

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church - Unitarian Universalist
BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUGUST MEETING

August 15, 2018

MINUTES

In attendance – Cindy Shepard, Donna Baker – Vice President, Ann Salamini – Secretary, Adam Slate – President, Leia Durland-Jones – Ex Officio, Erik Walker Wikstrom – Ex Officio, Jeanine Braithwaite – Treasurer, Christina Rivera – Ex Officio, Ian Sole

Absent -

Guests -

I. Opening--(45 minutes total) Opening/Closing Words (Adam), Snacks (Adam), and Process Review (All)

Opening words – Adam

Check in and debrief from Aug 11-12

- A pastoral presence was held at TJMC on Sunday afternoon, August 12th.
- I chose to be low key over the weekend but participated in the Service for Repair and Healing. It was lovely. The six women of color who led it chose wonderful music, dance, poetry. It was cathartic. Also, the service here Sunday morning was wonderful.
- The service Saturday morning had been in the planning a long time by Congregate Cville. Outside help was eventually invited in because the local clergy were still traumatized from last year, when their role was to stand between citizens and white supremacists. This year their role was to stand between dissidents and law enforcement.
- Let's not just move onto the next thing. We need to keep working on processing what has happened, offering pastoral care, working on how to live with what happened.
- The Haven service on Thursday showed what our community could be.
- The Shabbat service on Friday was moving, high energy and fun.
- It was good to see so many TJMC folks in attendance throughout the week.

- Adam made a Facebook post about activities around the week's events on the recommendation of a congregant and hopes to continue this way of lifting up church members and activities.

Community Time / Public Comment - None

1. Acceptance of Agenda

MOTION: Accept the Agenda.

Unanimously approved.

2. Correspondence (see text at end of minutes) -

- Letter regarding August 5th congregational conversation
- Annalee Durland-Jones - Resignation from Board

II. Reports

1. President's Report (none) – Adam Slate

2. Vice President's Report (n/a) – vacant

3. Treasurer's Report (written) – Jeanine Braithwaite

4. Lead Minister's Report (written) – Erik Wikstrom

5. Director of Faith Development Report (none) – Leia Durland-Jones

6. Director of Administration and Finance Report (none) – Christina Rivera

7. Membership Report (written) – Sally Taylor

8. Board Liaison Reports

- Personnel Committee (written) – Donna
- Nominating Committee (verbal) – Adam

The Nominating Committee is looking at a good number of names and having conversations with some potential new leaders. A lot of care is going into their discussions.

MOTION: Enter Executive session.

Unanimously approved.

MOTION: Leave executive session.

Unanimously approved.

Summary – Specific individuals and positions were discussed.

III. Consent Agenda / Electronic Motions

1. Approve July 2018 Board Minutes.
2. Accept verbal and written reports as submitted.
3. Accept Annalee's resignation from the Board.
4. Approve nominations from Nominating Committee.

MOTION: Approve the Consent Agenda without specific nominations.

Unanimously approved.

MOTION: Enter Executive session to discuss nominations.

Unanimously approved.

MOTION: Leave Executive session.

Unanimously approved.

Summary – Donna Baker was appointed as Vice President of the Board of Trustees and Don Landis was appointed to the Nominating Committee.

IV. Old Business

1. Budget revisions - Jeanine and senior staff (60 min) (46:00)

The Board asked Senior staff to develop two budget scenarios, one with a \$19K deficit and one balanced budget. Chris walked us through the particulars.

MOTION: Enter executive session.

Unanimously approved.

MOTION: Leave executive session.

Unanimously approved.

Summary – The Board developed two revised budget scenarios present to the congregation.

Three cheers for Chris's labors and our senior staff's willingness to engage in this difficult work!

BREAK AND GRATITUDE CARDS (10 min) - Please think of people the Board should recognize for their recent contributions to our church community.

V. New Business

1. Debrief August 4-5 conversations as needed - Adam (20 min)
We ran out of time for this discussion.

VI. Closing Activities (5 minutes)

1. Process Review / (all):

(How are you feeling and / or what you would like to see different?)

- Trusting that it will work out.
- Unsettled.
- Hungry.
- It will be a struggle but it will work out all right.
- Sad.
- Appreciative of Board's hard work and willingness to engage and struggle through these tough decisions.
- Regret the tough decisions but working to tell the story of the church through this budget.

