

First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee

Board of Trust Meeting Minutes FINAL

November 23, 2021

Present: Jane Cliff (President); Ben LeFort (Vice President); Tony Panciera (Secretary); George Bledsoe, Mike Hogan, Mark Miller, Dianna Dentino and Rollie Hanson. Also present: Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom (Senior Minister), Julie Bock (Strategic Planning Team); Absent: Patricia Geenen.

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM by Jane Cliff. The meeting was held via videoconferencing due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic.

Strategic Planning Team. Julie Bock represented the Strategic Planning Team providing an update and recommendation for a consultant to help us with a campaign to secure financial sustainability for FUSM. The recommended fundraising campaign candidate is Klote & Associates from Falls Church, VA. They were unanimously selected by the SPT out of seven proposals received and four candidates interviewed. They bring strong relationship building as part of their approach as well as a strong record of success. Several other elements of their approach were attractive to the SPT, including experience working with UU congregations. One full-time Klote staff person will help volunteers with the campaign and to facilitate conversations with all members & pledging friends. The board asked many questions about the consulting group and the fundraising campaign. The previously approved \$20,000 seed money has not yet been touched and the cost of fundraising would be considerably more than originally allocated; however, Klote and Associates (as well as other firms consulted) believe we have the potential to raise much more than originally proposed and the cost per dollar raised would be relatively low. We would need to be prepared to pay the consulting firm on a weekly basis during the period that they are working with us (12-14 weeks). We'll need to cover the consulting charges plus any expenses for mailings, events, etc.

Tony made the motion to allocate an additional \$145,000 from the church's unrestricted reserves to dedicate towards hiring the SPT's preferred consultant and additional campaign expenses. Mike 2nded the motion. Eight voted in favor and one abstained.

Monitoring Ends 5 and 8. (Rev. Jennifer & Jane Cliff). Rev. Jennifer supplied an updated and comprehensive report on compliance with Ends 5 (promote Unitarian Universalism and our shared values in the world) and 8 (create accessible, courageous, and innovative welcome to people who might find a sense of belonging and a spiritual home with us). Based on our FUSM congregational surveys, There was a 0.28 increase in how the congregation rates #5 at how true it was in 2020, compared to 2018.. It is at 1.1 and we want to head to 1.5 or "strongly agree." Our 2020 baseline is 1.18 for inviting guests (this question was not on the 2018 survey). Our visitor numbers increased from church year 2019-20 to CY 2020-21.

We now have increases on our social media stats, due to the efforts of our Digital Outreach Coordinator, who joined the staff in Dec, 2020. Jennifer was asked for thoughts in the drop in YouTube viewership. She stated that this is part of a disengagement trend across the country and congregations with people being tired of screens and not being with people.

End 8: This End has the biggest gap between where we are and how important it is. There has been a .5 to .77 increase since 2018. We are not all the way to "agree" (our goal) yet. The importance dropped because of End 4 (generously give and provide support, connection and care in times of joy and challenge" increasing during this time. New memberships are down compared to last year and the year before, but we are holding with our overall membership at

650 currently (661 in 2019-2020). It's generally harder to keep everyone engaged "at the edges" of our congregation. Our demographics have not changed much from 2018 to 2020. Jennifer answered various clarifying questions from the board.

Mike moved that while there are opportunities for improvement, the board has seen sufficient progress overall towards complying with ends 5 and 8. Tony 2nded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Sr. Minister's Report (Rev. Jennifer). We are planning Xmas Eve in person! Jennifer feels that the congregation needs it and it will be fulfilling for many. FUSM will advertise it to members & friends and is also open to the public even though it is limited to 100 people per service (reservations will open Dec. 1) Under Covid re-opening policies, it is now possible for the board to meet in person, wearing masks. Jennifer would like all board members to contact her individually and supply proof of vaccination or a negative test within 72 hours of the meeting. We can also meet via Zoom even if some are in person. We have decided to meet in person in January 2022 with a Zoom option, and keep the December 2021 meeting virtual.

Conflict of Interest Form for BOT (Tony Panciera & George Bledsoe). Tony asked for suggestions to be added to the document. If this captures what we desire, then we can move forward. Mike made a correction to one word. Dianna pointed out a redundant statement that could be pulled. Tony agreed to the changes and will re-upload the final for the next meeting. Members can disclose conflicts following that update. All board members should complete the form regardless of whether or not conflicts of interest need to be disclosed. The goal is for BOT members to complete the form in December 2021.

Review/Consent Agenda (Jane Cliff)

Minutes of October 26, 2021 BOT Mtg.

Mike moved to approve the October 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Tony seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

Nominating Committee skills matrix. Everyone has completed the skills matrix and Jane has compiled the results. Mark will send this on to the Nom Com as the board liaison.

Other Business.

- Jane mentioned that we need to be thinking about our training on anti-racism, diversity, and inclusion.
- Ben mentioned that a committee wishes to meet with us to go over UUA changes in the Values. We agreed to carry this into our December meeting.

Adjournment. At 8:11 PM Ben moved to adjourn. Jane 2nded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Next Meeting: December 14, 2021, 6:00 PM CST