



## UUCK Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes January 25, 2023

### I. Call to Order

Board Members In attendance in-person were: Don Gregg, Diane Kloss, Carol Weigand, Susanna Smart, Kara Kramer, and Rev. Steven. Liz Bright and Heidi Shaffer Bish attended virtually.

MET members in attendance were: MaryBeth Hannan. Lois Weir and Jennifer May attended virtually.

CoSM members in attendance were: Lori Mirkin-McGee

After a brief check-in, the meeting started with chalice lighting and Rev Steven offering a reading.

Due to the joint meeting with the MET and CoSM, the Liminal Action Plan was addressed prior to other agenda items. Some of this discussion overlapped into the agenda item of Communication with the Congregation (see below), particularly about financial issues.

### II. Announcements

Board Breaking NEWS meetings: The Townhall meeting was held January 22, and the next date has yet to be determined. Board volunteers were alerted in the minutes to sign up for future dates with Sign-up Genius:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050d4caca82ca0ff2-board>

### III. Approve Prior Minutes

The December 2022 Board Meeting Minutes were modified as directed by the Board. The revised minutes were approved (Kara moved; Diane seconded).

### IV. Consent Agenda

Received reports: Having reviewed reports prior to meeting, the Board discussed reports received: including the Minister's Report (Dec 2022), and the Treasurer's Reports (Dec 2022); the MET report from MET Minutes (Jan 2023); the informal notes of the Joint Board and MET meeting of 1/12/2023.

Rev. Steven reported a recommendation by Rev. Sunshine that the Music Director position be preceded by hiring an Interim Music Director for two years, and that the MET is planning in this direction.

The MET report included an endorsement for the Spring Live Auction.

The Treasurer's reports indicate: "Pledge and plate income is at 109% of budget. Total operating income is currently at 112% of YTD budget. It is most encouraging that non-pledge donations are three times the projected YTD level. Thanks for this is largely due to the Board of Trustees for organizing the successful "Close the Gap" campaign. Expenses are 89% of YTD budget. To date, a single draw of \$26,500 has been made from the Endowment Fund to shore up the General Fund. While it is likely that more funds will be needed during the remaining 6

months of the fiscal year, the current numbers are encouraging that our income will exceed what was projected when the budget was created a year ago. With some luck and some more hard work and ingenuity on the part of the church community, the amount we will need to borrow from the Endowment fund will be less than expected.”

The Consent Agenda was received (Diane-moved; Kara-seconded).

The Informal notes of the Joint Board and MET meeting of 1/12/2023 were approved.

## V. Liminal Action Plan

Reviewed the three parts (priorities) of the LAP and discussed the next steps for implementing the LAP. (Slide used in the Town Hall meeting).



- 1) Community Engagement - Engage with and Build Community, both internally and externally. Engage our community both internally and externally with sensitivity to inclusivity and healing.
- 2) Communication - Enhance our communication strategies through a multipronged approach to ensure the right message reaches the right audience at the right time. Enhance church communication strategies through a multi-pronged approach to ensure that the right messages get to the right people at the right time.
- 3) Fiscal Health - Harness the congregation's creativity to build a robust financial future. Harness the congregation's creativity to build a robust fiscal future. Engaging the congregation to solve the budget problem in many small and large ways

*What does it mean to be inclusive?* Jen agreed to audit services for inclusivity to make recommendations and to work on this with the CoSM.

*“How do we remove the barriers”.*

Rev Steven added that it makes sense to practice and model inclusivity at every service and to have this be included in the opening words. In addition, it was agreed that inclusivity might include being sure everyone has a microphone when needed and describing images that are shown rather than relying solely on sight.

*How are we reaching out to the greater community as well as our church community?*

There was brainstorming related to reaching out to the greater community. Don mentioned perhaps partnering with other UU congregations in the vicinity to advertise on radio to encourage attendance. He expressed willingness to contact the Cleveland UU. There was discussion of ways to reach out to KSU students, for example the LGBTQ student group on campus.

Lori suggested a public lecture series of varied topics, drawing upon the members of the congregation who have expertise in many areas. Lectures could be advertised to the greater community via the Portager and Facebook. This idea would need to be shared with the congregation to gauge willingness to participate.

Heidi mentioned that there are some in the congregation who are interested in publicity, which might suggest “a fledgling publicity committee”.

