

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF PORTLAND
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting, August 24, 2006

Present: Cindy Cumfer (Moderator), Randy Russell (1st Vice Moderator), Marilyn Scott (2nd Vice Moderator), Kathryn Estey (Secretary), Dave Patterson, Jean Omelchuck, Ron Yoder, Pierre Provost, Don Watne, Marilyn Sewell (Senior Minister), Tom Disrud, (Associate Minister)

Absent: Eric Schmidt, Teri Martin, Helena Lee

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

Guests: Barbara Dow, Stephen Cross

Minutes: Jan Larson

Process Observer: Jean Omelchuck

Time Keeper: Don Watne

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

There was a quorum with 9 of 12 Board members present.

The June 2006 minutes were accepted as written.

Announcements: Saturday, September 16 there is an Open House at the church to view the Salmon Street building renovations. Time: 3 to 6 pm.

Agenda Changes: Communications Committee report is not available for this meeting.

To do list:

1. Cindy will place timelines and “point persons” for the Board’s 2006-2007 goals on the meeting agenda for September.
2. Marilyn Sewell will contact developer who has expressed interest in the future of our block, and will report back to the Board by the end of the calendar year.
3. Cindy will place “Policy Evaluation report/discussion” on the meeting agenda for September.
4. The BOC will recommend at the September Board meeting a plan for an ad hoc committee to address this issue.
5. The Communications Committee will make recommendations to the Board in September regarding actions to take from Ed White’s report.
6. The Communications Committee will bring to the Board in September their ideas regarding interactive congregational events to be held this church year.
7. The Communications Committee will bring to the Board by December the results of their work with the “Comm Team” regarding the Board’s web pages.

Action Items to review: Kathryn resent (emailed) the Board evaluation process information.

BOC Actions: Board Officers are now authorized to sign documents related to the construction project, including bank documents related to the project.

Open Mic for Congregants: No comments.

Consent Items: Authorized First Church's sponsorship of ministerial candidate Aaron McEmrys.

Non-Standing Committee Appointments:

Education & Community Building Committee: George Crandall and Julia Spence, Co-Chairs, Tom Archer, Tom Disrud, Barbara Miller, Tomm Pickles, Joel Reitz, Randy Russell (Board Liaison), Marilyn Sewell, Vic Vore, and Don Watne (Board Liaison) (Staff: Candace Clarke and Gardner Grice)

Foundation: Pierre Provost and Don Watne

Nominating Committee Liaisons: Cindy Cumfer, Kathryn Estey, and Dave Patterson

Compensation/Senior Minister Evaluation Committee: Cindy Cumfer, Chair; Randy Russell, and Marilyn Scott

Committee on Generosity: Kathryn Estey, Chair; Cindy Cumfer; Pierre Provost; Randy Russell, and Ron Yoder,

The Board agreed by consensus to these appointments.

Adoption of Board Goals

Goal 1 "Plan for growth in support of our vision and mission."

Objective 2, #1 – in the "Who?" column add the Committee on Generosity

#2 – in the "Who?" column add the Executive Team and Staff

Ideas which arose during discussion of the above: regarding "Who?" Board needs to specifically identify who will be the "driving force" behind each task; also a timeline for checking in on progress needs to be determined. Cindy will place these on the meeting agenda for September.

Objective 1, #1 – under "Indicators of Progress" add 'Buchan Building is finished!'

Question: when is the Salmon Street Sanctuary ready to be marketed as a rental space?

Answer: this fall, but the work needs to be completed on the front columns for earthquake proofing; the Executive Team will contact the SS marketing committee and get them focused on their task again.

Objective 1, #2 – under "Indicators of Progress" add 'Developer gathers information/Exec Team brings research to the Board'.

Question: what would a timeline look like for beginning the next phase of developing our block? Marilyn Sewell will contact the developer who has expressed interest to her in what the church is

planning for the future of the block. She will ask him if he is still interested in starting research this fall in order to report back to the Board by the end of the year.

Objective 2, #1 – under “Indicators of Progress” add ‘An aspirational budget concept is in place for this fall’s Annual Fund Drive (AFD)’

#2, – under “Indicators of Progress” add ‘AFD organization is in place’

Question: what will the Board’s specific participation look like?

#3, – under “Indicators of Progress” add ‘a) Another successful annual fund drive. b) Sunday plate give-away plan implemented. c) Pledging levels improve. d) New member pledges rise.

