

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting,

**Meeting at 5:30 pm by Zoom
April 16, 2020**

MISSION STATEMENT: *All Souls Unitarian Universalist Congregation is a liberal religious congregation that nurtures lifelong spiritual development. We covenant to create a welcoming, caring, justice-seeking community within and beyond these walls.*

VISION STATEMENT: *All Souls welcomes seekers to our liberal religion and offers a transformative worship experience. We act boldly, compassionately, and publicly for justice. We intentionally share the message of Unitarian Universalism. While building a congregation of over 300 members, we broaden and deepen our ministries with community partnerships and an integrated campus.*

Call to Order at 5:30 pm

Members present via Zoom: Rev. Carolyn Patierno, Maggie Clouet, Laurel Holmes, Tina DuBosque, David Burnside, Denise Davies, Sean Elliot, Becky Noreen, Brad Mock, Sally McGee, Bruce Cummings

Members not present: N/A

Others present: Perry Montrose, Ann Kadlecek, Andy Derr

Minutes of meeting: Meeting minutes from the March 16th, 2020 board meeting were approved.

Correspondence: Thank you from Writer's Block for a contribution All Souls made. Thank you from the census training folks for making space available.

Mission/Vision

1. Update from Andy Derr on Nominating and Leadership. Barb Yates came in January and was appointed. Andy gave a list of the slate of nominees. Sally suggested that the entire NLD team should be provided to the congregation. Andy said the whole list is shared, both new nominees and those who will continue to serve. NLD discussion continued. Sally did a close read of the bylaws in an effort to think about improving function of NLD and communication between them and the board. Should consider a few things in next revision to bylaws. Need to consider more active engagement between ex officio members (Senior Minister and President) and NLD. Bylaws refer to a committee chair but there is no official chair, that should change. Bruce asked if Sally was considering a particular course of action. Sally said more participation and an official chair are good recommendations. Carolyn gave some history about how the committee came to have no chair. The consensus was that perhaps we need to go back to the bylaws. Longer term when bylaws are revised we will take a close look at NLD.

2. Annual meeting – plan for virtual June 7th (needs board vote) needs budget review prior proposing April 27th 10:00 am and May 7th 4:30 pm. Laurel announced the request for moving the meeting. David moved, Tina seconded. Brad asked for information on logistics of a virtual meeting. Carolyn said the UUA has offered congregations the opportunity to get Zoom accounts through the UUA, which would allow for up to 300 participants. Perry said there is a way to make sure that people can “raise their hands” and be acknowledged before speaking, just like at an in person meeting. David suggested that a dry run might be in order. Move to June 7th carried.
3. Neal gave a building committee update. Project updates are in the design and engineering phase. Structural engineers are a little bit behind, probably about two weeks. Spec writers are moving along very quickly. Goal is to have this all done and be able to solicit bids by May 31st. Hoping that things will stay on track. Specification writer is a very important piece so it’s good they’re on track. Still in contact with both Enfield and Carlin, making sure they have the latest drawings. Expenditures through to end of construction drawing phase total \$140K. Fairly on track for soft cost estimates from 2016. Clearly construction costs are higher. Need to deliver information to spec writer – requirements for insurance (working with Church Mutual to find out what information they need). Probably wouldn’t need for a remodel but additional building requires it. Should have an estimate in a couple of weeks. Brad asked about cost of builders insurance. Bruce asked if this insurance would cover COVID related delays. Neal said that we need to make sure that is covered for both liability and not to exceed costs due to delays. Bruce asked what Neal’s biggest concerns were. Neal said that he’s concerned that our budget is right at the upper limit. Neal would like harder verification on construction costs. Carolyn said that Debbie Baker, retired Town of Groton engineer, said that the recession helped lower costs for Groton Senior Center build.
4. Coronavirus preparedness-Carolyn said that Ann suggested we really need to take the “bull by the horns.” Carolyn, Perry, and Ann have been crafting a plan. There have been other, smaller scale urgent items the congregation has had to deal with. There is a document in process that has been sent to the executive committee, if anyone else on the board wants it Carolyn can send it. Tina asked if backup for the book keeper was included. Carolyn said it is being considered. Maybe the finance committee can take that up on their next agenda.

Business

1. Liaison reports: Reports came in. Carolyn asked why snow removal put Facilities in the red in a year with no snow. Brad said it was inspections but others thought that was last year. Becky will look into it further. Becky said there was an open sharing circle but there was not much interest. Parent’s group is off and on. Mostly older people using sharing circle.
2. Treasurer Report: Tina paid off the mortgage at the end of March. Got an application in to Dime Bank for a payroll protection loan. Got an email, funding has been exhausted but we are putting our information in again in case of more funding coming from congress. Carolyn said that the UUA has said if your lender is problematic consider looking for a new bank immediately. Tina will ask Dime what their process was. On to running budget – still approximately \$3000 in the red. Tina made \$11K deposit into capital campaign. Heading towards halfway mark for campaign, which is good. Online giving as of April has been almost

\$4,000. Online giving is up from last fiscal year. Tina is looking into less said we've set up a PayPal account for online sales, and she is looking into a dedicated eBay account. Balance sheet for operating account has a \$5K shortfall. However, we have a reduction in our mortgage of \$4500 that makes up for that. We are getting close to the pledges we budgeted for. Carolyn said we are also supposed to have one more mission offering. Brad said that pledges are usually a bit front loaded, and he's concerned that we are not where we should be. He thinks we need a projection on our pledges. Sally said in the non-profit world they are looking to 30-40% budget cuts. Tina will find out if the UUA has any projections. Sally asked Tina if she could speak to how the savings from paying off the mortgage will affect the budget. Tina said total expense is down but we still have issues with income. Tina hasn't looked at how to cut expenses this year, has been looking at next year. Expenses are somewhat reduced because we're not in the building.

3. Budget update. Pared down quite a bit. No raises, no child care for anything other than faith formation. Bulk of expenses is payroll. Building and grounds are all paid for from capital campaign during construction. Assuming we start construction in October, budget only needs to show a few months where operating expenses have to pay those costs. Brad asked if the capital campaign budget has those items. Tina said that the biggest unknown is the delta in pledges. Currently we have \$291K in pledges but budget projects \$330K. Bruce is sending an email tomorrow to families that have yet to pledge. Laurel asked how expenses will be monitored more closely in the next fiscal year. Tina said the budget will be reviewed quarterly. Sally asked for clarification on where the \$330K came from. Tina said initially she used a percent gain of last year's and set it at \$400K but after the pandemic she changed it. Maggie said that the number is trying to be reasonable based on the \$300K already pledged. Thanks to Tina and Finance from Carolyn. Tina asked for a vote on approval of budget as draft. Bruce asked if there was any way to approve a budget outside normal process given circumstances. Budget reviews will be moved closer to the two week before congregational meeting mark. Will work by email to come up with new dates.

4. Laurel said there was an email that went out to the board last week from a sister congregation in Iowa. Please read and provide input/ideas to the congregation.

Calendar

1. Executive Committee Meeting, Tuesday, May 12th, 2020, 5:30 pm.
2. May Board of Trustees Meeting, Thursday, May 21st, 5:30 pm

Respectfully submitted by David Burnside