

**First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee
Minutes of the Meeting of the BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

January 22, 2019

Present: Michelle Naples (President), Mark Bishop (Vice President)-presiding, Chris Aiken, Mark Bender (Recording Secretary), Maria Dorsey (via Zoom), Jane Peterson

Also Present: Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom (Senior Minister), Rev. Dena McPhetres (Associate Minister), Noreen Gilbertsen, Jean Johnson, Lynne Jacoby, Elizabeth Lentini (via Zoom)

Called to order: 6:01 p.m.

Opening Words: Chris Aiken

I. Consent Agenda (Mark Bishop)

- a. December Minutes
- b. Moved to Approve (Jane / Michelle); Approved (unanimously)

II. 2nd Quarter Financial Review (Noreen Gilbertsen, Jean Johnson)

- a. Total Income is slightly ahead of budget at this point in the year. Investment income is a little slower than usual (due to the economy) and bequest income has exceeded expectations.
- b. Total Expenses are lighter than planned due to a couple staff vacancies, fewer staff opting into our health insurance, and only modest increases in insurance premium.
- c. Therefore Net Income is currently operating in the black, which is normal as many expenses occur at year end.
- d. The Balance Sheet has shifted slightly (but remains very strong – assets up 5% since last quarter) due to calling out Krug bequest funds into its own line item (impacting Capital Maintenance and Unrestricted Fund balances) so that we can better monitor how much remains.
- e. The Board discussed how this financial review and approval may be different under a Policy Governance model.
- f. Moved to Approve (Michelle / Chris); Approved (unanimously)

III. KGAT Update - Preliminary (Elizabeth Lentini – KGAT, via Zoom)

- a. The Lu Krug Gift Acceptance Team (KGAT) reviewed 19 member-submitted proposals (for projects funded by the portion of the Krug bequest allocated for strategically implementing our ends over the next 1-8 years) and are prepared to make their recommendations.
- b. The Board was briefed on the strategy and rationale KGAT used for arriving at these recommendations.
 - i. KGAT used general agreed-upon guidelines for what percent the church would donate in support of external programs, what percent we'd used to fund church programming, and what percent we'd dedicate towards capital expenditures.
 - ii. KGAT recommended against fully funding some proposals so that we could at least partially fund (possibly seeding future fundraising efforts) more proposals for a wider impact.
- c. Recommendations were reviewed and discussed
 - i. The Board questioned whether the financial estimate for each proposal was closer to a preliminary guess or a final bid. We learned that some were concrete fixed costs, whereas others (especially those that couldn't be implemented for a few years yet) would need revised estimates as we got closer to their implementation dates.

- ii. The Board questioned the scope of one specific proposal, and was assured it respects the historic architecture of our sanctuary.
- iii. Rev. Jennifer noted that other congregations growing from “*program-sized*” to “*corporate-sized*” churches are often seen dedicating more resources towards worship.
- iv. Rev. Dena noted that proposals which were recommended to partner with Share the Plate recipients should coordinate with the Share the Plate schedule, which is usually planned a full year in advance.
- v. The Board has noted that much, if not all, of the specific proposals were operational (rather than policy-related) which under Policy Governance should be under the discretion of the Senior Minister rather than the Board.
- d. There may be an opportunity for another round of KGAT proposals in the future, but that would likely require rotating in other KGAT members.
- e. The Board will review these recommendations and have a decision by end of February.
 - i. The Board will pass any questions on to Michelle by Feb 01, who will get responses from KGAT to fully inform our next Board meeting.
 - ii. Care will be taken to provide context to those who submitted proposals that are not ultimately adopted, to ensure everyone understands: 1) how much we value all these great proposals; 2) we sadly can’t fund everything; and 3) we’re selecting those most strategically aligned with the Ends.

IV. Associate Minister’s Quarterly Report (Rev. Dena)

- a. Dena reported new Pastoral Care program engagement, Spiritual Development small group participation and upcoming classes, and our Social Justice Intern’s (Claire’s) progress to date.
- b. Dena’s winter leave will run from Feb 9 – Mar 11, during which Jennifer will supervise Claire.
- c. Dena’s report stood on its own and didn’t generate any questions

V. Congregational Support Request – Omega Burckhardt (Michelle)

- a. With zero debate, the Board unanimously agreed to endorse Omega’s candidacy for fellowship as a UU minister. We are proud to have her seek ordination through the UUA with First Church as her sponsor.
- b. Moved to Approve (Maria / Chris); Approved (unanimously)

VI. Sr. Minister’s Report (Rev. Jennifer)

- a. Jennifer’s report provided an update to the board on program achievements, staff activity, stewardship development, RE & worship attendance, and her participation in UU and MKE events.
- b. Sunday live-streaming is now operational, with some final audio kinks being worked out.
- c. Jennifer provided some extra context around church systems and our ongoing transitions: We already experienced the most difficult growth transition (from *pastoral* to *program*) through Drew’s ministry, but now we’re faced with the next level of transition (to *corporate*). Adding a second service is an incredibly effective way to enable the jump to program, whereas a third service has proven less effective at encouraging growth (as we’ve seen). The jump to *corporate* is usually dependent on 1) Excellence of worship, since fewer folks have 1x1 relationships w/ the minister; and 2) an effective, harmonious Staff System.

VII. Ends 1-4 Metrics (Rev. Jennifer)

- a. Following her explanation on church growth and size transition, Rev. Jennifer discussed the role of growth while measuring progress towards our Ends.
- b. Jennifer's plan for measuring Ends 1-4 detailed what we could count, and how the staff could implement this counting.
- c. With so many details to review, while trying to refrain from getting stuck in the weeds, the Board agreed we felt this is all heading in the right direction, but will be subject to future discussion as we begin learning from our metrics and continue together towards our Ends.
- d. Some discussion was had around the desire for concrete measurement, while recognizing that even "fuzzy" data was valuable for generating conversation, inspection, and progress. Possibly even more so than some arbitrary quantitative measurement.
- e. Jennifer will work on her plans for measuring Ends 5-8, for the Board's review in the future.

VIII. Policy Picnic – Debrief / Follow-up (Mark Bishop)

- a. The Board reflected on what we accomplished Jan 11-12, along with what remains to be done.
- b. We will engage Laura (via Zoom) to help us work on the remaining policies together. This will provide an opportunity for board members who were not able to attend the Policy Picnic to better understand policy writing and Policy Governance in general.
- c. Mark Bishop will send a Doodle including both weeknights and Saturdays for us to choose from.
- d. Once complete, it could be enlightening to have some former board members (particularly Dale and Julie, who were instrumental in moving us towards Policy Governance and developing our Ends) to react to our new policies, to see what does / doesn't jibe with The Board's initial goals around Policy Governance, and to see if a set of fresh eyes has a different perspective.

IX. Other Business

- a. Rev. Jennifer brought to our attention a situation with a current First Church member in "an acute financial need," questioning whether this need fell under our conservative "designated for UU congregations in crisis" budget line item. The board voted that, in 2019/2020, at the Senior Minister's discretion (together with Dena), the definition of this budget line item shall be expanded to include individuals in crisis.
- b. Moved to Approve (Michelle / Mark Bishop); Approved (unanimously)

Motion for Adjournment: 8:20 p.m. (Michelle / Mark Bender); Approved (unanimously)

Next Meeting: February 26th, 2019

Leader: Michelle

Words/Snacks: Chris

Minutes and Chanticleer: Jane