

First Unitarian Church of Chicago
Minutes of May 16, 2019 Board Meeting

Trustees Present:

Betty Holcomb	President
Christine Harrell (via Skype)	Vice President
Julia Elizabeth Harris	Treasurer
John Martin-Eatinger	
Ellen Larue	
Beverly Bennett	
Amos Biggers	

Also Present:

Julie Larson	Secretary
Jason Lydon	

Absent:

Kristin Faust

Meeting began at 7:11 with opening words by Betty.

1. RE Report

Along with the written report, Jason (representing Beth) highlighted the following:

- Easter Sunday was a big success
- The Coming of Age group Boston trip is happening soon
- OWL has started for younger children
- Youth worship is scheduled for the 3rd Sunday in June

There was no motion to accept.

2. Treasurer's Report by Liz

- April had a net income of \$6000 and a net loss of \$65,000, because of pledges that haven't been received yet. The projection is that the year will end at a loss. The endowment will need to be used to cover the loss. If the building fund is not used by June, that releases \$75,000. There are errors with Jason pay listing, and his income in the budget. Fenn house funds are allocated for Jason's pay.
- The budget passed for the year was very off. The church took in less revenue as the previous year and the budget was based on the previous year's income.
- RE (Beth) and administrator (Mike) will be receiving raises given that they are underpaid according to UUA. Music Director is at 102%, so he will not be.
- The custodial staff will not be receiving raises this year.
- A membership coordinator needs to be hired, 20 hours a week instead of 10, over 9 months' time. Compensation recommendation is \$20,000. This will come from the endowment.

Discussion:

Betty: need to really consider the position of membership coordinator.

Liz: talked with Kristin, discussed this with her, she agrees that there needs to be a MC and to borrow from the endowment

Francis Shore: welcoming and becoming committee does this type of thing that the MC. Borrowing from the endowment isn't sound. Proposal: form a committee and have them fulfill the duties of the MC. He thinks that the committee can handle the workload for one year. If after a year there is a membership increase, then the MC isn't necessary.

Ellen: Francis needs to bring up these points at the Annual meeting, explain what he explained here, and see if there is enthusiasm from the congregation.

Beverly: a committee can reach more people than one person, so the MC. We need to be more aggressive in growing numbers.

Amos: an MC has the professional background that a committee doesn't.

Christine: the professional will be more effective. Other churches that have an MC have raised enough funds to pay for the position plus.

Francis: Belonging and welcoming committee was set up by David. He believes that that they can do better than an MC.

The motion to accept by Ellen, seconded by Amos was unanimously approved.

3. Minister's Report by Jason

- Highlights include: CC and pledge drive are ongoing. There are people who are withholding pledges pending the outcome of Findley's class resolution.
- Staff has gone on vacation at various times which have been filled by Jason.
- Jason has gone to a few different groups, including humanist, denominational affairs and the membership committee. Membership classes and pastoral care committee is ongoing
- Jason will be starting at second Unitarian the first week of August.

4. Committee Assignments

Board:

President: Kristin Faust

Vice President: Grace Williams

Trustees: Ellen LaRue (until 2021)

John Martin-Eatinger (until 2020)

Cindy Pardo

Margie Gonwa

Grace Latibeaudiere

Amos Biggers

Alternate Trustee: Betty Holcomb

Council Chairs:

Program Council Co-Chair: Kathy Szoke (no co-chair)

Religious Education Chair: Sophia Watson

Social Justice Council Chair: Evan Freund

Nominating Committee:

Delores _____

Lisa _____

Jennifer Randall

Break 8:07-8:15

5. Presentation and Board Decision for The Nature of Racism Class

Finley Campbell read an opening statement discussing the history and intent of the class. This document will be available upon request.

Others speaking for Finley/The Nature of Racism Class:

- Chris Berry: wants to take the class, does not understand the adversarial contention in the church. A reason he joined the church is to make connections.
- Cheryl Wegner, co-chair of the program council: Statement read by Cheryl and Cindy Pardo. The program council has decided that the class fulfills all of the requirements. The program council was not included in the decision making. Statement available upon request.
- Phiefer Browne, Chairperson adult religious education committee. Read statement, has attended many of the classes since the beginning. Statement available upon request.
- Allan Lindrup: The class offers a lot of different sources, all viewpoints are welcome, no belittling of the other viewpoints. The curriculum requirement is a false allegation in that many other classes do not have them either. Feels the board is acting in a discriminatory way.
- Joan Staples: This is a class offered by someone who knows things she doesn't, should not be rejected. The church should be open to the lessons to be learned. The class should be held up as a model, and not discriminated against.

Board member questions:

John: re the document sent to the board members: in your (Finley's) opinion, regarding Black Lives Matter and Neo-racism, what is your opinion on color exclusive groups?

Finley: Rejects BLM in that it's too generic. Must be multiracial. BLM is too focused on raising money and not wanting to be inclusive with other races.

John: was there a syllabus?

Betty: written curriculum was sent to the board. It was labeled a draft.

Finley: it was a draft because it depends on whether the participants are interested in the topic and are they going to come back. Until he knows that he can't really set a syllabus.

Ellen: what was the original complaint that led to this?

Finley: Announcement in church to renounce the Neo-racism in the UU church. The purpose of the class to rebuke the Neo-racism of the UUA.

Christine: the issue is that any theology that does not agree with this definition ideology then you are by definition a racist. That calling any other ideology that does not agree is racist.

Finley read his closing words, available upon request.

Executive session started at 8:50

Board meeting resumed at 9:25

Jason called the meeting back open to offer the decision by the board.

John presented the decision: "The Board has decided that the Nature of Racism cannot be held at 1st Unitarian due to the one-sided ideology as written in the curriculum. A future class with diverging views on racism can be offered, operating under the auspicious of the Program Council with approval by the Board of Trustees.

Finley thanked the board for their consideration.

Betty had closing words.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30