

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF PORTLAND
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
APRIL 27, 2006 MEETING

Present: Cindy Cumfer (Moderator), Randy Russell (1st Vice Moderator), Lee Fawcett (2nd Vice Moderator), Dave Patterson (Secretary), Don Watne (Treasurer), Kathryn Estey, Helena Lee, Teri Martin, Jean Omelchuck, Pierre Provost, Marilyn K. Scott, Marilyn Sewell (Senior Minister), Tom Disrud, (Associate Minister).

Absent: Eric Schmidt

Staff: Candace Clarke (Director of Finance and Administration), Jan Larson (Administrative Assistant)

Guests: Gil Rendle (Alban Institute), Julia Spence, Arnie Pickar, Ann Kramer, Barbara Dow, Jean Scott, Glenda Jackson, Robin Lindsley, Jennifer MacNichol, Robin Henderson, Bill Harris

Minutes: Jan Larson

Process Observer: Helena Lee,

Time Keeper: Kathryn Estey

The Meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

There was a quorum with 11 of 12 Board members present.

The March minutes were approved, with a spelling correction on page 5.

Agenda Changes: Rev. Ed White, Consultant, review of his report postponed until the June Retreat. PNWD report postponed until the May meeting. Added more time to discuss Consultant Gil Rendle's report and recommendations.

To do list

Jan Larson will reserve the Channing Room for May 21, Annual Meeting Sunday, for ballot (vote) counting. Cindy will work with BOC to finalize the Annual Meeting Agenda. Board should send Retreat Agenda ideas to Cindy. Jan will book a retreat site for June 3, Saturday. and book space at church for the evening of June 2, Friday.

Action Items to review.

Jean, Kathryn and Jan L. met and reviewed and updated vote-by-mail procedures; they presented their recommendations to the BOC on April 12.

- **Open Mic. for Congregants:** Barbara Dow and Robin Henderson read parts of letter from the UUPIAG in response to Rev. Ed White's report to the Board.

Consent Items:

- Don added the following Finance issue: Bank of America and US Bank have offered the best terms for working with us on the building project. The Finance Committee has agreed to sign with Bank of America as they offered better options and more staff assistance.
- After conferring with tax experts to draft a Ministerial Housing Allowance, Cindy offers this draft resolution. The Board agreed to resolution as follows:
 - BOARD RESOLUTION ON MINISTERIAL HOUSING ALLOWANCE
RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees authorizes the amount of up to 100 percent of the compensation of each minister employed by First Unitarian Church of Portland, Oregon as a ministerial allowance under 26 USC section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code (or any corresponding future sections). The ministers currently employed are Marilyn Sewell and Thomas Disrud. In the fall (2006) Leela Sinha will be employed. This resolution shall continue from year to year until it is revoked by the Board of Trustees.

Report from Consultant Gil Rendle, Alban Institute

Gil Rendle was hired by the Executive Team for his expertise in congregational growth issues. Gil came to church last month and interviewed staff, ministers and lay leaders regarding our church's unprecedented growth in the UUA, and how best to assess our staffing needs and strategic planning. Gil stated first that we are a healthy institution, and that we have an exceptional staff. Programs are excellent, and we have plenty. Focus on building bridges and connections, not more programming (exception young adults). In his interviews, Gil heard consistently how we have done right things, however we have a "reactive culture" in that we respond to what people want and that we have stretched our resources in order to do more. Gil advises a shift from this reactive stance to one of strategic planning in order to optimize our growth. Other suggestions:

Good that we are building a new building – we need the space and need to remove passive barriers (limitations of current facility for children and adults).

A third worship service, other than Sunday a.m. – be clear on the purpose/outcome of this service and who your target audience is Gil heard the need for young adult focus. A third minister is needed and their work, in part, should focus on the young adult needs. Give young adults opportunities to express what their needs are. Also, this is an opportunity to nurture a congregation vibrant with many generations.

Stewardship – UUA congregants give at a lower percentage than any other denomination; we need to invite our members to participate; we need to have strategies for working with different generations.

Board Communication – listen to the congregation continuously, but be aware that there will always be members who will not agree with decision made. Board synthesize from all the voices and makes the best decision for the church as a

whole. Do not use “satisfaction” as a measure for evaluating leadership because a satisfied congregation is less willing to change and grow. “Normal” distribution curve: at both ends of the curve are the 2 % who are positional (yes or no always), 12 % at both ends will decide yes or no depending on the issue – they are engaged in the conversations; those in the middle – 72% - are glad the Board is doing its work but really don’t care about any particular issue.

Large church governance –policy governance is necessary for a large church. The Board decides on the mission and the “ends” and the ministers and staff determine and carry out the objectives to meet those “ends.” Board should look ahead 2 to 5 years to determine key focus – this is our “developmental window” – we don’t have the resources to do everything, so set clear priorities.

Senior Clergy within a large congregation personifies the congregation and represents stability, particularly through times of transition which we are in.

Report on BOC Action

- Kathryn and Jean reported to the BOC on the vote-by-mail procedures. BOC decision: April 17 is the date of record (April 17, 2005 – April 2006); prepaid pledges are considered within this time frame
- Biographies will go out in the mailing, not in the Annual Report
- It is not necessary to sign your return envelope and if a member forgets to use the secrecy envelope the ballot is still valid
- At 10:45 a.m. on May 21 no more ballots will be received
- New members were contacted to instruct them in payment of pledge
- If a member says to remove their name from membership roll, the office will send them a written confirmation
- Cindy asked if anyone had input for the May Annual Meeting agenda to get that to her. There was a discussion about an “open forum” time for congregants to speak about what has been positive for them at church this year.

Eliot Committee Update

Julia Spence reported that Tom Archer is working with Jim Zehren to finalize the contracts with P & C Construction. We are almost at our ground-breaking goal and expect to meet it this weekend! During construction, the Eliot Committee will meet on a semi-regular basis to be updated by the regularly meeting Building Sub-Committee (Julia, George Crandall, Tom Archer, Randy Russell, Tom Disrud, Candace Clark). The Eliot Committee will report to the Board. When our fundraising exceeds 7 million, the Committee will come back to the Board for further authorization of use of funds. A Ground Breaking Ceremony is slated for June 18th. This is the Sunday we go to one service at 10 a.m. for the summer.

Board Committee Reports:

Finance Committee

- Don and Candace will hold a Budget Q & A session for congregation re: the 2 budgets to be voted on in May. Session is May 7, Sunday, in SSS, at 12:15 p.m.

- We have 114,000 dollars more in cash than last year. There is 2.4 million in cash and investments. Loss of income is from loss of rental property. We expect to be 5,000 in the black at the end of the church year.
- The hoped for donor for finishing the work in SSS has declined to give more – that amount is 50 thousand. The bell work is on hold. Of primary importance is a wheel-chair lift to stage. This is also needed in the MSS. We were reminded that the congregation voted to build the new building before finishing more in the SSS. This item is referred to the Executive Team.
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Board Evaluation Committee

- The committee will be meeting in May to review the governing policies to ensure compliance, especially with respect to the provisions. The End Policies encompass the overall “ministry” of the church. (Evaluating ministry does not refer to evaluating ministers.). The committee will also make recommendations for Board self-evaluation.
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Executive Team

May 7, Sunday, the third minister Leela Sinha will be our guest minister. She will assume duties in September.

Process Observation

Helena noted that Gil Rendle’s report was very enlightening and useful. The Board discussions were thoughtful and many value-based comments were used. The dinner was a lot of fun and tasty, created by Staff Managers Team.

Closing Words—Randy Russell.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.