done during the Long Range Planning topic above.	
Sr. Minister Ends Policy Interpretation		Deferred to a future meeting due to time constraints.	
GA Delegate Issues		In the past, the Board has never instructed General Assembly delegates in how to vote on issues. Because there will likely be more people attending GA this year than the number of delegates allotted to our congregation, for the first time it will likely be necessary to have a selection of which attendees will be given official delegate status. This selection is the responsibility of the Nominating Committee.	Board takes no action.
Meeting Summary		The Congregational Survey will use shorter version with the changes mentioned above. Judy Goebel will make those changes. Nancy to provide a paper discussion her vision of how to do long range planning in a church environment.	
Adjourn			8:30

Respectfully Submitted,
Judy Goebel, secretary

Important Dates:

Next meeting: April 15

Treats for Next Meeting Nancy Gaschott