

First Unitarian Society of Ithaca

Board of Trustees Meeting

November 11, 2020 Minutes

President Andy Turner called the regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees (BoT) to order at 6:38 pm on Wednesday, November 11, 2020.

Trustees Present: Andy Turner (president), Diana Nier (clerk), Therese O'Connor, Lyn Staack, Simon Catterall, Kim Wilkinson, Elton Hall, and Jennifer Streid-Mullen (treasurer, ex officio). Matt Hare (vice president) joined the meeting at 7:23pm.

Trustees Absent: Carsten Hess, Rev. Margaret Weis (ex officio)

FUSIT Members & Guests: none present

Handouts:

- [Committees of the Board membership list](#)
- [Board Goals for 2021-22 draft document](#)
- [Board-Minister Relationship](#)
- [Finance/Capital briefing](#)
- [Draft Charter for a Healthy Congregation Team](#)

Agenda Item # 1: Opening Reading and Consent Agenda Approval

Andy Turner lit the chalice.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

- Approve the minutes of the October 14, 2020 Board of Trustees meeting, shown in Google Docs folder as of the date and time of this meeting
- Approve membership of Board Committees: Finance, Endowment, and Nomination

MOTION: Approve the Consent Agenda items. Moved by Elton Hall, seconded by Therese O'Connor. **PASSED.**

Agenda Item # 2: Minister's Report and Upcoming Dates

(Newsletter deadline this month is November 12.)

Date	Event	Comments
Sunday 11/22	Cornbread and Cider Communion	

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Sunday 11/22	Central NY cluster leading worship	
Wednesday 12/2	Common Read Book Group	Text is <i>Breathe: a Letter to My Sons</i> , by Imani Perry
Fri & Sat 12/4-12/5	Living the Pledge Facilitators' Training	

Agenda Item # 3: Unsung Heroes for October 2020

- Discussion of whether Unsung Heroes is properly within the Board's remit, given the structure of partnership governance, or whether it belongs with a Ministry Team.

MOTION: The Board will table Unsung Heroes until December, pending review and information gathering by Lyn Staack. Moved by Therese O'Connor, seconded by Simon Catterall. **PASSED.**

Agenda Item # 4: Financial Report and Sanctuary Repair Options

- Financial situation is okay for 2020-2021, though plate and pledges are down. Jennifer Streid-Mullen is working on the PPP forgiveness application and we should be fine on that front.
- 2021-2022 financials are very concerning, even with the remains of the PPP loan. Projected shortfall of \$30,000.
- Organ repairs are estimated to cost \$21,000 and take approximately one week. Jennifer recommends the Board approve this expense, with funds coming from Endowment.
- Fixing cracks in the sanctuary and improving lighting will take at least one month and cost \$70,000. Fresnels are separate and cost \$2,000. The Board must decide the source of funding when approving the financial outlay.
- Jennifer estimates we will need a \$50,000-\$60,000 loan to cover the balance of the sanctuary repairs, unless the Board approves a Capital Campaign.
- The Board will invite Sara Catterall to the December meeting to discuss sanctuary repairs in more detail.
- Because Finance and Endowment are working closely with Buildings & Grounds, the Board has decided not to appoint a B&G liaison at this time.

MOTION: The Board approves spending up to \$21,000 for organ repairs, as needed, to be paid for by Endowment unless funds are available from a 20-21 Endowment Capital Fund. Moved by Therese O'Connor, seconded by Lyn Staack. **PASSED**

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Agenda Item # 5: Service Auction Next Steps

- Discussion of feasibility of the Service Auction given pandemic situation.
- Lyn Staack proposed an ad hoc committee of the Board to research online auction options and choose a platform, etc., and report back to the Board in December.
- Proposal to research some online auction structures used by other churches and nonprofits and copy one wholesale.
- We will get a platform set up for the December meeting, and congregants will submit their own auction items.
- Ad hoc committee members will be Lyn Staack, Therese O'Connor, and Kim Wilkinson.

Agenda Item # 6: Board-Minister Relationship

- Rev. Margaret is planning a Committee on Ministry to support her.
- The Board needs either to assign people to handle the issues still hanging from the summer, or schedule a series of balcony meetings to handle them.
- Discussion of setting up a Governance Committee to help keep the Board on track.

Agenda Item # 7: Right Relations Committee Next Steps

- Discussion of whether a Right Relations Committee should be a Committee of the Board or a Ministry Team. A Governance Committee or a Personnel Committee would fall under the Board, but a Right Relations Team seems to be more in the Ministry's remit than the Board's.
- Members of the Right Relations Team need extensive training, but meetings would be ad hoc as issues arise. It is very important to include people outside the "known names," both to pull people into ownership of the congregation and to avoid burnout.
- Discussion of the Healthy Congregation Team draft charter written by Rev. Margaret.
- Historically, Mark Pederson handled much of the work that a Personnel Committee would otherwise be responsible for. Jennifer Streid-Mullen has been shouldering it, but when we hire a Membership Coordinator, Jessica English may be able to take some of that work, particularly since the future Treasurer may not have time or interest.
- Andy Turner will reach out to Rev. Margaret to ask whether she intends for the Healthy Congregation Team to be a Ministry Team or a Committee of the Board. The Board recommends that it be a Ministry Team, but one that is welcome to consult closely with the Board.

Agenda Item # 8: Countering Structural Racism

- The Board will move forward with the FUSIT Anti-Racism process and Policy Review with a first step of organizing a retreat for the Board, Minister and Staff and the Ministry Anti-Racism team for January, 2021 with the assistance of the Rev. Sunshine Wolfe.

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Agenda Item # 9: Board Goals for 2021-22

- Discussion of Board Goals document created by Matt Hare and Andy Turner.
- Edit suggested to the 4th goal, clarifying that the policy review will happen after a winter retreat and UUA input. Edit accepted.
- Board Goals will be added to the Meeting Agenda template to help the Board remain focused on our mission.

MOTION: The Board accepts the goals for 2020-21 as listed in the Board Goals document attached to these minutes. Moved by Therese O'Connor, seconded by Simon Catterall.

PASSED

Agenda Item # 10: Meeting/Action Summary for Communication

- Jennifer Streid-Mullen will request the Strategic Planning Committee to record a short video to include in either the newsletter or the next Sunday service.
- Matt Hare suggested the Board record some short videos discussing our recent work. We will submit a Board Minute for one of the December worship services.

Meeting adjourned at 8:09pm.

Minutes taken by Diana Nier, 11/11/20.