

West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church
Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, Sept 29, 2022, 6:30-8:40 p.m.
Motions and Minutes
Approved 10-27-2022, 6:45 p.m.

TRUSTEES

Present

- *Mark Aulisio - absent*
- Cathy Bollin (Vice President)
- *Dierre Cody - absent*
- David Drickhamer (Secretary)
- Brian Gardner (President)
- Kathy Kosiorek
- Gary Kustis (Past President)
- Liz Nolan
- Suzanne Rusnak
- Dave Willett
- Jen Wynn (Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair)

STAFF

- Suehana Kieres
- *Rev. Anthony Makar - absent*
- Meghan Ross

CONGREGATIONAL PARTICIPANTS

- Linda New
- Catherine Almquist
- Joan Clark
- Cil Knutsen
- Cathy Ross

MINUTES

- 1. Chalice Lighting and Opening Reading**
Unison affirmation - Brian

- 2. Approval of Minutes**

Motion to approve August BOT minutes. Motion made by Liz Nolan, Suzanne Rusnak seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

3. Waste Reduction at West Shore - Linda New and Kathryn Almquist

- a. Challenge: We have recycling now but it is not well implemented, there's low awareness of effectiveness and some other issues.
 - We currently recycle paper in the bins in the parking lot, and metal recycling is taken to Berea metal recycling
 - Repeat Glass empties bins twice monthly.
 - Republic is not recycling a significant percentage of single stream recycling, and it ends up in landfill.
- b. Proposed solutions (Reference summary of Environmental Stewardship at WSUUC Summary)
 - Periodic education of congregation and childcare center staff.
 - Clear signage kitchen and elsewhere.
 - Reinstate composting (like before pandemic) by Rustbelt Riders
 1. \$30 per pickup, once/week proposed (\$1500 per year)
 2. Suspended at the church because of low on-site activity
 3. This is a clear expense, but it directly ties into environmental justice principles.
- c. Current waste and recycling practices summary - Suehana
 - The church uses Legacy waste (\$190/month) not Republic, and they don't take recycling.
 - We do take some recycling to the curb that Rocky River picks up on rubbish day
 - Bins behind RR city hall have historically only collected paper.
- d. The Board recognized and understands and supports the priority and the connection between these efforts to environmental justice.
 - Budget changes will have to go through a new process
 - Signage changes will have to go through Rev. Makar, and possibly the Aesthetic Committee.

4. West Shore Justice Visioning Taskforce Report (WS JVTF) – Joan Clark, Cathy Ross and Cil Knutsen

- a. Brief background on JVTF mission - Brian
- b. Vision for Justice Work at West Shore - Joan Clark
 - This is a path not a plan, intended to be flexible documentation of the congregational viewpoints that they have gathered and information the Taskforce wants to share and develop in the church. This vision and understanding needs to be an organic process.
 - There is a budget matter within this strategic outline. Reference to a part-time position, which is contingent on the overall budget of the church growing to accommodate that. It's shown in the timeline which is a hopeful and helpful direction that the Taskforce suggests we want to move in.
- c. Review of Introduction - Cil Knutsen

- Definition of Justice - “the moral principle(s) determining right and proper conduct.” We have 8 moral principles, which bind Unitarian Universalists together.
 - WSJVTF - March 2021, charged with developing a congregationally based and approved vision of where the church could be in 5 years. (See board packet for review of activities.)
 - Bulk of the work of the taskforce was synthesizing the elements of what they heard from all of these activities. It is now the congregation’s turn to review this and see if it aligns with what we truly want.
 - “The church has always found the money to do what is considered a priority.”
- d. Review of 5 Strategies for achieving the vision - Cathy Ross
1. Establish Greater Accountability to our Social Justice Commitment
 2. Strengthen the Connection Between Social Justice and Spirituality
 3. Increase Opportunities for Social Justice Participation at All Levels to All Congregants
 4. Maintain the Priority of Partnering with Organizations in the Larger Community
 5. Enhance Support of Social Justice Activities and WSUUC Volunteers
- e. JVTF charge to the Board:
- Do you accept the concept of having a justice vision going forward, and accept the basic ideas that are included in the JVTF vision statement?
 - And also, two representatives/focal points from BOT who will support the taskforce on this, and then this will eventually lead to a vote/approval by the congregation.
- f. Discussion
- Board resoundingly applauds the JVTF’s dedication and and is thankful for their work to bring this effort to fruition.
 - There’s a lot of leeway to move from path to a plan - Brian
 - Best practices from other congregations are included - Cil
 - Showing up at the different groups and committees quickly common threads rose up - Joan
 - World Cafe model was really helpful to engage people in the issue, and gather meaningful input and perspectives. Also, for raising up points of conflict, and to begin discussions that move people from “either/or” perspectives to a “and/both.” - Cil and Joan
 - One recurring challenge: What is the one focus? Depends on whose issue takes prominence. Justice work often reflects people’s personal passions and interests.
 - There’s a governance committee issue here - requires a 30% quorum to make congregational statement on such issues.... - Brian
 - Another Challenge: Connecting justice activities to spiritual aspect of why people go to church. Need to articulate the direct linkage between