Lori requested that the Board send any additional specific questions to be included in the upcoming CoSM meeting agenda.

The group agreed on the importance of a reconnection campaign to reach out to members who have become inactive. This could be done by committees like membership.

*What are the next steps for implementing the LAP?* The group emphasized that we must engage the community. We are doing this with the Halapalooza and other events. Kara indicated that there are ways we are implementing the LAP which were discussed at the TownHall meeting. The question was posed about how we will continue monitoring progress with implementing the LAP.

*How are we keeping open communication with the congregation and addressing finances?*

The MET advocated for a long-term view of fiscal health. They encouraged the Board to be unified in our messaging to the congregation so as to galvanize energy and not foster unhelpful fears. They reported that pledges and rentals are increasing.

The Board agreed that we must have a long-term plan for fiscal responsibility. In addition, Don volunteered to forward a UUA article that addresses how other congregations are working with budget challenges.

*How do we galvanize energies toward implementing the LAP?* Lori said that all committees should be using the LAP as the foundation of their mission statements. In this spirit, the CoSM is beginning to conduct quarterly meetings with a representative from each committee reporting on LAP progress. This procedure will ensure updates about implementation of the LAP. Notes from these meetings will be shared with the Board and MET. It will be important for the Board to take action on that feedback. It was suggested that the LAP be kept going forward into the next year. The next fiscal year would then need to approve it.

Jen described a shared leadership model, ADKAR: Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement and how this may be applied to our church.

## **VI. Communication with the Congregation and Continuing to Emphasize the Financial Need:**

The outcome of the feedback from the congregation about communication indicated the need for multiple announcement format. As a result, the announcement slides are being played before the service and also after the service during coffee hour in Hobbs Hall. Jen suggested a video reading of the announcements that could be embedded in the enUUs. (She referred to a recent successful announcement from youth by Iona).

Kara said we need to be sure that the Tech Team is notified about any special needs for their services beyond the usual service times. For example, assistance with Town Hall.

All agreed that keeping the LAP on the forefront of our discussions as well as in front of the congregation is essential going forward.

## **VII. Winter Town Hall Jan. 22nd, Reflections**

Kara and Don were commended on their presentation and conducting of the Town Hall meeting. Among takeaways from the Town Hall was that there is a tension between two important values we hold: fair compensation and fiscal well-being.

It was acknowledged and mentioned in the Town Hall meeting that staffing comprises the major expense. During the Town Hall, the Treasurer noted the importance of living up to our UU values by compensating staff fairly; using UUA recommendations would mean raising staff pay. At the same time, the value of fair compensation needs to be balanced with fiscal responsibility.

The MET reiterated that borrowing from the endowment was a necessary phase of growth. The question was raised as to whether we are fostering angst about money because of the way we are talking about financial issues. "We are in the black." Our messaging matters. The message to the congregation needs to be that there is a long-term plan for keeping the church financially sound and that this is fiscal responsibility.

Following the meeting, the Board received a letter from a concerned member who expressed the importance of fiscal well-being and suggested that pay increases be postponed until financial stability has been achieved. The letter also stated that this individual's concerns were likely shared by others in the congregation. A suggestion was raised that hiring new staff and increasing staff hourly wages might convey the opposite of fiscal responsibility.

The tension between these two seemingly conflicting values - staff compensation and fiscal health - will continue to be weighed in order to navigate our way through this liminal, post-COVID time.

## **VIII. Board Endorsement of Current Membership:**

The Board acknowledged 168 members and accepted the membership endorsement (Kara - made motion to accept; Diane seconded).

The Board commended the membership team; Carol volunteered to send a thank you card on behalf of the Board.

## **IX. Recommendation for Purchase of Security Cameras**

The Board discussed the request from Building and Grounds for funds to purchase additional security cameras to safe-guard the premises and congregation in the face of understanding that churches like the UUCK are at risk of harm. The Google-based cameras are less expensive; data is stored off campus. The pros and cons were discussed. A motion to purchase 6 cameras to use within our existing network was made and approved (Heidi moved; Liz seconded).

## **X. Next Month Board Meeting**

The meeting is to discuss the draft of the Budget.

## **XI. Process Review**

We agreed that the shared meeting was productive.

## **XII. Extinguish the Chalice and Adjournment**

Rev. Steven extinguished the chalice and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9PM.

Gratefully submitted,  
Susanna Smart and Carol Weigand, Co-Secretaries