

First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco  
**Regular Board Meeting**  
October 20, 2009

***Present***

*Board Members*

Matt Fuller, Moderator

Claire Weber, Vice Moderator

Thad Smith, Treasurer

Jane Park, Secretary

Laura Gilmore

Stephen Schwichow

Judith Stoddard

Don Williams

Bill Wise

*Excused*

Ben Bear

*Staff*

Joel Gilbertson-White, Ministerial Intern

**Call to order.** The meeting was called to order by Moderator Matt Fuller at 7:03 pm. Matt announced that Greg was on bed rest and would join the meeting by phone for selected agenda items. He noted the Board's covenant was posted in the room.

**Opening.** Don read from Christopher Reeve "On Being Unitarian..."

**Agenda review.** Matt announced three additional items under new business: two related to General Assembly and District Assembly delegate elections; and the third related to performance evaluation for the Board.

**Consent agenda.** The minutes of the September 15, 2009 meeting were accepted with minor revisions.

**Policy Review**

1. Fundraising Policy

The Board briefly discussed the fundraising policy, passed in May in 2008. It needs updating to reflect the change from Executive Team to Senior Executive. Matt stated he would discuss with Greg staff implementation of the policy. Some concern was expressed about the ambiguity of the phrase "Most fundraising must have the prior approval of the Board of Trustees..." (emphasis from the Secretary). Matt will make edits to the policy and bring it back for the Board's consideration next month.

2. Updated Liaison Chart

The Board reviewed the Board-Committee Liaison chart, prepared by Matt. Corrections under stewardship/fund development were noted. It was reiterated that the liaison system is an interim measure, while the Board develops the "missing middle/program council" structure. The Board agreed to repeat last year's "column reports," wherein Board members present on the status of groups in each of the five groupings. Reports would probably begin in January.

3. Distribution of Board packets

The Board briefly discussed dissemination of the Board packets. It was agreed that packets are archival material (and will be so considered for auditing purposes) and that electronic

copies could be distributed beyond the board. The Board elected not to adopt any formal policy at this time and agreed to be mindful about using watermark/draft stamps.

## **Reports**

### **1. Senior Minister's report.**

Greg submitted his written report for September and took questions via telephone. The Board was very supportive of the new format of the report. Greg will describe trends in the RE program in next month's report.

### **2. Executive Director's report.**

The Board reviewed the Executive Director's report. It was noted that lack of volunteer coverage for the front desk has required Nancy and Jay to assume more phone duty. This is problematic if there are concerns about event/rental income. Staff members have not received raises, but the church expects to do this retroactively.

#### **a. Plate collection and Attendance**

The Buddhist group is no longer reflected in this report. The reports now focus on who is in building on Sunday morning. The RE numbers are encouraging; the Board requested clarification as to whether the numbers includes leaders as well as learners.

#### **b. August Financials.**

Currently, there is a month's lag in the Board's receipt of financial reports, due largely to the time required to reconcile all the Schwab account into separate funds for balance sheet. In order to receive more recent reports for budget to actuals, the Board agreed to review the balance sheet on a quarterly basis.

## **Old Business**

### **1. California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC) update**

Bill did not attend last week's CPMC meeting on the institutional master plan sent to board via email today. The main issue for the church is that there is not change in the overall plan: we will have an enormous hospital next to us. Several church members attended the meeting and gave comment. The meeting was proportionately filled with supporters of the hospital.

### **2. Annual Budget Drive/Beyond Sunday Challenge Update**

Matt reported that we now have \$7,200 left to reach the \$50K goal. Matt noted that Board calls made a difference in securing the challenge grant from financial leaders, lifting the total raised from \$17,000 to \$25,000. This put the Board in much stronger position to go before the congregation. Matt requested that Board members make additional calls to members who pledged during the "first" budget drive, but have not responded to the challenge. Board members expressed gratitude for Jonathan's work on the Beyond Sunday brochure.

### **3. Ordination Request from Jeremy Nickel**

Matt reported on communication with former intern Jeremy Nickel. He understands and supports the need to avoid encroaching on church fundraising efforts. He plans to fundraise outside the church and does not anticipate requesting the church mailing list for fundraising. The Board understood the main impact to be on staff and foregone rental income and agreed

that this impact was consistent with our mission. Jeremy will send a more detailed plan that the Board will review before making a recommendation to the congregation.

