

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF PORTLAND
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting, March 25, 2004

Present: Kathryn Estey (Moderator), Lee Fawcett (1st Vice Moderator), Pat Emmerson (2nd Vice Moderator), Margo Clark (Secretary), Teri Martin, Dave Patterson, Elsa Porter, Pierre Provost.

Absent: Don Watne (Treasurer), Peggy McComb, Linda Roach, Vic Vore, Bruce Davis (Intern Minister)

Ministers: Marilyn Sewell (Senior Minister), Tom Disrud (Associate Minister)

Staff: Nancy Olson (Church Administrator), Cecilia Kingman Miller (Director of Stewardship), Jan Larson (Manager of Office Support Systems & Executive Assistant to Rev. Sewell)

Guests: Julia Spence & George Crandall (Vision Committee), Robin Lindsley (Chair, Nominating Committee), Jane Betts-Stover (member of Tom Disrud's ministerial committee), Marcia Schekel & Nick Kreofsky (members of Marilyn Sewell's ministerial committee), Beth Hiller.

Minutes: Katherine Parker

Welcome

Kathryn Estey opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

“To do” List and Actions Taken

Kathryn Estey: Contact Rob Eller-Isaacs re consulting services and dates

Teri Martin: Coordinate schedules and set meeting for small group working on the *Ends* policies.

Action: Transfer the Lorenzen funds to the Pacific NW District.

Action: Delay consideration of revised bylaws until next year's annual meeting.

Opening Words

Marilyn Sewell brought a book, *A Time to Build*, by Earl Morris Wilbur, the second minister of this church, and Evadne Hilands, church member. This book chronicles the early history of the church. The book was passed around and Board members took turns reading aloud the chapter about the founding of the church. Marilyn posed this question for discussion: What does the text tell us about faith and leadership?

Meeting Administration

Elsa Porter agreed to be the process observer for the meeting and Lee Fawcett the timekeeper.

The minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Kathryn confirmed that an extra Board meeting for the purpose of approving the budget will be held on April 8 at 7:00 p.m. in Fuller Hall. There will be no dinner or sharing period.

On the consent agenda is an item regarding the Lorenzen fund which was set up many years ago to support the Tualatin congregation. That group merged with another congregation 10 years ago. A resolution was made 3-4 years ago to transfer the funds to the Pacific NW District. A motion is now needed to effect the transfer. Margo moved that the Lorenzen funds be transferred to the Pacific NW District. Dave seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Vision Committee

Julia Spence and George Crandall reported on the Vision Committee work. The draft plans for the Eliot Center are currently being discussed in task force meetings. The next step is to firm up the needs of all the groups planning to use the center. Before the final design is done, the committee will talk to other agencies who might want to be partners. The goal is to share the space so that the building can be used 24 hours a day. Julia noted that the footprint of the Eliot Center is too small to allow housing, but a housing partnership is a possibility for later projects on other parts of the block.

George distributed the most current draft of the preliminary schedule and budget. The first two segments (“Starting” and “Prepare Concept Design”) have been completed. Board approval for an expenditure of \$236,000 to prepare the final design is needed before moving on. Don has included this amount in the proposed capital budget for the next fiscal year and the Board will consider the expenditure as part of the budget discussion at the special budget meeting on April 8. The congregation will vote on all budgets, including the capital budget, at our regular annual meeting in May.

Preliminary cost estimates for the project as a whole include:

Salmon Street (sanctuary)	\$366,000*
Salmon Street (steeple)	\$470,000*
Eliot Center	\$4,809,000**
Soft Costs @ 1.45	\$2,164,000

*estimates from PNC Construction for seismic work

**includes upgrading some existing classrooms adjacent to the Eliot Center

The church currently has \$300,000 in funds designated for the Salmon Street Sanctuary. The question was raised as to whether it is necessary to perform seismic upgrades on the Salmon Street sanctuary. Beth Hiller, who is part of the Salmon Street committee—a sub-group of the Vision Committee—reported that some committee members feel strongly that the church shouldn’t market the Salmon Street sanctuary for rental without doing a seismic upgrade first. While the sanctuary is used often for events, the committee does not want to develop a marketing brochure until the work is done. Beth noted that the Eliot Center will provide space that will make the sanctuary more usable, such as space for receptions, space that can be used as a practice room or bride’s dressing room. Some Board members wondered how the policy re rental of the Salmon Street sanctuary was formed since it did not come to the current Board. Julia stated that

the decision was made about three years ago, prior to the current Vision process. The Salmon Street committee is planning to make a recommendation to the Vision Committee, who will bring the proposal to the Board.

