

First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
August 17, 2010

Present:

Board Members:

Jim Barnett, Treasurer
Matt Fuller, Moderator
Laura Gilmore, Secretary
Lizzy Gruner
Howard Oringer
Millie Phillips
Stephen Schwichow
Judith Stoddard
Claire Weber, Vice-Moderator

Ministers:

Jeremiah Kalendae, Beyond Sunday Minister
Greg Stewart, Senior Minister

Member Guests:

Leslie Bader
Karla Jones
Amy Kelly
Otto O'Connor
Alison Rittger
John Sage

Call to Order. Claire called the meeting to order 7:05 pm.
She read opening words from “Who owns your Congregation?” in UU World.
Board members and guests checked in.

Agenda Review. Claire reviewed the agenda with the Board and added two items to the agenda:
A fourth item under Old Business: New Board Liaison assignments; and an update on the
Updates and Reports Family Faith Exploration during the Committee Updates and Reports.

Members Opportunity to Address the Board.

John Sage spoke to the Board about the Interfaith Men’s Shelter, since he is co-chairing the new
Winter Shelter Committee. He asked two questions, which Claire and Jim agreed to get back to
him with answers to:

- Is there a budget men’s shelter this year and if so, how much?
- How much was taken in collections related to the shelter last year?

Feedback from Board Members.

Claire noted that she had received a call from Catherine Savage, who raised concerns about the California Pacific Medical Center project. She told Claire that she thought the Board should go on record in opposition to the project. Stephen and Jim shared that they had also received phone calls from Catherine Savage.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of July 20, 2010 meeting minutes.

The minutes from the July 20, 2010 meeting were accepted with minimal changes.

2. Approval of First Republic Signatories.

Jim requested that the board re-authorize the four board officers to sign paperwork allowing access to the accounts at First Republic. This authorization will allow access to accounts, allow officers to write checks, and Jim also requested that we continue to allow Bookkeeper, Grace Lam, to access accounts for oversight. The authorization was accepted.

Governance Review & Learning

There was no Governance Review section of the agenda during this meeting, because the Board had focused extensively on these issues at the annual retreat the previous weekend.

Reports

1. Financials.

Jim reviewed the final financials for the 2009-2010 year.

Claire pointed out that the pledge information was more accurate this year than in previous years and better illustrated whether members completed their pledges. In previous years, when someone lowered a pledge mid-year, the pledge amount in the budget would also be adjusted. This year, these changes were not made, so it is easier to see variances. Lizzy asked for clarification of the Rites of Passage line item. Greg explained that it is for memorials, funerals, and child dedications.

2. Attendance Reports.

Claire shared the attendance reports for 2008-2010. She explained that she would like to get more detail for future meetings. Lizzy, who gathered much of the information in this month's packet from the Ushers, explained that there is a Google document with more specific information. Stephen requested that information be provided numerically as well as in line graphs. He said that the current graphs were not helpful for him.

Laura asked whether the Board ever reviews membership data over time. Claire agreed that it would be useful over time and agreed to try to obtain this information for a future meeting.

Old Business

1. Membership Committee Chair.

Lizzy contacted the Membership Committee and the Greeters about the possibility of merging the two committees. She said that she has learned that the two groups overlap a lot and might function better if they worked together more. She provided the example of the church tours, which are no longer being run through the Membership Committee but are still happening

through the persistent work of an ad hoc group. She shared that there will be a hospitality ministry meeting this weekend with Jeremiah that could help facilitate the integration of the two groups.

Jeremiah has spoken to the leaders of both committees about the possibility of merging to boost the energy and activity in both groups. Jeremiah is hopeful a merger of the hospitality ministries of the church will happen. He provided some information on his planned hospitality ministry meeting this weekend, in which participants will view a video on growing membership that was put together by the Jefferson UU Church in Golden, Colorado.

2. Intern Committee Discussion.

Laura introduced the members of the Intern Committee who had come to the Board Meeting: Amy Kelly, Otto O'Connor, and Alison Rittger. She then turned the discussion over to Amy to share their public outreach ideas and their 2010-2011 plan for the committee.