2. Things to do / communicate –

Adam and Chris - Schedule budget conversations

Jeanine – talk to Nominating Committee

Chris - send board members the stewardship script

All - continue stewardship calls

3. Closing words - Adam

Dates to remember –

- September 5, 2018 - Exec
- September 18, 2018 – Board meeting

Upcoming topics -

- Policy Review panel - (Empower group to undertake policy review process and bring policy manual up to date)
 - Charge for Personnel Committee
-

REPORTS

President's Report

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report
Jeanine Braithwaite

August 2018

We have mostly closed the books on church year 2017-2018 (which ran from 1 July 2017 through June 30, 2018), with just a few items outstanding to be cleared from staff travel to General Assembly 2018. As discussed with and approved by the Board, this year the Finance Committee decided to change our accounting procedures for the booking of late pledges so that only pledges received during a given church year are booked for that church year[1]. Since a few people do pay their pledges late, this year the recorded deficit is \$10 K higher because of this purely accounting change.

As approved at the May 2017 meeting, we did run a substantial deficit in CY2017-2018, which will be booked at around \$65-70 K. The congregation approved a deficit of just under \$50 K. The difference between the deficit approved by the congregation and what we book is due to the accounting change for late pledges, slightly lower than anticipated pledge revenue, and the suspension of the scrip program which was effectively disbanded

We show this deficit on our balance sheet for CY 2017-2018 as negative net revenue. Following from the Finance Committee's policy,[2] during the year, drawing on the line of credit was not triggered, so we have not incurred any external debt this year. Immediate bills during this year were covered by drawing down our liquid assets at our business savings account at Wells Fargo. Following from the policy, going forward into CY 2018-19, we will begin to draw from the line of credit as our savings account is right at the limit of the Finance Committee policy.

When we draw from the line of credit, we will be taking on external debt. We are unusual for a UU congregation in that we do not have any external debt. We do have internal debt which consists of the Summit House Loans of \$125 K shown on our balance sheet under long-term liabilities which we owe to ourselves, not to any individuals in the congregation, and are held against our assets as a whole (our property plus our endowment).[3]

Total revenue for 2017-2018 was 492 K and total expenditures were \$557 K. On the revenue side, unpledged donations, building user fees, and income from our endowment held at the UUA all performed better than budgeted, while actual pledge revenue was sharply below the budgeted amount. Expenditures were tightly managed, with salaries comprising the bulk of expenditures as usual.

[1] "Pledge income that is paid after the end of a fiscal year (June 30), but is intended to pay that prior year's pledge, shall, in the Church books, be credited in the fiscal year it is received as a 'Prior Year Pledge'. The pledger's account will be credited as he or she desires in the pledge tracking records."

[2] If, in any calendar month, expenses exceed income for that month by 10% or more after applying any current year-to-date surplus, then, at the discretion of the DAF, the Line of Credit (LoC) may be used to supplement that month's income to the extent necessary. If the monthly gap is less than 10%, then current Church savings shall be used unless those savings are at or below \$100,000, in which case the savings shall not be used, and the LoC may be used instead."

[3] Please do not be alarmed if you see under other assets line item 1250 Endowment Fund principal as 0 on the balance sheet. You can see our endowment under Other Current Assets line item 1245 UUA Common Endowment Fund as our endowment of \$293 K is managed by the UUA and they now list it as a "current" asset.

Minister's Report

Lead Minister Report to the Board — August 15, 2018

In her sermon on Sunday, Alex repeated several times: "And so, now, here we are, on the morning of August 12, 2018." It was a really good sermon – especially for those of

us who identify or are identified as white – and if you weren't there to hear it for yourself, I commend it to you. She reminded the congregation of the many ways grief shows itself, and the at least equally as many ways that people find to make sense of it – particularly the paramount importance of community. In our UU community there were people who were so glad that there was not the same kind of eruption that there was last year; people who were disturbed by the scale of the police presence; people who were brought back to their memories more forcefully, perhaps, than they'd expected to be. For many, I think that this anniversary served as a reminder of just how hard, just how traumatic, last year was – and our congregation's 2017-2018 church year had only just begun no more than a month before! (And only a week before the KKK came to town.) No doubt the ripples of those events traveled through our community's life in both conscious and unconscious ways.

It was truly heartening to see how many UUs – and, actually, just how many people regardless of their faith affiliation (or not) – showed up and engaged in events which not only talked about unity but were, in fact, experiences of it. I'm thinking particularly of the Interfaith service held on Thursday, August 9th at the Haven, and the Shabbat service on Friday the 10th at Congregation Beth Israel. Both events were extremely well attended, and both created a real spirit, were true expressions of that Spirit of Life and Love we sing so often about. We were one community during these events, the kind of community we dream about being. I'm not such a Pollyanna as to think that all the work is done, that all the divisions have been overcome, that real reparations for historic – and ongoing – harms has been paid. But for a moment ...

