

# First Unitarian Society of Ithaca

Board of Trustees Meeting

February 12, 2018

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## Agenda Item # 1: Opening Reading, Minute Approval, Etc.

Vice President Angela Jihong called the regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees (BoT) to order at 6:06 pm, Feb 12, 2018 (note: on a Monday, not a Tuesday). Angela provided a reading while the chalice was lit.

### Trustees Present:

Scott Grover	Jennifer Streid-Mullen (Treas.)	Angela Jihong (VP)
Wendy Salomon	Andy Turner	

Note: A quorum was present being a majority of the full Board (currently nine members). Treas. Jennifer Streid-Mullen attended via Zoom technology with both audio and visual capability.

### Trustees Absent:

Marie Benedetti	Oliver Habicht (Clerk)
Laura Free (President)	Whitney Wiggins

### FUSIT Members & Guests:

Fred Balfour (Scribe)	Dave Salomon (Stewardship)
Mark Pedersen, Admin	Rev. Margaret Weis, Minister

### Handouts:

1. Memo dated February 12, 2018: TO: All Board Members; FROM: Mark Pedersen; RE: Enclosures.
  - a. Including list of handouts for this meeting.
  - b. Including Pledge Summary for 2016-17 and 2017-18
  - c. Including Current Member Count
2. Agenda: "*First Unitarian Society of Ithaca: Board of Trustee Meeting Agenda: January. 9, 2018*"
3. *Record of Attendance (Sep 2013 to Feb. 11, 2018)*
4. BoT Meeting Minutes: "*First Unitarian Society of Ithaca: Board of Trustees Meeting: January 9, 2018*"
5. "*Minister's Report - February 2018*"
6. Vision of Ministry 2018: "*Vision of Ministry: Mission Lenses*"

### Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Board meeting conducted on January 9, 2018 were presented. Corrections were made.

**MOTION:** Approve the minutes as corrected. **PASSED**

## Agenda Item # 2: Upcoming Dates

Date	Event	Comments
Feb. 27, '18	Balcony Meeting	Strategic Planning
Mar. 13, '18	Regular BoT Meeting:	

## Agenda Item # 3: Unsung Heroes

Ann Stephenson	"Out of the box" activities and events of RE staff to create context and framework for Guatemalan experience.
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## Agenda Item # 4: Committee of the Board Check-in: Stewardship

Angela introduced David Salomon, chair of the BoT Stewardship Committee. Dave touched on a number of items and answered questions.

David gave background comments on overall pledging:

- Current year pledge characteristics (2017-18):
  - Pledge units equals 200;
  - Budgeted increase in average pledge was 8%;
  - Resulting in budgeted pledged total for the year: \$300,000 which was achieved;
- Stewardship proposes budgeting for (2018-19) at 8% increase in average pledge resulting in a budgeted total for 2018-19 of \$325,000.
- Treas. Jennifer confirmed that she was comfortable with budgeting \$325,000 for pledge income for 2018-19.

David noted that the Stewardship Committee is made up of competent and experience FUSIT members, BUT that the ongoing workload can lead to burnout. He asks the BoT to work with the committee to bring in new members, both to reduce the load on existing members and to train new members.

David discussed the committee's work with Membership and Nominating Committees.

- Stewardship Committee is working with the two committees to develop new pledge units (no previous pledge) and increasing the year-on-year pledged amounts from the smaller "newer" pledge units;
- Dave noted that FUSIT traditionally has a handful of very large pledges which drive the average up; such a skewed pledge distribution is common in small to medium church communities;
- And, in the long term, FUSIT is vulnerable to having one or two of those large pledge units drop away -- resulting in a significant drop in annual total and average pledging amounts.

David discussed the stewardship campaign over the next three months.

- Sunday March 4, 2018 is the kickoff sermon for the stewardship campaign;
- Sunday March 11 is a stewardship “party” in the parlor immediately after church service with music and dancing. BoT direct participation requested.
- Stewardship campaign information will be available at the weekly services and coffee hours through March and April.
- The Committee has emerging ideas to add to the campaign.

Angela summarized the outcome of this agenda item:

1. The BoT agrees with the suggested Stewardship budget target for 2018-19 of \$325,000 for total pledging. Treasurer Jennifer agrees.
2. The BoT agrees with the schedule for the stewardship campaign.
3. The BoT commits to help and assist with the Stewardship Committee program over the next three months.
4. The BoT agrees to work with the Stewardship Committee providing guidance and ideas on addressing the “large single pledge vulnerability”.

### **Agenda Item # 5: Community Solar**

Angela noted a letter by Rev. Margaret thoughtfully considering the community solar issue. Rev. Margaret spoke to some general points:

- The BoT has considered the community solar issue from time to time over the past few years. Perhaps it should be re-examined in the light of FUSIT’s moving to a partnership governance model.
- Is community solar a broad social issue for FUSIT or is it a financial issue?
- FUSIT’s past discussions considered the construction of a community solar farm. Now that a number of developers have implemented local solar farms, should FUSIT consider other aspects of community solar?
- A FUSIT task force on community solar is being formed – BOT members are invited to join

The BoT took no action on this issue at this time.