Monthly Program Review

Nancy Olson began the review of the Administration program by stating that she works closely with the Finance Committee and the House and Grounds Committee. She apologized for not thinking to invite the Chair of the House and Grounds Committee to attend the meeting. This committee is in transition and working on how to make work parties more meaningful and how to organize what volunteers can do. They have many landscaping ideas; they have received two bids and are waiting for the third.

In response to a question, Nancy reported that they are still working on an e-mail system for the office that would allow them to send the *Front Steps* by e-mail and send other broadcast e-mails. The first system that they tried developed problems. Another member asked Nancy for clarification of #7 in her written report regarding current trends. This paragraph refers to movement toward integrating the development of a program with the financing for that program. The Board thanked Nancy for an excellent report.

Report from Large Church Ministers' Conference

Marilyn reported on the Large Church Ministers' Conference that she recently attended along with over 30 other ministers from around the country. Bill Sinkford, UUA President, and Stefan Jonasson, large church consultant, talked about the UUA's plans for extension. For a number of years, the UUA has been putting money into smaller churches. They have decided that pattern has been unsuccessful and now want to help large churches become larger. (A large church is defined as a church with 700 members or more.) The goal is to have three churches with membership of 1800-2000 each by the year 2010. Historically UUA churches have not been able to grow bigger than 1500 members. Three factors were cited that are necessary for a large church to grow:

1. a governance system that works well
2. small groups within the large community that people can connect to
3. multiple worship services

Portland is the only church close to breaking through the 1500-member mark and we currently have factors 1 and 2 in place. Attendance has been very good lately, possibly due to rising political interest or publicity surrounding gay marriage. Marilyn, Tom and staff are considering ways to utilize the Salmon Street sanctuary and add a third service to our Sunday schedule next year—possibly an early Sunday morning service. Bruce Davis will be holding Sunday evening services there this summer. The RE program has not been growing, possibly because there is not enough space. The Eliot Center will allow more children to participate. Marilyn has invited Stefan Jonasson to visit. She suggested that we write a grant to receive funding from the UUA to support further growth.

Board Action/Decision Items

Bylaws

Kathryn led a discussion about whether it would be prudent to postpone the vote on the revised bylaws until next year. Concerns have been raised by some congregants including:

- perceived concentration of power in the ministry and concern over who appoints program committees;
- conflict resolution at leadership levels has not yet been dealt with in the bylaws or the governing policies;
- in some cases, the bylaws refer to policies that don't exist yet.

It was pointed out that change is unsettling, but it would be helpful to allow time for more communication with the congregation and time to finish policies first. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to delay consideration of revised bylaws until next year's annual meeting.

Ends Policies

Marilyn reported that at the Large Church Ministers' Conference she found out that all of the churches trying to adapt the Carver model have had difficulty and many have hired consultants. The main problem areas that others reported were similar to what we have experienced. Some congregants are fearful that democracy is reduced with the policy governance model. Some aspects of the Carver model don't fit with a called ministry, since the Carver model comes from the non-profit arena in which boards hire an executive director to manage the organization. The policy governance system empowers the Board to be visionary. The relationship between the Board and the ministers has to be grounded in trust. The question should be: How are we empowered together? Board training, continuity, and leadership development are very important since Board membership is constantly changing.

At the last meeting a small group was appointed to resolve the *Ends* policy discussion (Dave, Margo, Teri, Kathryn, Marilyn and Tom). That group will meet, but before refining technical matters such as monitoring we will seek the advice of a consultant. Marilyn suggested inviting Rob Eller-Isaacs to come and work with the Board and the ministers on these issues. He is a UUA minister with a number of years' experience with policy-based governance, and he and a lay person work as a team to provide consulting services to congregations. Kathryn will contact him to discuss our needs and see what dates he is available. She will bring that information to the Board Officers Committee meeting.

Other Board Action/Decision Items

The Salmon Street rental policy was discussed earlier during the Vision Committee report. All other items were deferred due to lack of time.

Reporting-In Items

See written reports. Lee made a correction to the Operating Summary dated 2/29/04 in the Board packet (p 25 or 26). Under attendance, the report should read:

	Feb-04	Feb-03	Change
Avg per Sunday	818	868	-5.76%

Process Observation

Elsa noted that there were too many agenda items. The conversation was warm, nurturing, and relationship-building.

Closing Words

Elsa read from David Bumbaugh's *Ministerial Musings*.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.