

Unitarian Universalist Society of Mill Creek  
Minutes of the April 16, 2013 Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Attendees: Tina Guerrette, Mike Hilgart, Matt Doty, Brenda Levin, Susan Klugerman, Doris Roth, Mary Pat Knauss, Paul Hull,

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

The minutes of the March meeting were circulated electronically and approved by the board in advance of this meeting.

1. Tina opened the meeting with a quote from Fred Rogers pointing out that in every tragedy there are always helpers, and it is important to look for those helpers.
2. The Board discussed the proposal for the next step in congregational strategic planning, bridging the gap between the recent leadership conference and the next steps in church-wide strategic planning.
  - a. Between now and the fall there will be a focus on personal reflection and “will building,” stimulated by Grist articles, sermons and other ongoing communications. A “weekly question” intended to stimulate conversation and ongoing thought is another possible mechanism, and could be targeted to chalice circles, potluck conversations or after-service informal conversations. Establishing an after-service informal discussion also provides a venue for new members and visitors to develop deeper relationships with others in the congregation.
  - b. The board feels it is important to allow major program activities and new directions to emerge from a congregational conversation rather than be “dictated” by the board. To this end, the board is supportive of new initiatives and programs that are emerging from interested congregants, but will focus on facilitating the congregational conversation that leads to articulated statements of congregational mission, vision and values that can help define new programs and directions.
  - c. The board agrees with the proposed approach, which includes the board beginning to use governance procedures that allow congregants to form deeper connections to the congregation and to participate in the congregation in the way that they wish. One example of this behavior is for the board to focus on policy, personnel and planning rather than individual “operational” decisions.
  - d. Several members of the board have heard concern that much of the strategic planning is being led by long-term members of the congregation. The board considered possible strategies to enable a broader cross-section of the congregation, particularly relatively new members, to participate in and lead the conversation.

- e. The board discussed the timeline for ongoing strategic planning and the need to allow new ideas and directions to emerge organically. Rushing the next steps in this process could result in strategic plans that do not have sufficient buy-in to gain traction. On the other hand, congregational input into the objectives of the congregation are critical to many decisions. We will begin publicly discussing the idea of a congregation-wide event tentatively to be held this fall. We will consider our readiness and the appropriate date and format for this event in the near future.

### 3. Ongoing Business:

- a. The Service Auction was well attended and ran very well. Thank you Susan!
- b. Publicity committee: All road signs have been recovered. The revitalization of the foyer area to enable more effective communications is moving ahead. The Roy Zimmerman concert established several media contacts that we can use for future events.
- c. CVS and sewer rights: We understand that our sewage capacity is permanently locked in by the permits we've have already secured. Our engineering firm will contact the city to confirm this understanding. Thank you Clem Bowen!
- d. Status of serving as an emergency site for Independence School: our fire code allows 422 people. Independence School is preparing a proposal for how they might use our site.
- e. Preparation for annual meeting: Tina is preparing the announcements to be distributed. The nominating committee has identified two candidates to replace the two board members whose terms will expire.
- f. The finance committee was asked to investigate whether any changes to our insurance are necessary as a consequence of the installation of the air conditioners. No report yet.
- g. Paul reviewed the proposal to create a Caring Community committee that would include both lay pastoral care associates and caring connections that provide meals, transportation, cards, calls and other congregant support. The board approves formation of this committee. Paul will consult with interested people to identify a chair for this committee.
- h. Discussion of the draft statement on committee vs. board authority is deferred until the next meeting.

### 4. Treasurer's Report and discussion

- a. We entered this fiscal year with a projected deficit of approximately \$25,000. We anticipate that the final deficit will be approximately \$10,000, which will be covered from our prior year operating reserve.
- b. We anticipate that we will enter the next fiscal year with approximately \$15,000 in the operational reserves.
- c. Current pledges for the next fiscal year are running slightly higher than this fiscal year. Based on projected expenses, we anticipate a deficit of approximately \$10,000 for the next fiscal year.

- d. The board is comfortable proposing a budget with a \$10,000 deficit.
5. New Business:
    - a. Jack Guerin has proposed a bi-weekly program of salsa dance instruction and open dancing. Jack proposes to finance the initial four events and see how the program develops. The proposed salsa dance program is consistent with music cut-off time and alcohol consumption agreements with our neighbors. The board approves this program and encourages Jack to solicit congregational volunteers to help and to spread the word about UUSMC during the event. [Note added: The Board has approved use of initial proceeds from the event for advertising to build ongoing participation.]
  6. Minister's Report:
    - a. Paul submitted a written report covering the last month.
    - b. Paul has recently met with Ginger Stein and Linda Lucero about Welcoming Congregation activities related to the Marriage Equality Bill upcoming in the Delaware legislature.
    - c. The board asked Paul to include statements of the average Sunday attendance in his reports.
  7. Topics for next month's discussion:
    - a. Review of Paul's performance relative to the three and six-month goals set at the beginning Paul's employment.
    - b. Vacancies in committees and other leadership roles

The meeting adjourned at 9:40. The next meeting is scheduled for May 14.