spiritual growth and justice work that a UU church does compared to an advocacy group.

BREAK

5. RE Report - Meghan Ross

- a. 30 children first week, 33 children second week, Classes are mostly staffed.
- b. Church picnic was a big success
- c. UU Wellspring starts 2nd Tuesday in October. Developed by other UU congregations, similar to Connection Circles. It's small-group ministry with pre-work. First year is all about the UU sources. Funded by a \$500 grant, includes Oberlin and Olmsted congregations.
- d. Collaborating with childcare center to put on a kids' Halloween Party
- e. We need more RE office volunteers - once a month on Sundays.
- f. Melinda, new youth ministry coordinator is doing fine.

6. Ad hoc Discussion of Project Check-In findings - Suehana

- a. What can we do with the people contacted in the Project Check-In outreach program who stated they no longer expect to be part of the church? - Suehana
- b. We've made every effort to contact them, not pledging members, etc. What is the process for removing these specific people from the membership role?
- c. This connects to the existing drop-list process (not executed since 2016), which is under discussion to be part of perpetual annual agenda (which needs to be part of the board packet).

7. Financial Report - Jen Wynn

- a. In reference to recycling proposals, we need to finish the new initiative procedures for any activities that propose to spend operating dollars. Draft of that process is still in development, and has not been communicated.
- b. New operating budget includes funding for stewardship work and pledge campaign. Motion to cover those items by moving funds from a Board designated organ maintenance fund toward stewardship and consultations.
- c. Starting on page 18, reviewed new working budget (dated 9/12), with new and proposed comparisons. The annual deficit increases in this revised budget.
- d. Discussion around impact of down market on our investment draw and the budget impact.

Motion to approve the redesignation of the \$10,000 balance in the D-040 Organ Maintenance Fund for use in the FYE June 30, 2023 operating budget for stewardship consultations. Dave Willet motioned. Liz Nolan seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

Motion to approve the WSUUC working budget dated Sept. 12, 2022, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023. Brian Gardner motioned, Cathy Bollin seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

8. Ad hoc Discussion of Obvious Church Maintenance Issues

- a. Lightbulbs in the sanctuary are out.
Replacing them is a big, expensive job that requires moving pews and special equipment. It's a recognized priority and is being worked on.
- b. Five trees on the grounds appear to be dead/dying. Again, the issue is recognized, possibly linked to mulch application. The hope is that they may come back next year.

9. Brief Chlidcare Center Update - Suehana

Two major developments (p. 30)

- We have been able to change our licensed capacity for children 2.5 years and under from 26 to 38.
- Stabilization grant phase III of \$173,200 has been approved. When received and implemented, the church will benefit significantly from this work in terms of facility improvements. It will also allow them to give staff bonuses and take other actions that improve retention.

10. Road Ahead and Follow Up Actions - 4 Questions Around Board Communication with the Congregation - Brian

- a. What are some ways to improve how the board communicates its work and goals to the congregation? Check with Debbie re: Shorelines deadlines and timely submission of activity.
- b. What are ways to increase Board dialog with the congregation?
- c. What are ways for the Board to improve its visibility into the activities of the church? - Rev. Anthony's monthly report is very helpful here.
- d. What are ways to improve the way we communicate as a board with one another?
 - Proposal to use Realm - Brian G.
 - There's a clear need for a central source for communication and document storage.
 - Transition and support will be required.
 - Make sure the email we have registered in Realm is the same one we would like to use for Board work.

11. Closing Reading & Extinguishing the Chalice

"We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth...." - Brian

NEXT BOARD MEETING: October 27, 2022