

West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church
Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, August 25, 2022, 6:30-8:40 p.m.
Motions and Minutes
Approved Sept 29,2022, 6:40 p.m.

TRUSTEES

Present

- Mark Aulisio (via Zoom)
- Cathy Bollin (Vice President)
- Dierre Cody
- David Drickhamer (Secretary)
- Brian Gardner (President)
- Kathy Kosiorek
- Suzanne Rusnak
- Jen Wynn (Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair)

Absent

- Dave Willett
- Liz Nolan
- Gary Kustis (Past President)

STAFF

- Suehana Kieres
- Rev. Anthony Makar
- Meghan Ross

Minutes

1. **Chalice Lighting and Opening Reading** - Brian Gardner
2. **Approval of Minutes**
 - a. Revisions from Jen Wynn.
 - b. **Motion to approve June BOT minutes. Motion made by Brian, Suzanne seconded. All in favor, none opposed.**
3. **Board Update and Open Item**
 - a. **Covenant Among Members of the Board of Trustees**
 - Read aloud around the table and reviewed.
 - b. **Perpetual Agenda for Governance**

- Presented in board packet and everyone encouraged to review before Sept. meeting.
 - Suggested to include in BOT packet every month. (David) *Agreed.*
- c. Volunteers for the Governance Committee**
- Monthly obligation. This committee failed to meet on a regular basis last year.
No immediate volunteers
- d. Volunteers for a Liason to the Coordinating Team**
- Meets 4X per year with senior staff and lay leaders of 5 councils (lead by senior staff and lay leader). Opportunity to see how this group of leaders engages and tends to the well being of the congregation at a program level. (Background Rev. Makar)
– *Dierre Cody volunteered to represent the board.*

4. RE Report - Meghan Ross

- a. Summer RE program completed.
 - Several families were church shopping this summer, so it was good to have the program available.
- b. Backpack program this coming Sunday Aug. 28th.
- c. 10th of Sept. teacher training.
- d. RE year starts on Sept.18th
- e. More like a regular RE program than recent years. Class age ranges will be broader than pre-pandemic times because of class sizes. Will make adjustments based on attendance
- f. Need 3 more teachers

5. Financial Committee Report - Jen Wynn

- a. June 30 Overview reviewed
- b. August FC Report
 - Pledge total \$588,878 as of August 22
 - Balance of the Recovery Fund is \$72,890 (unchanged since June 30)
 - Employee Retention Credit - Still going back and forth with the IRS.
 - The Finance Committee has two new potential members: Larry Wise and Cheryl Maude, who have some great ideas for better communicating the budget and church finances to the congregation.

BREAK

6. Senior Minister Report - Rev. Makar

- a. Main goals presented in the BOT agenda
- b. Renewed emphasis on positive “money talk,” reflected by power of generosity article in Shorelines.
- c. UU Wellsprings program introduced.
- d. Fun will be focus of the Ingathering Service

- e. Membership Numbers
 - Pre-covid years:
 - 2010-2019 = +5.5 new member net gain per year
 - 2019-2022 = -6.6 member net loss
 - Recovery will mean a return to a new member net gain
- f. Church-going habit has been lost by many of past members who did not renew their pledges.
- g. Introduction of Next Steps Weekend Stewardship Consultation
 - Pledge plateau from \$525K has been broken through, so we're doing something better. And it's up again this year with fewer pledgers.
 - 15 years since we had someone come in and take a look at us and our congregation.
 - Stewardship consultant. We last had an outside advisor to WSUUC in 2007. He noted that "our congregation needs to address its history of low level giving from members. West Shore has the dubious honor of having more low level donors than any other church of its size that he's worked with."

In the past several years, we've begun to turn that around.
- h. Questions and discussions about membership data and how it's reported, net gain and losses. How the numbers relate to KPIs, and dashboards as a reflection of church vitality. Need to focus on just a critical few key measures as a way of assessing the strength of our program. What would the board like to know?
- i. Reintroducing "Rule of 3" - Everyone is part of the membership committee.(Makar)

7. Road Ahead and Follow-up Actions - BOT Communications - How can we improve? - Brian

- a. Beyond the minutes, how can we share the work and the goals of the BOT? What are our goals this church year? Where are we headed? Are we making progress? Shorelines blurb for example. Table in rotunda?
- b. How can we increase dialog as part of our church culture? Key topic: the budget. How often do we talk? Do people feel comfortable talking to board members?
- c. How can we improve our visibility and perspective on what's happening in the church? Invite Council presentations at the BOT meeting? The more we understand about what's happening, the better positioned we are to steer the organization.
- d. How can we improve how we communicate within the board itself? Can we use Realm? How are we retaining information and sharing information? How can we have access to all relevant docs like the perpetual calendar and the board covenant.

Discussion: Communication is always a challenge in every organization. Reintroduce a "time for congregants" to board meeting?

Fishbowl discussion method introduced (Rev. Makar):

Mediated discussion in the center, and members, and observers outside of the circle (who only listen), and then they switch seats and roles. There are ways to increase communication that are out of the box. Should we go to some of the Council meetings?

- e. Closing charge to board members: Review Appendix 2 of Senior Minister Report, Reflect on what the Board can do to demonstrate “8th Principle” leadership. (Brian Gardner)

8. Closing Reading & Extinguishing the Chalice

“It can be difficult to let go of the familiar....” (Suzanne Rusnak)