

**First Unitarian Church of Chicago
Minutes of November 16, 2017 Board Meeting**

Trustees Present:

Joan Pederson	President
Jim Proctor	Vice President
Christine Harrell	Alternate
Joe Harrington	
Margot Horn	
Dennis Koehn	

Also Present:

Rev. Teri Schwartz	Senior Co-Minister
Rev. David Schwartz	Senior Co-Minister
Thom Thomas	Student Minister
Julie Larson	Secretary

Joan called the meeting to order at 7:00. Teri offered opening words and David lit the chalice, followed by check-in by all present, then regular business at 7:20.

1. RE Report by Beth Moss

Report offered showing breakdown of attendance, budget expenditures, outreach to other church communities for combined programs.

The motion by Joe to accept the report, seconded by Margot, was unanimously approved.

Updates from Priority Teams^[JP1]

^[JP2]**2.** David offered the report from the **Communications Team**. Jo Brill received commendation for her work on the church website. The podcast brought in a new member. Both the podcast and a Facebook presence have drawn new people into the church. There is discussion about asking some of the young adults to offer a teaching forum for helping less tech-savvy members become familiar with Google groups, etc.

3. Policy Team: Policy Regarding Disruptive Behavior

Joan offered the report of the Policy Team, setting forth giving its purposes, goals, timetable, and RASCI chart. The motion by Margot to accept the report, seconded by Jim, was unanimously approved.

Joan presented an updated proposal for updating the Policy on Disruptive Behavior.

- Changes since the October meeting incorporate suggestions from the discussion at that meeting, specify that the issues addressed by the policies are aggressive and

divisive behavior and not diversity of opinion, clarify in detail what disruptive behavior entails, clarify the policy's sanctions and the progressive stages of the procedure for employing them, and uses clearer language than the original policy did.

- Margot asked that the policy specify that threats may be either actual or perceived and that sanctioned behavior explicitly include bullying and demeaning behavior; by group agreement, it was.
- David asked whether the policy on disruptive behavior addressed misrepresentation. Joan answered that it does not, but that a separate policy could; see below.
- If the revised policy on disruptive behavior incorporating the language about bullying and threats is adopted tonight, Joe asked that it be reviewed by an appropriate attorney before being put into practice; that is the plan.

The motion by Joe to adopt the updated policy, seconded by Dennis, was unanimously approved. The complete approved policy, as amended, appears as an appendix to these minutes. The approved policy will be added to the policy manual, which will be published on the church website. RE policies that are believed to exist but that do not appear in the manual will be sought and added if it is clear that they have been approved by the board. If they have not, they will be presented to the board for its approval.

Joan presented the first draft of a proposed policy on misrepresentation for comment and discussion, revision by the policy team, and presentation to the board for adoption at a later meeting. Key points of the discussion:

- Margot: this is not directed at one person, a wider scope referencing the Social Justice Council drafting a letter to Kim Foxx that was to be presented as from the full body of the church rather than a single group.
- Dennis: what about change and rehabilitation? add language that will offer guidance, leadership etc.
- Joe: who gets to represent the church without approval from the board or church leaders needs to be addressed

4. Jim offered an update from the **Spiritual Adventures Team**. Cindy Pardo sent out electronic surveys to decide where the council will go forward. Not all who attended the discussion sponsored by the team have received their surveys yet.

5. Teri spoke about the **Capitol Campaign** regarding building maintenance and increasing membership. The need to have a strategic meeting with the congregation on whether keeping the building is something that can be achieved. The Capital Campaign leadership proposed: Lisa Christensen Gee and Jim Proctor.

The motion by Joe, to appoint Lisa and Jim as Co-Chairs of the Capital Campaign Team, seconded by Christine, was unanimously approved.

6. Emergency Plan and Security: Current safety policies were discussed and the draft of a plan being developed by Director of Operations Michael Knowles was presented. Thom will be the point person, having had experience at other churches.

7. Membership Coordinator: Teri reported that there were 77 applicants for the position, and the posting is closed. Interviews will be conducted in December with the planned start date in January 2018.

8. Minister's Report: Teri and David reported that new member classes will be held in January. The Little People Learning Center is requesting to rent the room vacated by PSN, with rent of \$2,200 a month, initially with a 6-month lease, and yearly leases after. This proposal will mean that the church cannot use the room other than Sunday. Proposed discussion on whether to proceed with the lease.

The motion that Joan have the authority to speak for the board and sign the agreement by Joe, seconded by Jim, was unanimously approved.

9. Joan offered the **Treasurer's Report** put together by Mike Knowles. Pledges are ahead of time frame expected. There is no cash flow issue at the moment, as expenses are not high.

10. October 29th Minutes: Motion to accept was made by Margot, Joe seconded. A few corrections were offered, and the minutes were accepted unanimously as corrected.