Amy explained that this year, the Committee is working to educate the congregation about the committee mission and the importance of training interns. She went through some of their potential plans for reinvigorating the program, including running a monthly column in the newsletter, a cooking class to benefit the program, a display of former interns, and a possibly hosting a town hall discussion.

Amy also mentioned the issues with scheduling to have an intern for the 2011-2012, since advertising would have to begin in October or November of this year, long before the 2011-2012 budget is set. She also shared that they may have an intern dinner at a different time of year.

Amy then mentioned the congregational resolution on whether or not we are a teaching church; the resolution was tabled at the annual meeting in 2009. She said that if the Committee brings that resolution back, they would like the Board's help to create a structure in which members of the Committee could answer questions from the congregation. She would also like board input and involvement in any future meeting.

Stephen shared that he thought that at that past congregational meeting, it was clear that the congregation did not understand all of the issues. He stated that he was impressed with the ideas that the Committee had brought to this Board meeting as a way to improve congregational understanding of the Intern program.

Amy asked what would assure the Board that the Intern Committee has congregational support. Claire explained that Board always wants to see grassroots support for the program. For example, the winter shelter seemed to be losing volunteer leadership support, but then a group of people stepped forward to support the program and offered to run it this year.

Stephen explained that he does not conflate having an intern with the teaching church resolution. He did think that many people in that meeting did not seem to understand the Intern program and the resolution. Alison disagreed. Jim recalled that people did not say they did not support the Intern program, but rather that they did not understand the resolution.

Millie stated her support for the Intern program and educating members of the congregation about the program. Laura suggested that the Intern Committee try to bring newer members along as well as reminding existing members of the great interns the church has had. She stressed the importance of getting the basic information out on why the Intern program is important, what it costs, how it benefits Unitarian Universalism. Claire raised the current church budget issues and suggested that the Intern Committee keep putting fundraised dollars away toward building an Intern Fund that could support future interns. Jim suggested that the Intern Committee explore alternative sources of funding for next intern.

Otto said that she feels like there are two issues being conflated: having an intern next year and the resolution. Lizzy stated that the plans to educate the congregation this year are incredibly important. Claire reiterated the need to demonstrate congregational support, possibly by getting signatures, letters of support for the program, new committee members, and people who are willing to up their pledge to support the program. Laura suggested that the Committee bring back a concise summary to the next Board meeting with the financial implications of having an intern next year, alternative methods to fund the program, support for the program. She suggested that if the Committee needed an answer by the October Board meeting, all information should come to the September meeting for review. She also suggested that the Committee work with her (as former Board Liaison) and then with the new Board Liaisons when they are assigned.

Karla Jones asked whether the Senior Minister is interested in supervising an Intern. Greg expressed his support for the program, but said that the church “does too much in a mediocre manner” and said that he would rather see the congregation do less and do it well. Greg also said that he liked the Intern Committee’s congregational outreach approaches, but suggested that they also think outside of the usual ways of advertising by using social media. Jeremiah said that the San Francisco internship program is one of the most highly sought after UU internships in the country and said that the program attracts many of the top ministerial prospects. He reiterated that people do not always know what the intern program is about and that education is always needed.

3. Hiring Update.

Claire provided the Board with an update on the hiring process for the open positions of Church Administrator and Director of Lifespan Faith Development. She explained that there have been interviews for the position of Church Administrator, but no decisions will be made until the budget shortfall is settled.

Members of the family faith exploration program have been meeting with board members and are generally in favor of hiring an Interim Director of Lifespan Faith Development on a one-year contract with option to renew. Stakeholders in the family faith program would like to be involved in the hiring process. Judith said that representatives from Family Faith would like more information on the timeline for hiring. The Board first needs to review the budget and clarify a whether the position will be full-time or part-time.

4. New Board Liaison Assignments.

Claire announced that she is still working on Board Liaison assignments for the year. They should be assigned in the next few days.