Since Board members began personally contacting new members, the pledging levels have risen; the Board will be participating in New Member Orientations.

Goal 2 “Deepen the connections between Board and Congregation.”

Objective 1, #1 – under “Indicators of Progress” add “Meetings were held; evaluation and summaries of meetings were produced”

#2 – under “Indicators” add “Communications Committee presents recommendations from Ed White’s report at the September Board meeting.”

#3 – under “Indicators” add “3 to 5 various interactive forums/meetings during the church year; Communications Committee brings recommendations to September meeting.”

#4 – Discussion centered around various ideas regarding how the Board might best make use of the church website, and whose responsibility it is to accomplish this. The church will be hiring a professional publicist/communications specialist, and there is already an Executive Team committee called the “Comm Team” which is directly involved in the church’s publicity and outreach, including our web site. Under “Indicators” add “Communications Committee and Dave Patterson meet with Comm Team to ensure that the Board’s needs are considered during the redesign of the church web site. Committee to report to the Board at November or December meeting.

Objective 2, #2 – Discussion: How much can we accomplish this year, on this multi-year objective? We would like to appoint the Covenant Committee and give it a clear charge. Idea: find a resource person to facilitate an educational meeting regarding the meaning of and how to develop a congregational covenant. There was discussion as to how much more the Board itself should do. At what point is the baton passed on to the Covenant Committee?

Restructuring Board Meetings & Reports to the Board

The Board agreed by consensus to the following BOC recommendations:

Meetings: that the Board meet to do business two meetings each quarter and that the third meeting be used in the following ways: as a mini-retreat to brainstorm on topics related to governance, vision, etc; for training; or as one of two open meetings with congregants to allow for dialogue/discussions.

Reports: 1) that the Finance Committee will provide financial statements (year-to-date) quarterly at Board meetings and will alert the Board in the interim if there are issues that need immediate Board attention. 2) that the Executive Team reports quarterly, with a future-orientation. Program information will be summarized – this is a more “macro” approach. 3) that the Board packets be made available to congregation via the website and the Board’s Bulletin Board in Fuller Hall. (Sensitive material will not be distributed publicly – directed to Board only by author.)

Board Committee Meetings: – open or closed: The Finance Committee meetings are currently open. Now that the Board packets will be published to the congregational, Board committees’ work is available to the congregation via their reports to the full Board.

Board approved by consensus the following: Board Committee meetings are closed unless designated as open by each particular Committee. A Board Committee may open a specific committee meeting if they wish to receive immediate feedback or ideas from congregants. The “open” announcement shall be made ahead of time so congregants are aware of the option to attend.

Congregant Comments to the Board

The BOC recommends that twice yearly (fall and spring) there will be 2 meetings that provide opportunity for back-and-forth discussion or dialogue between Board and congregants wishing to attend. The Board approved by consensus this plan.

Regarding a Congregant Comment period at Board meetings: much discussion followed regarding how meaningful such comment periods have been (frustrating for both Board members and congregants) as well as the potential for abusive comments to disrupt the meeting. Church bylaws state (Article 6, section 4, e): “The Board shall provide time on meeting agendas for members to comment on agenda and other church issues.”

The Board approved by consensus to keep a 5 minute comment period. Congregants wishing to comment at a meeting will, on a form provided, sign in and note the topic they wish to address. The Board Moderator will preview the topics and decide if a comment is not to be addressed.

Board Committee Reports

Policy Evaluation Committee

This report will need a certain amount of discussion time and will be placed on the September meeting agenda.

Finance Committee

Don Watne asked for authorization to release the end-of-the-year contingency funds. Board agreed.

Revision of Board Policies

Lee Fawcett is currently reviewing the Financial Policies for the Board. Other policies will be reviewed next year, except for the Exclusion Policy. The BOC will recommend at the September Board meeting a plan for an ad hoc committee to address this issue.

Leadership Development Advisory Group

Cindy Cumfer has spoken with members of this Executive Team advisory group – they are interested in what she learned at GA regarding leadership, etc, and would appreciate a forum/meeting to learn more with Cindy, MarilynScott and Randy Russell at some point this year. Cindy reports that LDAG will get back to her about this idea.

Process Observation

Jean Omelchuck stated the Board does need to make some format/restructuring of the meetings as there is so much to discuss and not enough time. She said the discussions were good but lengthy.

Closing Words – Randy Russell

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05.