

First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee
Minutes, Board of Trustees Meeting—March 26, 2019

Attendance: Jeremy Koenen, Michelle Naples, Maria Dorsey, Melinda Vernon, Mark Bishop (presiding), Mark Bender, Jane Peterson (recording secretary). Also in attendance: Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom, Lynne Jacoby and Sarah Richards via Zoom (Item VII)

- I. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM.
Mark Bishop read the opening words.

- II. **Consent Agenda**
The minutes of the February BOT meeting and the slate of Regional Assembly Delegates including Bruce and Terry Wiggins, Janet Nortrom, Rev. Jennifer and up to 15 delegates to be appointed by Bruce Wiggins were unanimously approved. (Chris Aiken/Mark Bender).

- III. **KGAT Recommendations/Update**
Mark Bishop asked if the Board members had any feedback from the grant recipients and non-recipients. Melinda said a summary may be coming out next month, and that applicants were generally understanding and appreciative. The next Chanticleer will name the successful applicants, and they will be presented at the May General meeting.

- IV. **Pledge Drive Update**
 - A. Lynne reported that about half the pledge forms were still out. The returns look healthy to date. She sent 198 messages to those who have not yet pledged, asking them to consider taking a bold step in their pledge. Messages from individual Pledge Team members will go out this week, followed if necessary by phone calls in mid-April, made by Stewardship, Pledge Team, and Board members. Members will be able to see their previous pledge as they sign on to the pledge site.
 - B. Mark Bishop asked if there were any surprises in the pledges. A few members have reduced their pledges, while 144 have increased by an average of 16%.
 - C. Lynne said there was energy around the pledge drive and commended Fred Gutierrez for his leadership.

- V. **Budget/Staff Compensation Discussion**
 - A. Rev. Jennifer explained the Predictive Model. Her goal is to decrease the deficit by \$20K/year for the next 7 years. Expenses have been reduced, but to keep pace with the projections, she [is concerned about raising expenses next year, even in HR]. She is concerned that the 2019-20 church budget may come in \$30,000 to \$40,000 below what had been budgeted.
 - B. Mark Bender opined that this is a revenue issue, not an expense issue. The Income Opportunities Team is working on the lack of increases.
 - C. The Board asked Rev. Jennifer to prepare 3 salary proposals for consideration at the April Board meeting.

- VI. **Policy Updates/ Communications Plan/Bylaw Amendments**
 - A. Mark Bishop discussed proposed changes. The Treasurer would change to a 3-year appointed oversight role rather than operational position. A long-term goal

is to bring a bookkeeper in house and reduce expenditures for CPA services. The Finance Committee would (pending bylaw approval) in future report to the Director of Administration and no longer be a Committee of the Board.

- B. Mark further reported that the work to date on policy governance was submitted to Julie Bock for a former President's perspective and comments. She suggested including the current FUSM members as the most important sources of authority.
- C. Michelle noted that in addition, the Nominating Committee would remain a Committee of the Board with a Board member liaison. Bylaws changes will be reviewed at the next Board meeting for approval. Michelle and Mark will meet with the various committees to communicate any changes, there will be an article in the Chanticleer, and an explanation at the Annual Meeting.

VII. Senior Minister's Report

- A. Rev. Jennifer reported that there are several strong candidates for the DRE position, after a nationwide search including 400 personal letters encouraging applicants.
- B. Sarah Richards, member of the DRE search team and Chair of the CRE joined the meeting. She discussed the concept of family ministry, which recognizes the family as children's primary religious educator. Family ministry begins with first asking families what they need. It aims to provide the information and support required to bring religious education home, and to support families in parenting. The congregation has said they want this kind of RE.
- C. Rev. Jennifer described some of the aspects of the new DRE position, including family ministry. She was seeking support for a motion to authorize her offering up to \$5K for professional expenses, up to \$64K in salary, and the immediate onset of retirement contributions, about \$6K/year. She further asked to include 4 weeks' vacation, 2 weeks for study, and a sabbatical after 5 to 7 years, as well as moving expenses of up to \$5K. (Melinda /Maria) Motion carried unanimously after some additional discussion.

VIII. Annual Meeting Planning and Preparation

Michelle noted there will be a short Board meeting after the Annual Meeting to elect new officers. In response to her request for help at the meeting, Melinda Vernon and Chris Aiken agreed to arrange food for the reception, Mark Bishop offered to serve as the assistant minute taker and Michelle said Tom LeBel would be a quorum counter. Jeremy Koenen will arrange for child care.

IX. Retreat Planning

Mark Bishop said prospective dates include August 2 & 3, or August 9 & 10. We will welcome Mark Miller, Jane Cliff and Dianna Dentino to the Board pending their election at the Annual Meeting.

Motion to Adjourn

Jeremy/Mark Bender. Carried unanimously at 8:03.

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