Committee Updates & Reports

1. Solar Panel Project. Claire reviewed the information in the Board packet about the rebates for the solar panel project. The Society is currently in line to obtain rebates for the project and it is likely that we are early enough in the queue that we are likely to receive the rebates before they run out. Howard asked about how these rebates impacted the total available amount for the loan from Society for Community Work (SCW), which was capped at \$100,000. Claire explained that we are not in financial position to do project unless the rebates come through, since without the rebates the total project costs would be more than the \$100,000 approved loan.

*Matt **moved** that the Board accept the SCW offer to finance the solar panel project at a cost not to exceed \$100,000, 6% simple interest, 25-year repayment, pending rebates from the state and the city. Lizzy **seconded** the motion.*

Matt explained that the Board had previously authorized the signing of a contract for the project, because a contract was needed to get in line for the rebates. The current contract can be cancelled at any time until the project construction begins, however. Matt also pointed out that while there are capital costs to the project in the form of loan repayment, it is estimated that the Society will have \$6,316 in electrical savings this year, which would be nearly double the annual repayment of the loan. Laura asked for clarification of the project timeline. Matt answered that the projected savings were for the 2010-2011 fiscal year, assuming that panels are installed in approximately November. Jim asked why this was the time to complete the solar panel project. Matt answered that there is likely no perfect time to do the project, but that even if solar get cheaper in the future, the rebates would make such a difference to the project cost that now is a good time to do it. The current total project cost is estimated at \$87,000.

The motion passed, unanimously with all members voting.

2. California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC)

Claire provided information from George Mayer about the CPMC Task Force's review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report. The Task Force is specifically interested in promoting Alternative 3a, which would relocate some services for women and children to Saint Lukes in the Mission. This alternative would minimize construction in Cathedral Hill and also keep services in an area where they are needed. Jim asked if there is a plan to mobilize congregation. Lizzy noted that the Task Force has communicated with the congregation throughout the project and has regularly had announcements in the Flame. Matt explained that the Board has never taken an official stance on the CPMC construction project, but has looked to minimize impacts to the Society.

Jim asked whether it would be useful for the Board to pass a resolution in opposition to the project. Matt explained that the CPMC Task Force has not yet asked for that. Stephen suggested

that we let the Task Force take the lead on whether the Board needs to say yes or no. He said that the Task Force has been incredibly effective.

3. Treasurers Report.

Jim started by discussing whether or not a full audit was needed this year. He explained that the current budget allows \$15,000 for an audit but bids are coming in closer to \$20,000. Jim is working to get other bids. Howard asked whether we could conduct a financial review instead. Claire explained that we have gone with a financial review instead of an audit some years, but with staffing changes, we should do a full audit. Timing is the biggest question and the Board would like to have a recommendation from Finance Committee about when to plan the audit.

4. Family Faith Exploration Update.

Lizzy and Judith provided an update on their discussions with Family Faith Exploration program. On Sunday morning, they attended a large meeting with representatives from Family Faith Exploration. Members of this group are pulling together programs for this fall, even though there may not be a director in place by this time. They are looking for some administrative support to get information prepared from the fall. Claire suggested that they check with Sylvia since she has the skills to help with administrative support.

New Business.

1. New Committee Approval (Interfaith Outreach).

Stephen presented the application for recognition of an Interfaith Outreach Committee, to reach out to the four congregations that meet at this center: the afternoon fellowship, the Lutherans, the Buddhist meditation group, and UUSF. They are planning to host a worship/dinner/dance on September 24th as their first activity and are hoping to create more support for interfaith activity.

Committee: Interfaith Outreach Committee

Committee Charge

The First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco's Interfaith Outreach Committee seeks to promote cooperation and interchange among the four (4) congregations/religious communities currently meeting in the church's facility, as well as expanding and sharing our Unitarian Universalist ideals through cooperation and outreach to the greater San Francisco area's diverse religious communities.

