**All Souls Church Unitarian Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**

**March 22, 2023**

**Trustees Present**

Cait Clarke

Joe Feuer

Gretta Goodwin

Maya Hermann

Traci Hughes-Trotter, ex officio

Neil Manzullo, President

Bernard Mustafa, Treasurer

Bill Sinkford, ex officio

Justis Tuia

Clair Null

**Reports Received**

* Executive Team Report and Goal #3 Interpretation
* Quarter 3 Financial Report
* Materials for Executive Session (Mold/Moisture Report)

**Convening**

Neil convened the meeting at 7:04

**Chalice Lighting and Reading**

Traci lit the chalice and shared a reading

**1-1 Approval of Agenda**

* *Motion to approve (Cait), seconded (Gretta), approved without objection*

**3-2 Approval of Consent Agenda**

* Items on the consent agenda:
  + Beckner Committee’s recommendation
  + Neil added approval for the congregation to sponsor Traci, pending her interview with the Committee on Ministry
* *Motion to approve (Cait), seconded (Gretta), approved without objection*

**3-3 Bylaws review discussion**

* At today’s meeting we are just discussing what to recommend to the congregation (vote to be taken next month)
* Changes re membership: assigned board responsibility to set policy for financial waiver, related to definition of “member emeritus”. In the past, when the church had a required financial contribution, “member emeritus” was just those who got the waiver. Barbara Corprew suggests shifting it to refer to very long-standing members who are no longer able to be active but whose involvement in the church should be honored.
* Changes re church council: transferred responsibility for leadership development to Executive Team
* What will happen to the leadership class the LDNC used to run?
* Bill shared the proposed changes re shifting leadership with staff yesterday. It was a very energized and healthy conversation for the staff to have. But now that these questions have been raised, they will need to be addressed. Staff are interested in governance. Staff reactions:
  + With the exception of RE and Music, other groups don’t currently think of themselves as being responsible to the ET. Staff expected that groups would have reactions to implication that ET has supervisory authority over the groups. Staff wondered if any of those groups had been consulted about that change? Note that Black Souls didn’t even want to use the church’s zoom account for their meetings. Staff felt that saying “shared ministry” was overcome by other language that seemed more hierarchical.
  + Staff recognized the need for leadership development. There were similar questions and concerns about some of the language. They also noticed that Music and RE each have two FTEs, and other staff don’t have nearly as much bandwidth to support various groups at All Souls.
  + Staff would love to be acknowledged directly for their role, not only through the ET.
  + The church doesn’t actually function the way the governance document describes. The groups understand themselves to be independent entities that sometimes require assistance from staff (esp. on building reservations). In practice, staff facilitate the gathering of these communities. Staff scan the environment and look for opportunities, such as recent rekindling of Rainbow Souls by 2 staff members. Now lots of momentum there, but no sense of responsibility to the staff.
* To the extent that social justice under Rev. Rob’s leadership functions differently it’s because he’s managing the budget for those groups, which is different than the “souls” groups which don’t get funds from the church budget.
* Church leadership/staff has to ensure that our communities are safe / compliant with laws & policies, etc. esp during events on church property. But that’s stated in church policies; doesn’t need to be covered in the bylaws.
* Might need to update the org charge showing which staff are assigned to support each group.
* We don’t want lots of responsibility to shift on paper but to not be able to actually implement it. In addition to creating culture of financial generosity, we need members to be involved.
* Language from the policy governance framework has now been incorporated into the bylaws (the role of ET / staff in leadership development has already been church policy).
* The group discussed potential revisions to section 2c and ultimately agreed for the bylaws committee to keep working on this.

**3-4 Church Goal #3**

* Since there have been so many other staff meetings recently, have not workshopped this one with the staff yet. Have circulated this draft with staff and have received only positive comments.
* The board discussed other ways of monitoring congregants’ perception that they’ve learned something over the course of the year (similar to what we’d discussed for the caring goal), including incorporating this into visiting stewards’ interactions
* Core connections is recommended by the 8 Team. It’s a short 4-session opportunity to engage with each other and learn about the history of the church, our culture, etc. The hope is that folks will deepen their spiritual lives through this. Different groups would lead different modules (e.g. Committee on Right Relations might lead covenant module). The next step will be to look across all 7 interpretations and figure out the priorities.
* Board members invited members to share feedback on revised goal 1 via email.

**3-5 Executive Limitation Monitoring: Staff & Volunteer Treatment**

* 8 staff responded to the staff survey (all in English, though we should continue to offer it in Spanish and Tigrayan). 13 didn’t respond. Looks like there’s been progress on awareness of conflict resolution process, formal performance evaluations, written personnel policies, and mentoring (call this set of outcomes “group 1”). Room for improvement on opinions of the conflict resolution process, professional development opportunities, feedback, and workplace conditions being fair, safe, healthy, professional (call this set of outcomes “group 2”). Justis and Cait would like to share the findings with the staff.
* How does this staff survey relate to a standard HR annual review process? For a long time, All Souls monitored ET policy compliance, and also conducted performance evaluations of ET. During interim period we haven’t really known whether or how to do a performance evaluations. It seems inequitable to do a performance evaluation of one member of a co-equal team when one of them is already temporary.
* We use the church’s HR system to monitor progress toward goals. Late April/May ET meets with each staff person. It’s a standardized system. This staff survey bumps closely against management of staff. Even if that’s not the intent, it can be confusing to the staff to be approached directly by the board. Talking directly to Cait and Justis creates the impression that the board has oversight of staff management. If and when this survey is conducted in the future, we’ll have to think carefully about that.
* If we didn’t do the staff survey the board might have to give up on monitoring this executive limitation.
* *Justis moved: The Board finds the ET in compliance around the 4 indicators captured in group 1.*
  + *Cait seconded*
  + *Passed without discussion*
* The board discussed having Justis and Cait work with the ET to share staff feedback and determine what to do about the 4 indicators in group 2, with next steps to be included in the April Consent Agenda (including dates for action plan).

**3-6 Executive Team Report**

* As of today, As Love Shows Us How has reached 52% of the pledge goal. Have pledges from 217 units out of 450 who pledged last year. Had hoped to be considerably farther ahead, but there’s been progress in the past week. Comparing each individual’s pledge to last year, we’re up 27%, but at this pace we’ll still be $200k shy of the aspirational budget ($1.4M out of $1.6M).

**3-7 Church Repairs Update**

* *Motion to go into executive session was made, seconded, and approved*

**3-8 Next Meeting**

* Potential Board retreat on April 15 – hold the date
* Next meeting will be April 26 at church
* *Gretta moved to end the meeting, Cait seconded, passed without discussion*

Meeting adjourned at 9:38