David offered closing words.

Meeting ended at 9:16 pm

APPENDIX: Full text of policy adopted during the meeting (see agenda item 3)

POLICY REGARDING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

While openness to a wide variety of individuals is one of the prime values held by our congregation and expressed in our denomination's purposes and principles, we affirm the belief that our congregation must maintain a secure atmosphere where such openness can exist: both for those on its physical property or participating in church activities elsewhere and, by its public presence and impact, for those who might be drawn to it. When any person's physical and/or emotional well-being or freedom to safely express his or her beliefs or opinions are threatened, the source of this threat must be addressed firmly and promptly, even if this ultimately requires the expulsion of the offending person or persons.

Disruptive behavior by an individual may lead to concerns about one or more of the following:

1. Perceived compromises of the safety or well-being of an adult or child, including but not limited to bullying, intimidation, and physical harm;
2. Disruption of church activities;
3. Disruption by an individual affiliated with the congregation of activities of an organization to which the congregation belongs;
4. Disruption of public events where the individual is a representative of or otherwise identifiable with the congregation;
5. Diminishment of the appeal of the church to its potential and existing membership, staff, and/or space users.

Therefore, the following shall be policy of the First Unitarian Society of Chicago with regard to disruptive behavior by an individual or individuals:

If an **immediate response** to such behavior is required, the Minister(s), if available, and/or the leader of the group involved will undertake it and, afterward, promptly notify church leadership. This response may include asking the offending person or persons to leave, or suspending the meeting or activity until it can be resumed safely. If further

assistance is required, the Police Department may be called. As soon as possible, the leader(s) involved will notify the Minister(s) and the President and Vice President. This group, in consultation with at least one additional representative from the Board of Trustees, will determine what steps must be taken before the offending person or persons may return to the activities involved. A letter detailing these steps will be sent by this group to the offending party.

Situations **not** requiring immediate response will be referred to an ad hoc committee consisting of the Senior Minister(s), the President and Vice President, and at least one additional representative from the Board of Trustees, along with people deemed by the Board of Trustees to be appropriate for dealing with the situation.

The committee will assess the situation using their own judgment, as follows:

- a) The committee will respond to problems as they arise. There will be no attempt to define “acceptable” behavior in advance.
- b) The committee and the Board will deal with anyone identified as disruptive as an individual and will actively avoid stereotypic assumptions that might seem to apply to that person.
- c) The committee is responsible for collecting all necessary information.
- d) In evaluating the problem, the committee will consider the following points:
 - i) DANGER—Is the individual the source of a threat or perceived threat to persons or property?
 - ii) DISRUPTION—How much interference with church or other functions is occurring?
 - iii) OFFENSE—How likely is it that the disruptive behavior will drive or keep prospective or existing members, staff, and/or space users away?
 - iv) DIMINUTION—How likely is the disruptive behavior to substantially diminish the reputation of the congregation in its denomination, in other organizations it has joined, and in the wider community?
- e) To determine the necessary response, the following points will be considered:
 - i) CAUSES—Why is the disruption occurring: is it a conflict between the individual and others in the church? Is it due to a professionally diagnosed condition?
 - ii) HISTORY—What is the frequency and degree of disruption in the individual’s past?
 - iii) PROBABILITY OF CHANGE—How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?
- f) The committee will decide on the necessary response on a case-by-case basis, normally using the following progressing stages.—_ If the issue is not remediated at one stage, then it will be addressed using the next higher stage.
 - i) STAGE ONE—The committee shall meet with the person and other related parties to communicate the concern about the disruptive behavior, and will summarize the meeting in writing for the individual and the Board.
 - ii) STAGE TWO—After consultation with the full Board of Trustees, the committee may determine that the offending individual should be excluded from the church and/or specific church activities for a limited period of time. If so, it will share with the individual its clearly written reasons for its decision, the scope and duration of the exclusion, and the conditions of return.
 - iii) STAGE THREE—After consultation with and approval by the Board of Trustees, the offending individual may be permanently excluded from the church premises and all church activities. Notification of such a decision will be made in writing, and will explain the individual’s rights and possible recourse.

The committee may not abbreviate this progressive, three-stage response without the advance consent of the Board of Trustees, and only on specific grounds that justify such urgency, or if the real possibility of violence exists unless swift action is taken.

- g) Any action taken under item (f) may be appealed in writing to the Board of Trustees.

The First Unitarian Society of Chicago strives to be an inclusive community, affirming our differences in belief, opinions and life experiences. However, concern for the safety and well-being of the congregation as a whole must be given priority over the privileges and inclusion of the individual. To the degree the disruptive behavior compromises the health of the congregation, our actions as people of faith must reflect this emphasis on security.

Originally adopted during the 1980s; revised November 16, 2017