

First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco
Regular Board Meeting
September 15, 2009

Present

Board Members

Matt Fuller, Moderator

Claire Weber, Vice Moderator

Thad Smith, Treasurer

Jane Park, Secretary

Ben Bear

Laura Gilmore

Stephen Schwichow

Judith Stoddard

Don Williams

Bill Wise

Staff

Rev. Greg Stewart, Senior Minister

Call to order. The meeting was called to order by Moderator Matt Fuller at 7:03pm.

Opening. Ben led two songs “If we have courage ...” & “Weave and spin...”

Agenda review. No changes to the agenda.

Consent agenda. The minutes of the August 18, 2009 meeting were amended with clarifications related to the contributions of the Buddhists and the Beyond Sunday focus of current Annual Budget Drive activities, as well as other minor revisions.

Policy Review

1. Nested Bowls of policy governance. The Board briefly discussed the “Nested bowls” concept of policy and agreed it was helpful in guiding policy development.

2. The Updated Governance Principles Document has been posted on the Board web page. Other website updates include posting of the revised Governance Document, the current budget and all approved minutes since July 2008 (except September 08). Jane will create a spruced up of version of the Board’s covenant to display at Board meetings.

Reports

1. Senior Minister’s report.

Greg presented his monthly report. In response to questions from Board members, Greg discussed his resignation from the denominational Ministerial Fellowship Committee and the evolving partnership with the Sunday afternoon Fellowship. Response to Rev. Fitch’s participation in the August service was positive. Greg sees this development as part of a move toward becoming a becoming a spiritual center for the city.

Greg responded to Board members’ questions based on his annual report for the church year ending June 30, 2009. All job descriptions are done for staff who report directly to him (except Jonathan, who just became a direct report). The final step is for Carrie Steere-Salazar, who is assisting Greg in this process, to meet with each direct report to get his or her feedback. Job descriptions will then be developed for the next level of staff. The Board’s overall response to the annual report was positive. It allows the Board members to learn of progress and writing the report gives Greg a good opportunity for reflection.

2. Executive Director's report.

Matt announced that Nancy would not be attending Board meetings regularly. He briefly reviewed the history of the Board's linkage to staff since the Board adopted a policy governance model. First, there was an Executive Team (ET) with two ministers and an executive director (ED); then an ET with the Interim Minister and the ED, followed by an ET of the Senior Minister (Greg) and the ED. The Board changed the governance model to have the Senior Minister also serve as Senior Executive, making this position the Board's sole link to the staff. Given that Greg is the only direct report to the Board, the ED will not be attending on a regular basis. Matt described this as trial that would be revisited.

In reviewing the financial reports, Matt noted that past-year comparisons on the balance sheet would be provided quarterly. Board members praised the new doors for the Kincaid and Murdock rooms. The doors look better, plus having windows in the doors serves as a good risk management practice.

A promising sign of the congregation's growing financial generosity was noted: the church did not need to ask a generous donor to "pre-pay" the pledge in the prior fiscal year. This has been the case for the past several years, but was not necessary this year because church members stepped up to the plate in the final months of the fiscal year.

The great attendance for Rev. Fitch and Rev. Alyson's services were noted.

Matt reported that there is no update on our insurance related to the break-in, and Greg stated that the administrative staff reviewed by Nancy are Jay, Donald and Grace.

Old Business

1. California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC) update

Bill distributed the following report.

CPMC officials and consultants have met with Nancy on July 8 and have toured our building to determine sites to place vibration and sound monitors. We received a letter from Geoffrey Nelson, their Director of Enterprise Development, stating their commitment to addressing our concerns of noise, vibration, and loading dock activities. A copy of this letter is on the reverse side.

On August 5, CPMC officials have also presented options for streetscape designs, and received input from neighbors. It will be interesting to see what they come up with for the Franklin Street loading dock area.

The Committee discussed having CPMC officials present their plans for the hospital to our congregation. The committee thought that we should do this, but at a date closer to the start of construction.

Their Environmental Impact Report draft is expected by the end of 2009, and the final report will probably be completed by mid 2010. Construction is still expected to start in January, 2011.

There will be a joint hearing of the Planning and Health Commissions to present CPMC's Institutional Master Plan on Thursday, September 17, at 10:00AM, at room 400, City Hall. The Health Commission's resolution regarding their Institutional Master Plan will also be presented. There will be an additional public hearing on October 15 to present and collect public comment on this Institutional Master Plan.

