

All Souls Church Unitarian Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

September 28, 2022

Trustees Present

Cait Clark
Joe Feuer
Sophia Fisher, Secretary
Maya Hermann
Traci Hughes-Trotter, ex officio
Neil Manzullo, President
Bernard Mustafa, Treasurer
Clair Null
Bill Sinkford, ex officio
Justis Tuia

Trustees Absent

Gretta Goodwin
Chuck Wooldridge

Guests Present

T Vatnick, Search Committee
Carolynn Fowler-Smith, Search Committee
Paula Cole Jones, Search Committee
Erika Landberg, Search Committee
Jennifer Keller, Search Committee
Nadine Bowden, Search Committee
Mark Ewert, Search Committee
Gregory Ford, Search Committee

Reports Received

- Executive Team Report
- Finance Report (August)

Convening

Neil convened the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Chalice Lighting and Reading

Clair lit the chalice and shared a reading

9-1 Approval of Agenda

- *Motion to approve agenda*
 - Approved without objection

9-2 Approval of Consent Agenda

- Items on the consent agenda:
 - Appoint Marleise Pastore to the Finance Committee
 - Affirm the shared understanding on Church Goals, developed at the Board Retreat
- *Motion to approve, seconded, approved without objection*

9-3 Ministerial Search

- Reasons to delay the search:
 - Financial issues may put off candidates or may cause an “unintentional interim” – that is, set a future minister up to fail
- Reasons not to delay the search:
 - May disappoint congregation and search committee
 - Potential for not pulling the congregation together around a search
- Church staff are in favor of Rev. Bill staying an additional year
- Breakout room questions:
 - Discuss thoughts about potential search delay
 - Can we make a difference in one year?
 - Will the search committee be willing to serve an extra year (2 terms)?
- Breakout room report out
 - Consensus in favor of extending the search for one year
 - Need a conversation about messaging and language
 - Very direct—church is not currently in a financial position to have a new minister start on good footing
 - Need to address the financial position before calling a new minister
 - Set the new minister up for success
- Motion to suspend search:
 - *I move to extend the search for a second year and authorize the search committee for a second year and ask Rev. Sinkford to stay for an additional year and commit to supporting the Executive Team's stewardship plans*
 - *Motion seconded*
 - Discussion on the motion:
 - The search committee functions as a covenant group
 - Have the search committee as leaders in fundraising
 - Want to time the search with the regathering of the congregation
 - On the move, excited about the future
 - How will the congregation be notified?
 - Rev. Bill to make a pulpit announcement on October 2 and launch Funding our Future on October 9
 - Can the Search Committee communication team be included in the messaging?
 - The timeline to get an announcement to the bulletin is short; may not be able to coordinate on that piece
 - The Board of Trustees will make the announcement and the Search Committee will send out information on how the extra time will be used
 - There will be an ongoing process and conversation with the congregation
 - Discussion on whether to use extend or modify in communications
 - Consensus on “extend”

- Need to communicate both the search extension and the Funding our Future campaign widely, including to all the affinity groups
 - Regathering –extending the search and raising funds
 - Regathering energy related to getting financial house in order—one effort that we’re all making
- *Motion passed unanimously*

9-4 Church Goals

- Overview of Goal #4 “Act accountably to dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions” and conversation around the goal is found in the document.
 - Appreciate language around transforming self in the document
 - Accountability – perhaps a struggle for definition
 - Monitoring suggestion – ask people if they experience oppression over time
 - Ask small subcommittees/communities to create statements about how they embody the 8th principle
 - Quantitative—may miss people who had bad experiences and didn’t stick around
 - The Board should model discussing accountability—accountability can feel amorphous and fuzzy—opportunity to provide clarity
 - Board can take time to reflect on how it functions using the 8th principle as a way to model it for the rest of the church
 - Policy governance handbook calls for the Board to monitor itself and we don’t really monitor right now (like we should be doing)
 - Don’t need to come to a conclusion tonight—excited to help Board with internal reflection using the 8th principle as a lens
 - Including staff in goals is helpful—everyone is engaged and it is tangible for them

9-5 Executive Limitations: Protection of Assets

- Item C, protection of assets
 - Does proactive monitoring include questioning of the organizations that use the church building?
 - There is language in the rental agreements that is clear on how the space is to be used
 - Staff checks to make sure that the potential user is not a political entity and also checks websites to make sure that their values are in line with All Souls Church
 - Helpful to have this information
- What is the process the Executive Team goes through to identify proper insurance coverage for the church?
 - Traci works with a broker to plug in the correct numbers
- Does the church have an internal controls manual that spells out standard operations/ things that need to be tracked?
 - Many routine things are handled by church counsel
 - Good idea to put that kind of document together
- *Motion that there is evidence of asset monitoring*
 - *No discussion*
 - *Motion passes unanimously*

9-6 Executive Team Report

- Rev. Bill has spent a significant amount of time reviewing data on fundraising
 - Incidental decision making: funding our future name for the campaign; put together the timeline
 - Pulpit announcement 10/2
 - Letters to everyone launch 10/9
 - 3 different versions
 - Current pledgers
 - People who have not pledged but have given gifts
 - People who have made gifts in the past but haven't been heard from in the last 2-3 years
- For those who are pledging regularly, is this a top up or will it be a one time thing?
 - One time effort isn't enough
 - Need to be long term pledges
 - Also need people to increase their pledges by 30-35% in order to balance the budget
- Need to do what we can do reach those who join online
- Good to see wills/estate planning as part of the fundraising toolbox—would be good to see that made more prominent
- Can we get matching gifts from employers?
- Is ASC part of the Combined Federal Campaign?
 - Not currently; will look into adding ASC
- How much data can we capture?
 - There's a lot we can learn
- More timeline
 - November 5: 200th anniversary bash
 - November 6: altar call
 - Following that
 - Email follow-ups before the holidays and in the new year
 - Each round of follow-ups will be targeted to smaller groups and there will be more data available as the process moves forward
- Also developed a strategy that allows people to contribute to/from IRAs
- Asks will also go out through affinity groups
- Employee Retention Tax Credit
 - Traci will come back to the Board with a contract from a new vendor
- There seems to be some unhappiness about Lenard Starks leaving
 - Rev. Bill and Jen Hayman met with the Jubilee Singers and the plan for moving forward was well received.
- Is the draft membership and attendance report ready?
 - Not quite ready—coming soon

9-7 Next Meeting

- October 26 2022 – in person at church