The committee, coordinating with the other on-site groups, will host joint social and religious gatherings, bringing our four congregations together. The chair of the committee will also represent our church on the San Francisco Interfaith Council and the Interfaith Center at the Presidio.

Meetings

Monthly during active church year and as needed.

Interfaith Outreach Committee Members

Rev. John Young, Chair

Betsy Darr

Amy Kelly

Jan Oringer

Howard Oringer

Stephen Schwichow

Kathleen Moran

Stephen **moved** to recognize the committee, charge, and chair. Howard **seconded** the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Review of Finance Committee Memorandum

Claire shared a report from Annual Budget Drive co-chairs Shirley Gibson and Ron Weber detailing the projected budget shortfalls following this year's budget drive. Jim also shared recommendations from the Finance committee that detailed a variety of potential ways that the church would close that budget gap this year. Claire explained that the Board would discuss changes to the budget tonight, but would not make any decisions until next month.

Lizzy asked about the implications of potentially cutting dues to the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and the Pacific Central District (PCD), which had been proposed as way to save money. Claire explained that the church pays a fee to the UUA and the PCD for each member of the congregation. UUSF has been a "Fair Share"—paying the requested amount to both the PCD and UUA for each member--congregation for a long time and this is acknowledged with ribbons at District Assembly and General Assembly. Matt explained that other potential impacts of cutting some of our dues might be the loss of ability to borrow money from UUA, some grants, and other support from the UUA and the District. Lizzy asked if it had any impact on members individually applying for funds and Matt said it would not.

Laura asked whether the Board would be willing to go back to the congregation to ask for increased pledges, given the severity of the cuts. She suggested that we might need to go back to the congregation like was done last year for the Beyond Sunday. Stephen said it looks like close to 20% of congregation has not renewed pledge. He suggested sending a letter from the Treasurer and other members of the Board laying out the implications of the current fiscal situation. He and Millie suggested that sending a letter would be a good way to increase communication with the congregation, which is something that was discussed at length during the Board retreat. Stephen said that it would also provide a way to let people in severe situations know about the opportunity to obtain a pledge waiver.

Matt offered a couple of thoughts about communicating with the congregation: he said that Board-level follow-up is incredibly important and he suggested phone calls or in person meetings as the most effective way to get in touch with people. Claire noted that Board members have agreed to call some people who have not yet pledged. Matt said that going back to the congregation is possible and he hopes that people will realize that cuts are severe and they will need to step in. Matt also stressed that the congregation has funds in unrestricted savings, but

that he advised against using savings to make up for the entirety of the budget shortfall. He said, “we need to pay for the church today, and be prudent about using savings.”

Millie reiterated that a letter could be used to create a more positive impression of church business. Greg shared that he has been using his discretionary funds to help members with very basic requests, such as helping people stay in their homes. Jeremiah suggested that this might be an angle to take to the congregation: we are hearing that many members are in hardship and we all need to do what we can to support them in this time.

Judith **moved** to go into Executive Session with Greg Stewart, Jeremiah Kalendae, and Ron Weber remaining for the discussion. Millie **seconded** the motion. The Board moved into Executive Session at 9:24 pm.

The Board came out of Executive at 10:37 pm, having developed plan to move forward with potential changes to the budget.

Upcoming Events

Sept 19 – General Assembly recap
Sept 20 --Will Fellows book event
Sept 12 – Homecoming Sunday
Sept 24 – Interfaith dance
Sept 26 – Father Vitale event
Oct 2 – Breaking Bread, Building Community
Oct 3 – Blessing of Animals

Appreciation

Claire thanked the Board for their time and ideas during the Board retreat and those who led workshops.

Claire also thanked the Finance Committee for their work on the budget.

Lizzy thanked the Ushers for providing extensive attendance data.

Good and Welfare

Closing Words. For closing words, Claire read more of the UU World article “Who Owns Your Congregation?” She read a quote from the article saying that “the mission of the church is the job of the board.”

Adjournment. Claire adjourned the meeting at 10:45 pm.