First Unitarian Board Meeting
October 21, 2023 - 10AM-12PM
Social Hall

AGENDA

Board Members: Rev. Angela Herrera (ex-officio member), Dámaris Donado (President), Bill Slakey (VP), EmmaLia Mariner (Secretary), Carla Williams, Joyce Etheridge

Guest: Rev. Bob LaVallee, Linda Skye (Widening the Circle), Bryan Hackett
Absent: Chris Mayo, Maya Stephenson, Sally New, Aroop Mangalik

CHALICE LIGHTING

- Volunteer for chalice reading.
- Volunteer to light the chalice.

By Oberlin UU Fellowship

We light this chalice to find inner peace,
love for each other, and faith in ourselves.
Also, to be welcoming to whomever we meet
and kind to all living creatures. So gather around
this light of hope as we share this time together.

Read Board Covenant Aloud **Board Covenant 2023**

1. **Approving the Minutes**
    - **i.** Motion to Approve
        1. Carla
    - ii. Second:
        1. Joyce
    - iii. All in favor:
        1. All

2. **Consent Agenda**
    a. **Staff Reports**
        i. Senior Minister report
            1. Curious if there are things
            2. Staff turnover is tough.
            3. People sleeping on the roof. Note that there was damage to a water line to a swamp cooler. Luckily the water did not cause further damage.
                a. Arborist will take down the limbs that make it easier to get on the roof.
            4. Question for Rev. Bob about the safe overnight parking. Note that there is legislative movement.
            5. The document about hiring practices is available to share. This is a new document, so it will be entering conversations.
        ii. Staff Reports
            1. Curious about the RE members. Saw the note about needing more teachers. The number of kids does keep fluctuating, really ranges from low to high.
            2. Rev Angela: It is hard to get folks to commit to volunteering beforehand.
            3. Discussion of attendance: Rev. Angela- seems like there has been a drop in attendance recently, but unclear. Watching this. Membership is around 750.
                a. Revised later in meeting: There were 306 visible people this last month; the summer did have slightly lower attendance, but there was no dip going into the fall.

3. **Proposal for Policy Change [Incident with the pantry] & Task Proposal for Policy Change & Task Forces 2023-10-04.docx**

    a. Policy Change Proposal

i. Amendment: “Court ordered community service must be approved by a minister.” Instead of: “A minister may approve court ordered community service.”

ii. Motion to Approve: EmmaLia

iii. Second: Damaris

iv. All in Favor: All

v. Discussion after decision: Rev. Angela highlighted Rachel’s letter that she described how criminal record was purposefully hidden from her and the importance of that disclosure.

Add Rachel’s letter to next month’s board meeting.

b. Church Safety Task Force

i. Internal (Policies)

ii. External (Safety concerns)

- Board members or board members and others.
- Creation of Church Safety Task Force

c.

i. Effort to ensure decisions surrounding campus safety are made transparently and thoughtfully. This is physical campus and personnel/volunteer work safety.

ii. Should this be created now?

1. The staff shall… policy
2. There are larger and smaller solutions fo safety concerns

iii. Vote:

1. Joyce
2. Bill
3. All in favor

Agenda for next meeting will include the composition of the task force.

d. Mission Covenant Task Force

i. Effort to improve Membership Requirements and value statements.

ii. Discussion of annual meeting discussion about the membership requirement.

1. There were procedural frustrations.
2. There were feelings about shame towards not being able to contribute to the church in certain ways.
    a. There are people who express that they feel like they can't come to church anymore because they can't afford to give

iii. Suggestion: New board discusses the mission covenant in 2024, as part of the 75th anniversary energy.
1. Rev. Bob: We are due for an update; it is several decades old. Why is it a Mission Covenant instead of a Mission and a Covenant? How does Article II shape this?
    a. Discussion about how we do repair.

iv. Vote: Failed. Suggestion is for the 2024 board to pursue the discussion and revision of the mission covenant.

4. Budget Report (Joyce)

a. Board will need to call in November.
    i. We do not have a bookkeeper. Internal controls (Bryan will not be signing checks and will always count cash with admin).
        1. What about Bryan's need to take leave time.
        2. Goal for $100K for Operating Budget is high.
b. 105K in restricted funds$679k Collected, $217k outstanding.
c. May not need "Get in The Black" campaign this year; will depend on folks follow-through.
d. Board will be asked to make calls in November for folks to make pledges.
e. Note that Jennifer the bookkeeper has moved on to another job. It would be harder to hire a bookkeeper this time of year than for Bryan to do it himself. There are some internal controls to ensure fidelity of the accounting. The downside of this is that there is no duplication/redundancy of staff who have access to the books.
f. Verify that the board saw the accounting adjustments that were made.
g. There is an area of underbudget, that could cover some of the overages.
h. All are in favor of what has been described.
i. Goal: reduce reliance on the rent from ARC building for the operating budget. The pledge goal is $100k over last year. Right now we are at 31% of our goal.

j. It is hard to find a place for the money for security; there is not a clear answer for where the money will come from for an increase in security. Alarm system, AOP, and false alarm fines.
    i. Considering an operating reserve fund; 20, 30k. So that when the Operating fund goes low, it borrows from that instead of critical programming. We do not touch it otherwise.
        1. Is this ideal, or is it the only functional way forward? This does need further discussion to ensure following the law with restricted funds and that this is the most advantageous movement forward. We are not in hot water right now, but this could prevent us from running up on an issue.
        2. What is the messaging about the budget & fundraising that is helpful for transparency for the congregation and urgency in why we are raising money the way we are.
        3. Should Bryan come to all board meetings this season? Bryan is willing. Will come as needed.

5. **Average attendance in September 306 people at church. Going up!**
6. **75th Anniversary Task Force**
    a.
        i. **Geri: EmmaLia will follow-up with Geri about it.**
        ii. **EmmaLia announcement**
        iii. **75th Anniversary: broadsheet??**
    b. **Throughout the year celebration**Note to keep feelers out for interest in involvement in celebration efforts. Put this in the Broadsheet?
        i. Touch base with Geri.

7. **Standing Committee Updates**

Discussion of these updates on [the spreadsheet.]

1. Updates
    a. Right on track

    Board members will be calling with “thank yous”

2. HCC

a. Arnie & Sara met with A&A committte to help resolve issues.

7. Coffee with the Board

a. Updates? Link for sign-up.
b. Nov. 5: Social Hall: 12-12:30pm: open
c. Dec. 3: Social Hall: 12-12:30pm; open
   i. Dámaris

8. Recognitions? "On behalf of the Board…"

Thank you to Sara (Dámaris)

- To Sara Wofford for their work and leadership with the HCC.

9. Extinguishing Chalice Words

Volunteer to read the words:

By Amy Zucker Morgenstern

Never has it been more true than now:
We extinguish this flame,
But the sparks within us remain alight.
From each of us, in our supposed solitude,
The signals buzz and hum, sparkling through space one to another,
Connecting us invisibly
But palpably.
We are one.
And from every window,
Our light shines.