## **Committee Update & Reports**

### **1. Lay Leadership Development**

Laura reported that the group met in October and is delineating roles and responsibilities. The group is focusing on the “missing middle,” and is doing research on this and congregational covenants in other churches.

### **2. Culture of Generosity.**

Judith reported that the group is excited that their first picks for this year’s annual budget drive seem willing to serve. Claire and Judith will serve as liaisons to the annual budget drive. Thad will be the link to the service auction. There will be a 5-year plan update.

### **3. Town Hall Review & Update**

The Board expressed thanks to Claire, Ben, Don et al. for the first town hall. The response was very positive. The Building Town Hall, to be led by Jane in January, is next.

### **4. Finance & Investment**

Thad reported on the Finance Committee’s first meeting of the year (meetings will be first Monday of month at 7pm). The committee consists of Thad, Don Williams, Ron Weber and Matt Anderson, with a quarterly review with Nancy. At the November Board meeting, Thad expects to present on the Financial Review currently being conducted. The Review will be previewed the Thursday before the next board meeting. After the Review, the Board should make a final bylaw recommendation regarding the Financial Review, instead of the annual suspension of the bylaw’s audit provision of the last few years. The committee would like to be more involved in the budget development process next year. Looking forward, Thad stated that the board needs to identify a new treasurer. He is also preparing a binder for the next treasurer.

Thad also reported on the year’s first Investment Committee meeting. He stated that KCM reviews the church portfolio every other quarter, with the next review in January. Investment Committee chair Michael L’Orange would like to present to the Board in February and requests guidance as to what the Board would like to see in the presentation. The committee reviewed and approved the spending/investment policy, which was also supported by church attorney Bruce Cowan. It is now ready to give to the auditors. Thad also noted that the Castile Intern fund is growing very slowly; it would need to be invested for growth in order to yield fund that could help an intern. The total now stands at \$25,000.

The Board heartily conveyed its appreciation to Thad for his service as treasurer.

## **New Business**

### **1. Fiscal Year 09-10 Budget**

Matt reviewed information from Nancy, presented in packet, on the possible shortfall in projected rental income. A long discussion followed. Greg joined by phone for part of the discussion. There were several areas of agreement. The Board does not wish to cut the budget at this time. Rather, the Board agreed that it should be actively engaged in efforts to grow

rental income, as we have been in raising pledge income for the Beyond Sunday Coordinator. A first step is for the Board to identify church members who may have special skills related to increasing rental income (e.g., marketing background). It was also agreed that the Board should not run a deficit, given our repeated promise during the budget process that we would not “spend money that we didn’t have.” In the meanwhile, it was agreed not to implement the suggested changes in the budget; the Board further directed the staff to put the Macondray project on hold. Matt requested that Board members send him ideas for a marketing committee. He would submit a Flame announcement

## 2. Sponsorship Request from Amy Moses-Lagos

Matt explained the importance of sponsorship, noting it was a denominational requirement for those training to be ministers. Joel described sponsorship as standing in support of the ministerial candidate. The Board agreed Amy has shown a deep level of church involvement.

Judith **moved** that the church sponsor Amy Moses-Lagos as a ministerial candidate. Stephen seconded the motion. The motion was **approved** by a unanimous vote of 8 to 0 with no opposing votes, no abstentions and the moderator not voting.

## 3. Ordination Request – Michael Walker

Overall, the Board was supportive of Michael’s request. There was some discussion of the process in responding to these requests. In keeping with the process requested of Jeremy, the Board would like to see a more specific plan from Michael before formally considering a recommendation to the congregation. Michael would like an ordination committee, which would be a fundraising committee. The Board agreed it was appropriate for Stephen to proceed with seeking committee volunteers. Matt will communicate the Board’s requests to Michael, noting that the Board is generally supportive of recommending ordination.