### **Agenda Item # 6: FUSIT Becoming a Sanctuary For Undocumented Immigrants**

Angela opened the topic by noting that the federal immigration authorities had apprehended a number of restaurant workers recently. A spirited discussion ensued. Summarizing the major points brought forward:

- Many UU churches are committed to some form of a sanctuary position; FUSIT has congregation members with high interest in the issue. Should FUSIT be doing something specific?

- An institution openly promoting “sanctuary” must tread carefully through the legal issues; a thoughtful approach with legal counsel would make good sense at FUSIT.
- Is the FUSIT congregation behind this? How would FUSIT equip the staff, trustees, and congregation members to deal with questions out in the community? How would Rev. Margaret or the BOT bring the issue before the congregation for general consideration?
- Rev. Margaret will be attending the monthly Ithaca-wide clergy lunch in the near term and will determine what other congregations are considering.
- Does the issue of “sanctuary” provide an environment for a broader congregation discussion on:
  - What do we believe, and
  - How do we live it?
- A congregation wide discussion must include integrating different parts of FUSIT – for example integrating specific committee and team positions with regard to the FUSIT community.

The BoT took no action on this issue at this time.

### **Agenda Item # 7: A Plan for Planning for Strategic Planning**

The BOT decided that this issue will be taken up at the Balcony Meeting in late February.

### **Agenda Item # 8: All Church Night Proposal**

Angela introduced Rev. Margaret to discuss the concept. Points were made and discussed in a lively interchange:

- The general structure would be a once-a-month potluck dinner followed by team meetings. Childcare included can be an attractive issue to bring in families with children. A meal together as a congregation is a very desirable goal.
- Rev. Margaret will make this decision and implement within the Staff and Team Leader Council and she is using this BoT agenda item to keep the BoT informed and bring the board along. Will the BOT meetings fall outside such a structure – BOT can consider and define.
- Moving towards a monthly Church Night tradition would take a period of time. Benefits seem plentiful:
  - Cross fertilization of committees and teams all meeting the same night.
  - People outside the current committee/team structure could use this event to start up a new interest group(s).
- Some general points:
  - The idea of a Wednesday night “church night” is quite common across Protestant churches, particularly the large evangelical churches.

- If most team and committee meetings were held on a Church Night, each group must be disciplined about communicating cancellations, etc. However a tradition might grow that all meetings are held on Church Night no matter who shows up.
- Technology such as Zoom could make this concept work.

The BOT took no action on this issue but asked Rev. Margaret to update the BoT as work progresses.

### **Agenda Item # 9: Review of Staffing Procedures/Budget Results**

Angela asked Rev. Margaret to update the BoT on this issue. Rev. Margaret commented:

- The staff and Team Leader Council are adjusting to the perception that Rev. Margaret is head of staff as defined in partnership governance.
- Rev. Margaret and the staff are looking at work done by staff members in the context of job descriptions and pay levels.
- Rev. Margaret proposes a joint staff and board retreat across the weekend in August 2018 which will include this issue and other general issues under partnership governance.

The BOT took no action on this issue but asked Rev. Margaret to update the BoT as work progresses.

### **Agenda Item # 10: Budget Progress**

Treas. Jennifer reported no significant change in the financials since the previous BOT meeting. The BOT took no action on this issue.

Note: Trustee Jennifer Streid-Mullen left the meeting at this point reducing trustee count to four, so that a quorum was not present for the remainder of the meeting.

### **Agenda Item # 11: Finalize Vision of Ministry**

The BoT updated Handout # 6, the draft "Vision of Ministry". The new version is available from church admin.

## **Meeting Adjourned at 7:59 pm**

### **Open Action Items**

<b>Person</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
Each BoT	Jan 9, '18	Develop personal elevator speech describing the value and rewards of Board membership
BoT	Feb 12, '18	Work with Stewardship Committee: - Bring new members onto the committee. - Address the "large pledge vulnerability" issue.

## FUSIT BoT Meeting Summary - February 12, 2018

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Board Action or Outcome</b>
3. Unsung Heros	Ann Stephenson for her “over the top” activities and events done by RE staff to create context and framework for Guatemalan experience.
4. Stewardship Committee check-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pledge growth for 2018-19 proposed at 8%.</li><li>• BoT to work with Committee at strategic level of: A) committee growth &amp; development, and B) overall pledge structure.</li></ul>
5. Community Solar	Task force forming to review FUSIT’s future participation in community issue(s).
6. FUSIT formally supporting sanctuary	BoT will come back to this issue as high priority.
8. All Church Night Proposal	Rev. Margaret shared the action being considered at the staff and TLC level.
11. Finalize “Vision of Ministry”	The BoT updated and wordsmithed draft” Vision of Ministry”; new version available from church admin.