Laura suggested that the CPMC present their plans earlier, so they could respond to any feedback from the Congregation. Ben also expressed concern that it has been hard to nail down CPMC on issues of concern. There was clarification of attendance at and the nature of upcoming meetings. Matt noted that the Board's general approach is not to stop the construction, but make the process as favorable for us as possible.

2. Annual Budget Drive/Beyond Sunday Update

Matt reviewed the strategy to raise pledge income by \$60,000 to hire a Beyond Sunday Coordinator: get a commitment of \$30K from about 40 generous donors, then present a "challenge match" to the congregation. As of Sunday, Sept 13, about 5-7 generous donors had committed \$17K. Board members agreed to assist in contacting generous donors who have not responded. Matt distributed a sign-up and promised to circulate a script and guidelines for the calls. He believes raising funds for a Beyond Sunday Coordinator is still very possible.

3. Approval of Up on Top Memorandum of Understanding

The Board considered a motion to approve the Up On Top Memorandum of Understanding, presented in the packet. Don **moved** approval; Judith seconded the motion.

Thad asked whether the three-year "term" of the MOU was allowed in our bylaws. Matt clarified that is was and noted our bylaws limit *leases* to one year.

The motion was **approved** by a unanimous vote of 9 to 0 with no opposing votes, no abstentions and the moderator not voting.

The Board expressed a special thanks to Matt for all his efforts to bring this to fruition.

4. Review of Rites of Passage Officiants

The Board reviewed the current list of officiants listed in the packet. The packet included suggested changes from Greg, who explained his preference for removing from the list those who no longer live near or are not in contact with Greg (three people) and placing those with less affiliation with UUSF "at the bottom" of the list.

It was noted that Rev. Denis Paul, ordained by the congregation in March, was not on the list.

Ben **moved** that the Board approve removing the three individuals from the list and adding Denis Paul; Stephen seconded the motion. The motion was **approved** by a unanimous vote of 9 to 0 with no opposing votes, no abstentions and the moderator not voting.

The Board's vote resulted in the following list:

Currently Approved:

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| ▪ Rev. Alyson Jacks | ▪ Sandi Pilon | "bottom of list" |
| ▪ Rev. Kay Jorgensen | ▪ Rev. Fred Rabidoux | ▪ Rev. Michelle Favreault |
| ▪ Jeffrey Melcher | ▪ Michael Walker | ▪ Rev. Kurt Kuhwald |
| ▪ Rev. Denis Paul | ▪ Rev. Meg Whitaker-Greene | |
| ▪ Amy Moses | ▪ Joel Gilbertson-White | |

Removed: Rev. JD Benson, Rev. Susan Conrad & Rev. Craig H. Scott.

5. Resolution affirming board support of Senior Minister's focus on preaching

Continuing the discussion from August, the Board considered the revised resolution:

During the church's interim ministry between July 2004 and July 2006, the congregation engaged in a period of reflection about the past and visioning for the future. The results of task force meetings and discussions clearly showed that the congregation enthusiastically seeks congregational growth and envisions a busy church with many activities and programs.

In response to these congregational wishes, the Board and Executive Team created five long-term, specific goals to help us achieve the growth the congregation has strongly supported. One long-term congregational goal is to have widely known worship services, which recognizes the centrality of worship to life in our religious community.

The Board believes that the Senior Minister is the face of our Society and his presence in the pulpit is essential to achieving our goals of having widely known worship services as well as achieving congregational growth. We appreciate the strong experience and skills that the Senior Minister brings to his oversight of Sunday services and particularly to his Sunday preaching. We recognize that the Senior Minister's preaching is one of his strengths that attracts visitors and helps retain new members. Sunday service attendance is consistently highest when he is in the pulpit. For these reasons, the Board strongly supports Sunday preaching by the Senior Minister and we request and encourage his presence in the pulpit at least three Sundays each month.

While we understand that this request will necessarily limit the amount of time the senior minister allocates for other areas of Society life, we believe the congregation is best served when the senior minister is engaged in what he does best: preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling and public witness. We believe an increased pulpit presence would allow him to utilize his significant skills at worship and preaching, would move us towards our congregational goal of having widely known worship services, would enhance congregational growth and would heighten our overall sense of community.

We also recognize that Unitarian Universalism and this congregation both strongly support the tradition of a Free Pulpit. We reiterate our support of ministerial discretion in matters of worship, which is the heart of the Free Pulpit, and we do not seek to limit the independence of the Senior Minister in the pulpit.