## 4. Privacy Policy

Matt described the proposed privacy policy as proactive, not created in response to any problem. The impetus came in part in response to the recently approved Up On Top Memorandum of Understanding, which includes a provision to share member information with Up On Top. In a brief discussion, the Board expressed support for the policy and offered Matt feedback, suggesting a warmer tone and a statement grounding the policy in our principles. Joel offered to help. Matt requested that further suggestions be sent by email.

## 5. Resolution Congratulating Rev. John Newcomb Marsh

Claire provided background on this agenda item. The resolution was developed to “even out” the recognition of Margot’s ministry by granting her emerita status. Some in the congregation expressed the desire to bestow the emeritus title on John, which is not appropriate for a minister who has not retired.

The Board considered the following **motion**, printed in the Board Packet:

*Whereas, John Marsh was co-minister, with Margot Campbell Gross, of this congregation from 1995 to 2004, during which time our church spirit was revitalized, a highly successful capital fund drive conducted and an extensive*

*program of seismic strengthening and overall remodeling of our facilities took place; and*

*Whereas, his sermons during a decade of ministry reflected the lessons learned from his wide-ranging faith-inspired actions like volunteering to quietly maintain aquariums for his children's schools, swimming the cold Bay waters in both winter and summer and leading multi-faith death penalty vigils at San Quentin before planned executions; and*

*Whereas, his sermons also evidenced his personal spiritual practice and his commitment to religious education for children, whom he regularly entertained with his creative stories; and*

*Whereas, since leaving San Francisco, John has continued his service to Unitarian-Universalism at New England congregations and is currently working on a Doctor of Ministry at the Colgate Rochester Theological School; and*

*Whereas, he was recently called to be the fifteenth settled minister of the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, a vibrant congregation whose over 500 members endorsed his call with an overwhelming 98.5 percent vote of acclimation; now, therefore be it*

*Resolved, that the Board of Trustees of the First Unitarian Society of San Francisco, on behalf of ourselves and our entire congregation, do unanimously pass this resolution extending our heart-felt congratulations to Reverend John Newcomb Marsh on his call to ministry at the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa; and be it*

*Further Resolved, that we wish both John and Alison a joyous installation service on November 16, 2009, and a meaningful and rewarding ministry in Ottawa for many years to come.*

Stephen **moved** approval of the resolution; Don seconded the motion. The motion was **approved** by a unanimous vote of 9 to 0, with no opposing votes and no abstentions.

The Board expressed its gratitude to Jonathan for the quality formatting of the resolution.

#### 6. Nominating Committee Request for Board delegate candidates

Jane relayed a request from Galen Workman, Nominating Committee chair, that Board member consider running as delegates for General Assembly (GA) and District Assembly (DA), given their understanding of the congregation. Stephen was willing to run for DA; Laura is a second year DA delegate and is willing to be considered for GA delegate candidacy. Jane will communicate this to Galen.

#### 7. Date of Delegate election.

The Board considered possible dates for this election. It was agreed that March 7, 2010 was the best date. The meeting will very likely involve a "voting table" only, not an assembled congregation. This coincides with the first week of the Silent Auction, which might increase voting. Jane will be unable to attend that meeting; she will do the preparation that the bylaws require of the Secretary and Stephen agreed to staff the table. Jane will relay the date to Galen. There was also a brief discussion of whether the Nominating Committee should

nominate more candidates than open positions, rather than presenting a slate. Matt agreed to place the item on the November or December agenda.

**8. Board Performance Evaluation**

The Policy Governance document requires the Board to evaluate its performance, a provision that has not been followed. In the interest of time, Matt suggested that this item be tabled to a future meeting.

**Upcoming Events**

Upcoming events are listed in the agenda.

**Appreciation**

Per Nancy's report: Mason Ingram and Joan Labby, for assistance in updating the membership database.

Jonathan, for the Beyond Sunday Coordinator mailing, and expert formatting of the John Marsh resolution and Board covenant.

**Good and welfare.**

The Board expressed condolences to Joan Rost, on the passing of Clay Rost on Monday.

**Closing.** Don read from Robert Fulghum “...the lightness of being”

**Adjournment**

Matt adjourned the meeting at 9:45.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jane Park  
Secretary, Board of Trustees