

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF PORTLAND

Meeting of the Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, March 23, 2006

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

Absent: Don Watne (Treasurer), Marilyn Scott

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

Guests: Marsha Marzano, Bill Michtom, Tricia Knoll, Robin Henderson, Linda Fitzgerald, Vince Fitzgerald, Bob Townsend, Barbara Dow, Ruthe Taber, Ellen Bailey, Barbara Ford, Pat Malone, Beth Hiller.

Minutes: Jan Larson

Process Observer: Randy Russell

Time Keeper: Teri Martin

The Meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm.

There was a quorum with 10 of 12 Board members present.

Review of Previous Minutes

The February Minutes were accepted with the following changes:

- On page 4 of the Board Packet, Randy is not the permanent Process Observer
- On page 5, insert “members” after “Two board” in the second paragraph in Hiring a Consultant
- On page 6, correct the spelling of “compliance” in the Excess Benefits section and use “2%” instead of “a sliver” in the Committee On Generosity
- On page 7, use “\$182,000” instead of “\$125,000” and “42%” instead of “1/2”

Consent Agenda Items Added:

- The Board agreed to publish Rev. Ed White’s report once it is received (sometime in April).
- Senior Minister’s Assessment Report: Rev. Sewell has agreed to a 2,000 dollar raise (plus COLA), much less than what the committee had proposed. Rev. Sewell wants other specific staff members to have their salaries raised first (based on UUA salary recommendations). An appendix (Rev. Sewell’s response to her proposed compensation increase) to the Assessment Report is being posted.

Action Items:

No Action Items to review.

New Action Items:

- Jean, Kathryn and Jan L, will meet next week to clarify and draft any recommendations on the vote-by-mail procedure.

Board Officers' Committee:

After reviewing Bill Michtom's proposal regarding when the Open Mic comment period occurs during Board meetings, the BOC recommends that congregants may wait until the agenda item they are interested in speaking about comes up (after board discussion and before any vote). The time to speak is still 3 minutes per person, and a total of 15 minutes for the meeting. The Board unanimously agreed to try this procedure.

Open Mic. for Congregants:

2 congregants elected to speak at the beginning of the meeting. Steven Bailey proposed a change to the church bylaws that would remove any age restrictions to membership. Bill Michtom thanked the Board for trying his Open Mic proposal; he thanked Rev. Sewell for requesting pay increases for certain staff; he felt previous wording which described the impact of conflict upon Board members' health to be disrespectful.

Eliot Campaign Report:

- We have reached a milestone in fund raising – 4.1 million dollars (2 million from the seed gift and 2.1 million from congregation). 281 gifts have been donated thus far with an average of \$7,600 (does not include seed gift).
- Strategy for the next few weeks: 57 advocates are calling congregants and we are having “phone-athons” each week. There will be a phone-athon this Sunday (12:30 to 1 pm lunch and then calls from 1 to 2:30). This coming Wednesday there will be “cold-calls” (no known relationships to callers).
- Pierre, Kathryn and Candace are developing a list of corporations (local) who share similar values and might be interested in the project. If you have ideas, please offer them. Candace has already started making calls.
- Martha Richards, Capital Campaign Consultant, had to have surgery this week. Her assistant Deedee, who is on maternity leave, will help fill in a few hours per week at this time.

Vote-by-Mail Report:

- Jean Omelchuck reported in on the pros and cons of our congregation's first vote-by-mail experience. Overall it went very well and many board members, lay people and staff worked very hard to make it a success. Jean described the procedures the voting team created and reported on the areas of concern or where improvements in procedure might be made for next time, which will be for the

May 21 Annual Meeting. Key areas of concern included: prepays on pledge; how to deal with returned envelopes not signed by congregants, what is the determination for “inactive member,” what is the “record date” (the Board needs to determine when people are members - by such-and-such a date – this designates them as voting members), and when to destroy ballots. Regarding the latter, Jean suggested the second board meeting after the vote.

- Jean, Kathryn and Jan L, will meet next week to clarify and draft any recommendations on procedure.

ACTION: The Board certified the Eliot Campaign vote.

ACTION: Annual Meeting 2006 votes will be vote-by-mail.

ACTION: The record date shall be determined by April 12 when the BOC meets again.

Board Retreat

Board discussed moving their annual September Retreat to June. Out-going Board members would be included.

ACTION: The Board will hold its retreat June 2, Friday evening and during the day on Saturday, June 3. They will determine then whether there is a need for a July Board meeting.

Third Minister Update

Rev. Sewell reported that one of the top 2 candidates has taken a Senior Minister position at another church. The second candidate under consideration is currently also applying at another church. Our ministers and Search Committee are interested in this candidate but now must wait for her to finish the process at the other church. They will meet on Saturday and hope for a decision after this weekend.

Board Committee Reports:

Generosity Committee

- The Committee on Generosity has begun initial planning for Annual Fund Drive 2007. A chair and co-chair will be determined.
- The committee is considering the idea of sharing our Sunday plate donations once a month to various organizations with like-minded values.
- The committee is calling members who have increased their pledge by 10% or more to thank them for their generosity. They are also calling new members to discuss pledging with them.

Finance Committee

- Lee Fawcett reported that the committee has approved a contract for Tom Archer to continue on as the Eliot project’s Construction Manager, via his position at PBS Engineer and Environmental Services. Tom came highly recommended by the Eliot Committee. He has a great depth of knowledge of the project and works well with the construction firm hired. The contract is for \$99,450.
- The committee says the new budget is a “landmark budget.” Candace Clarke and Rev. Disrud are very positive about its projections, and about the 5 year

projections. It is a balanced budget. The congregation has increased their pledges and have helped to make this balanced budget a reality.
(See “Budget Calculations” handout)

Report from Candace:

- Candace made note that the handout lists the resources used to help determine calculations. She stated there is a goal of reducing Administration costs over a 3 year period from 27% to 20 %. (She says the National Center for Charitable Statistics recommends a best practice benchmark for fundraising and administrative costs at 25% or less of total budget. Question raised: what is the benchmark for churches – is it the same as other nonprofit categories?)
- Part of the planning involves reconfiguring the physical layout of staff work areas so staff are brought together in close proximity and can help each other be more efficient. In addition, we are getting better at allocating costs to the correct departments.
- Teri asked about the plan for a part time Communications Director to help get our liberal religious message out to a broader audience. Rev. Sewell reports that the position is being developed and will be funded via proceeds from the Auction to be held on May 13.

ACTION: The Board approved the Budget and recommends it to the congregation for approval in May 2006.

Executive Team

- Gil Rendle, our consultant from The Alban Institute, was here this past week meeting with staff and ministers regarding meeting the staffing needs of a large and growing church. His first comments to Rev. Sewell were “you have a healthy institution” and “your staff is excellent.” He will return to report at the next Board meeting on April 27.
- We have 541 children in our RE programs and the rooms are filled to capacity.

Process Observation

Randy reported that we “got into the weeds” during the voting discussion and also a bit during the retreat topic.

Closing Words: Eric read from a collection of thoughts by Mr. Rogers.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 pm.