Claire reviewed changes made since last month: addition of language affirming the free pulpit and explicit recognition of impact on other activities.

Claire **moved** that the Board approve the resolution; Stephen seconded the motion.

Greg made several clarifications in response to Board members' questions. Activities to be cut back include: some pastoral care which would fall to Fred; meetings with groups who want to use sanctuary for services; committee work; and management of daily issues that arise in the office. Greg is exploring ways to lessen his time supervising interns, given that only someone with final fellowship can supervise an intern. One possibility is to have an internship that is shared 50/50 with the Faithful Fools. Greg has responsibility for deciding whether there is an intern and is leaning against an intern next year, as he will be preparing for a 4-month sabbatical. Greg understands being in the pulpit three times a month to mean preaching a sermon three times a month, not just being present on the chancel and overseeing the service.

The convergence of several factors led to this resolution: Greg and other Board members have heard from many congregants who wanted Greg in the pulpit more; Greg's review by the Ministerial Relations Committee showed a relatively low presence in the pulpit, (a quick review of the packet's attendance report showed Greg preaching in about 20 of 45 services from last September to June); attendance reports show that attendance is higher when Greg is in the pulpit; and Claire specifically asked Matt to put this on the retreat agenda. It was agreed that attendance figures might be misleading, in that Greg can "cherry pick" which Sundays he preaches; however, attendance figures are not a primary driver of the resolution. Finally, Matt noted that, at the "minister's time" exercise at Council of Committee Chairs meeting, all groups put "leading Sunday worship" as their first priority for Greg's time.

Laura expressed concern that some people will not come, because one person cannot meet everyone's different learning styles. Stephen noted that this would translate to 12 times each year that Greg is not in pulpit. Greg also noted that he can be more creative and innovative when he is not managing others doing service, while staying within expected standards. It is also hoped that the Beyond Sunday Coordinator can do non-traditional worship.

Matt brought the discussion to a close by reaffirming that unanimity is not goal; rather, full discussion and good process is. He also noted that we are always trying things out, we make mistakes, and we revisit policies.

The motion was **approved** by a vote of 7 in favor (Jane, Stephen, Thad, Judith, Claire, Don, and Bill), 1 opposing vote (Laura), 1 abstention (Ben) and the moderator not voting.

Committee Update & Reports

1. The Lay Leadership Development team met and identified three priorities: Congregational Covenant; creating the "missing middle" (e.g., program council, decision-making body that links to committees); and finishing the Peers project. The team briefly reviewed the Sept 12 Council of Committee Chairs meeting. The minister's time exercise went well. Only 14 leaders attended, although some represented more than one committee. Those present want to continue and were most interested in meetings that focus on skills-building and networking among committees. They were not interested in cluster-based meetings (e.g., social justice, community building within the church)

2. Judith reported on the Culture of Generosity team's meeting. Their first priorities are finding leaders for the Annual Budget Drive and the Auction, and addressing the Holiday Fair. An Auction chair has been identified and the group has asked Greg to invite the Annual Budget Drive (ABD) drive chairs suggested by the committee. The ABD will also need people in supporting roles. Regarding the Holiday Fair, Matt explained that no formal decision has been made. As discussed at the retreat, the Board should not prop up one-person committees and we are trying to get away from recruiting bodies to fill seats. Last year, the fair was propped up by staff at the last minute. Greg has directed staff not to prop up activities.

As the event raises \$3,000 for the budget, the question is whether the Culture of Generosity team believes those funds can be made up through some other activity. There was general

consensus it could, with some ideas generated. For groups for whom this as a big event, there was general agreement that these groups should be informed and could continue their fundraising activities. This is primarily Sister Sheila/Kopenang, UUSC and Up On Top. Stephen will communicate with Sister Sheila and Matt will speak with Nan Parks-McCarthy (Up On Top) and Linda Harris (UUSC).

3. Town Hall Update

Don, Claire, Bill and Laura will plan the Sept. 27 “What we do well” event. Don and Claire have started planning the event. The event will be celebratory, with no “asks.” People will be seated at tables and asked to list ten things that we are doing well. Photographers are needed. We will post photos and things we do well on web page, with updates in Flame. Claire asked Board members to send a list of things we are doing well.

New Business

1. Approval of Breaking Bread, Building Community Committee Matt, Bill, Ben Jane

Stephen **moved** that the Board approve this committee’s charge and membership; Jane seconded the motion. The motion was **approved** by a unanimous vote of 9 to 0 with no opposing votes, no abstentions and the moderator not voting.

