

All Souls Church, Unitarian

Board of Trustees

Thursday, January 22, 2009

Eaton Room

Board Members in Attendance

Goldia Hodgdon
Erika Landberg
Josephine Nieves
Taylar Nuevelle
Mary Rojas
Fred Tipson
Elizabeth "Libby" Turpen

Absent Board Members

Fred Samuels
Joneis Thomas

Others in Attendance

Kyla Bollens-Lund (Assistant Secretary)
Jody Feldman (Moderator)
Rob Hardies (Senior Minister)
Lynne Heltman (Membership Secretary)
Barry Johnson (Treasurer—elected at the meeting)
Eliza Klose (Secretary)
Katie Loughary (Interim Director of Finance & Administration)
Shana Lynngood (Associate Minister)
Walter LeFlore (Intern Minister)
David Reynolds (Assistant Treasurer)

Summary of Actions

Board President Erika Landberg called the meeting to order at 7pm. Rob Hardies offered a video reading, playing the CBS video of ASC children reading out loud the letter from Barack Obama to his children.

The agenda was changed to allow for the election of Barry Johnson to the position of Treasurer of ASC. Barry has been a member of ASC for 8 years and served for a short time as treasurer three years ago. He is CFO of the investment firm ACON Investments and was elected unanimously. The board thanked David Reynolds, the Assistant Treasurer, for all he's done filling in until Barry was elected.

Retreat: Erika talked of the board retreat on Saturday, January 24, and its agenda. After an icebreaker, led by Mary Rojas, the group will discuss policy governance led by Tom Fox and Barbara Corprew, the board chair and co-chair when the system was initiated in 2001-02. (Erika promised to send an electronic copy of the policy governance document to everyone.) Next we will discuss the Ends Statement Visioning process led by Joneis Thomas, Goldia Hodgdon and Fred Tipson. The retreat will begin in the Longfellow room at 9am and move to the Eaton Room at 1:30 pm, where we will be joined by the Stewardship Committee for a conversation about the Capital Campaign with Tricia Hart,

our consultant through a FORTH grant from the UUA. Rob mentioned that he has also invited Jim Heltman and Gary Mummert, two members of congregation with building and engineering experience.

Reports:

David Reynolds, Investment Committee (See report)

Overall, there was \$5.22 million in the ASC endowment as of 12/31/07; \$3.95 million, as of 12/31/08. The total loss after fees was \$1,238,727, a major one, and reflects the drop in the market. Ins and outs for the year were normal distributions. Fees usually equal 1 to 1 ½ percent per year. (Mark Flood's Investment report of 6/17/08 provides more information.)

Rob Hardies (See report):

There was a huge number of people at the MLK service on Sunday and the Inaugural ball was lots of fun. Monday—overflow interfaith peace revival service. Two more events on "Sing the Dream" are the Jazz Vespers this week and the book signing on Feb. 9

The Executive Team will be making a major proposal to the Beckner Fund for 3-year funding for the multicultural program. The proposal will be finished in early February at which point the board will see it. Erika noted that the multicultural program will be on the BOT agenda in March.

Announcement has gone out all over the US re the ASC search for a new Music Director. Church hopes we will be able to hire for the position despite the financial situation.

Rob asked the BOT to formally thank the organizers of the Inaugural Ball.

Resolution: made by Erika, seconded by Josephine, that the board write a letter of thanks. Passed unanimously.

Shana Lynngood (No written report)

Sixteen people attended the "Refresh the Spirit" retreat at Bon Secours. It was successful, but probably won't do another until 2010. Twenty people are now signed up for the Summer pilgrimage in Portugal and Spain from June 10-18, 2009.

Katie Loughary (See report):

Preliminary figures suggest that the B&B for the inauguration earned close to \$9,000 and the Inaugural Ball roughly \$28,000. [The actual figures, sent out by Katie on February 5, were B&B—\$8,937 and Ball—\$37,702, for a total of \$46,639. EKK] The B&B program will continue all year and be advertised only in the UU guidebook. The Inaugural Ball was a huge effort and a huge success. (The 2009 budget included \$25,000 from a fundraiser and \$9,000 from the B&B program. We've already cleared that much.) ASC has also received more website donations this past month than in the past.