2. Motion regarding election of General Assembly and District Assembly Delegates

Stephen reviewed the recommendations from Denominational Affairs Committee, included in the Board’s packet. Among other things, the Committee requests that delegates be elected as early in the year as possible and serve for only one year. The Committee believes that the current practice of electing delegates for staggered multi-year terms has led to confusion. The Society bylaws do not address term length or timing of elections.

Stephen **moved** that delegates for both District and General Assemblies be elected at the same congregational meeting, to be held as early as possible in the year in which both assemblies are to occur, and that the term of the delegates will be for one (1) year from their election. Claire seconded the motion.

A short discussion ensued, which resulted in a few friendly amendments, reflected in the motion as printed.

The motion was **approved** by a unanimous vote of 9 to 0 with no opposing votes, no abstentions and the moderator not voting.

3. Recommendation from Lay Leadership Committee regarding committee liaisons

The Board’s Leadership Committee recommends continuing with the committee liaisons, as an interim measure to keep a link to committees, as the board considers transitioning to other structures. Matt distributed the previous board liaison assignments; he will update this list and requested that board members let him know of any assignment preferences.

4. Ordination Request

Matt has received a request from former intern, Jeremy Nickel to be ordained by the church. There is no bylaw about whether board or congregation decides on ordination; it was agreed to follow the process used with Denis Paul's recent ordination. In that case, the Board recommended that Denis' ordination to the congregation, which approved by a congregational vote. At the agenda meeting, the Board officers expressed some concerns the effect of ordination fundraising on the Board's other fundraising priorities.

Greg noted that, traditionally, one is ordained at one's first placement; however, this is made difficult by the limited number of jobs. There are 200 people looking for 20 openings. In the Board's discussion, members asked about the specifics of ordination (e.g., cost, room use, minister's time) and also noted that ordinations can serve as celebratory and revitalizing events for the congregation. The Board agreed it needed a better sense of the time and financial commitment involved. Matt said he would follow up with Jeremy to ask for a plan.

5. Resolution directing compliance with bylaws re: membership status

The Society bylaws currently provide for two categories of individual affiliation with the church: member or friend. In practice, the church is holding many types of "members" (e.g., inactive).

Stephen moved and Jane seconded the **motion** as written in packet:

Resolution Regarding Compliance with Bylaws regarding Member Status

Whereas, Article II, Section A of Society bylaws clearly defines two classifications of membership, and;

Whereas, our Annual Budget Drive team has recently been in contact with members about pledging for the current year and has received much information from members about their current status, and;

Whereas, our dues to PCD and UUA are based on membership count and we wish to submit an accurate number to contain costs as much possible;

Therefore be it resolved that:

The board directs our Senior Executive to ensure compliance with all appropriate bylaws regarding member status, and ensure that all of our relevant membership tracking databases and programs reflect only the statuses recognized by our bylaws.

The board also directs our Senior Executive to report as soon as is reasonably possible, but preferably by our next board meeting, the number of people in each category of membership, as well as the number of waivers granted.

Matt noted that the church pays UUA and PCD dues on all members, and that it was challenging for the annual budget drive chairs to track members down. These concerns led Matt and Claire to recommend the motion. In the ensuing discussion, concerns were raised that the motion may lead to a dip in membership and that the church should not neglect people whose status, including ability to attend and/or pledge, has changed. Those in favor of the motion emphasized that the bylaws give us the tools to care for members whose circumstances change; and that we can't arbitrarily create new categories of membership

without due process vis a vis the bylaws. One member agreed with the concern but felt a resolution was not necessary to keep us in compliance with the bylaws.

The motion was **approved** with 7 voting in favor (Ben, Laura, Jane, Stephen, Judith, Claire and Bill), 2 opposed (Thad and Don) and the moderator not voting.

Tabled, No Current Action Item (but not to be forgotten)

1. Intern Resolution (Stephen, Matt)

Upcoming Events

Dates changed on agenda

Appreciation

Donald Johnson, per the executive director's report.

Jennie Summer-Shea, for flowers at sarcophagus

Anna Sylvester, for her service as greeter chair; she recently resigned and David Hulbert is taking her place.

Good and welfare.

Greg read list of people visited by Fred.

Closing. Ben led a responsive reading based on Mary Oliver's "Wild Geese."

Adjournment

Matt adjourned the meeting at 10pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Park,
Secretary, Board of Trustees