We ended 2008 with a positive balance. Money came in at the end of year and we also cut expenses. The pledge shortfall now is \$75,000. In other words, we've received 94% of the \$1.2 million pledge goal. The Generosity Committee is continuing its

campaign. Katie recommended that we adopt some of our yearend cuts and revisit the budget question in April-May. Cuts include giving no raises this year and cutting committee budgets as well as the children's choir. Nonetheless, we plan to move ahead with the music director search.

A few points from the discussion: The interim music director can apply for the job along with everyone else. The JPD request for funds will be cut by 10%. Lynne Heltman, membership secretary, noted that we will soon have final figures that should be worked into our fees to the District. Also the ASC cut is not as large as that made by others. There was concern about cutting the sign language interpreter, also the audit. David Reynolds, Assistant Treasurer noted that our bylaws require us to have one every three years. Perhaps we could do a less expensive test of the numbers in the in-between years. Jody Feldman noted that the language we use regarding cuts is important. We should note that any reductions we make are temporary, so ASC can weather the storm.

Some trustees wondered whether we needed to make the cuts now instead of waiting until April or May to do so. Others felt it better to be conservative now and add later rather than spend money now and find we don't have enough later. In general, it was noted that it is better to act conservatively and to assume that the weakness in the economy might have a negative effect on the congregation and its pledges. Folks were concerned about starting the Capital Campaign in a weak economy. BOT was reminded that actual fundraising wouldn't be launched for another few years as it takes time to plan.

Resolution: Fred Tipson made the motion that we approve the budget cuts as suggested by the CFO and revisit them in May in light of the situation at that time.

The resolution was seconded by Josephine and passed with one abstention.

The BOT thanked Katie for pulling ASC in close to budget for 2008 and 2009. Generally for doing such a good job. Mary Rojas will be meeting with the financial team of Barry and David on a regular basis this year.

Jody Feldman (See report)

Jody said we have committee tables for Activity Sunday available for all. The board should also field a table. Sign up list was passed around.

She emphasized the new leadership training underway at ASC called Pathways, led by the Pathways team. She mentioned that leadership should be fun, a growth opportunity and a blessing. It should also be recognized better, publicly from the pulpit and by the congregation.

We also need to continue to follow up on ASC welcoming and membership practices, which were one of the priorities determined at the Council Meeting in May. We need other ways to meet people as well. Neighborhood groups among the congregation are being developed. One zip code group has been established in Mount Pleasant.

Bylaws changes were approved at the annual meeting. Jody is preparing a final copy of the revised Bylaws and will give them to the Secretary to distribute.

Consent Agenda.

The minutes for December 7 and December 18 were approved. Fred moved and Taylor seconded the 18th, Josephine moved and Fred seconded the 7th.

UUA Affairs: Ginny Courter would like to run for re-election for the top lay leadership position at the UUA. She runs the meeting at the General Assembly and has done a good job. The ASC BOT has been asked to sign the petition to include her on the ticket. Erika can do this if the BOT approves.

Fred made the motion, Libby seconded it. It passed unanimously.

Announcements:

Rob announced that a race for president of the UUA is underway. Two people are running and the outcome will affect ASC. There will be a candidate's forum at ASC on Wednesday at which both candidates, Laurel Hallman and Peter Morales, will speak. The forum will be facilitated by Chuck Woolridge. It will be followed by a panel discussion, "How to Heal a Broken Nation," featuring Marilyn Sewell, Thandeka and Nancy McDonald Ladd and facilitated by William Sinkford. The dinner will run from 5-7 and will cost \$30. The panel will run from 7-8:45 and will be free. Both will be held in Pierce Hall. All are welcome.

Erika asked that all reports for meetings come in earlier, ideally the weekend before the meeting so that people will have more chance to read them.

There was a discussion regarding the meeting assessment done at each meeting. Folks asked whether it could be more informal. For this session everyone at the meeting commented briefly on something they noticed, such as the frank and open discussion of the budget.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eliza Klose, Secretary

Attachments:

- 1) Meeting Agenda
- 2) Rob Hardies Report
- 3) Investment Report
- 4) CFA Report
- 5) Council Informational Report