I have a little of the same feeling about the meeting after church on Sunday, August 5th. No, I don't feel that there was anything like unanimity in that room, yet for the duration of our time together we were the kind of intergenerational community Adam keeps naming – long time members and relatively recent visitors; older folks and younger folks; people who are dissatisfied and people who are not only satisfied, but excited. And while we most certainly did not all agree with each other, wouldn't it have been a little surreal if we had? After all, when has a UU congregation ever been in complete agreement about anything?

We did hear some repeated themes, though. Not surprisingly, many people expressed their concerns about the state of congregational finances. It was useful to see that we have struggled to make ends meet since at least the early 2000s – balancing budgets by holding staff salaries steady, reducing our contributions which help fund the UUA, and deferring building maintenance. This is obviously not a new problem, yet it is unquestionably an urgent one. We need answers to some very fundamental questions:

How can we, as a congregation, fully embrace an attitude of abundance, and truly live into that part of our covenant which says that we will, “Generously support the ministries of the church with time, money and enthusiasm”? How can we move toward a spirit that calls us to give in order to nurture this community we love, rather than as a means of expressing our feelings of satisfaction (or dissatisfaction)? How can we ensure that our community has the resources it needs to fulfill our mission in the world? These are questions with which we must wrestle (or dance), both as individuals and as a congregation. As several people pointed out during the meeting, addressing this challenge is the responsibility of each of us, and all of us together. We must find the solution.

And while this was not unexpected, it may have been a surprise to some that both young adults and older adults expressed feelings of being left out and overlooked. Some of our elders said that they feel as though they’re being pushed out, and some of the young adults present said that they feel as though they’re not being let in. This was identified as “ageism,” and we heard that it went in both directions. For this, too, we need to find solutions. How can we change and adapt to changing times without leaving people behind? How can we invite new people into the structures we have in place, and how can we create new structures that will be more inviting? How can we learn how to talk *with each other*, and not simply with the people who look and sound most like us? (And this not just generationally, either.) We had a taste of it in that meeting; we caught a glimpse of the possibilities. Going forward we have to make of that a foundation on which we can build our future.

I was certainly gratified to hear the many heartfelt expressions of appreciation for me and my ministry, as well as such strong support for the direction we’ve been moving, especially over the past few years. Obviously, of course, not everyone feels this way, and it was clear in that meeting that many of the people who have been feeling most dissatisfied are also among those who feel that they are being, or have been, left behind and dismissed. As a congregation, we need to find ways to ensure that our elders continue to have meaningful ways of engaging with the life of our community, and that younger adults have truly accessible means of bringing their gifts and skills to bear. This will require us to do some new things, and to do some of the things that we’re already doing in new ways.

In a reflection a month or so back I quoted the UUA’s President, the Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, as saying that her call is not just to be a prophetic voice, but also a pastor. I noted, then, that I am becoming more aware of the extent to which I have unintentionally neglected that later role, especially in this unusual and disorienting past

year that began with the violent eruption of hate in our city and included the unacceptable racist attack on a member of our community by an individual from *within* our own community. I realize that I not only need to put more of a premium on *listening* to those who are feeling unheard (all along the age spectrum), but also to *creating opportunities to listen*. A repeated refrain in recent months has been that some people have not felt entirely comfortable coming to me. I understand that this means I must become more proactively intentional about reaching out in a variety of ways. It is my hope that, together, we can develop and deepen a congregational culture in which mutual communication flows more freely – not only between the congregation and me, but also with the Board, and among members of the community (especially among the various ages who make up TJMC). I enter this new church year determined to be a more listening presence.

I have also learned just how much of what I've thought I'd been communicating clearly was, instead, open to being heard in ways quite different than what I'd intended. And I see that I have not done as much as I could have to respond to the impact my words have had for some; I have not done as much as I could have to try to clarify what it was I'd meant to say. George Bernard Shaw wrote, "The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." I enter this new church year determined to do what I can to decrease the frequency with which that illusion prevents the real thing.

Listening more deeply. Speaking more carefully. These are two of the changes I enter this new church year knowing I must make in myself. I am hoping that my staff colleagues, you all as the elected leadership of the congregation, and every person who calls this their spiritual home will work with me to achieve these changes, and when I fall short (which I will certainly do from time to time) to lovingly call me back into my best self, and back into our covenant (which should guide us all).

Pax tecum,

RevWik

Director of Faith Development Report

Director of Administration and Finance Report

Membership Report

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of July 31, 2018: 429

Add:

Janine Jakim, August 5, 2018

Daniel Strong, August 12, 2018

Drop:

Eldredge, Patricia, email to Membership Tracker, August 6, 2018, archive

Spitzner, Dan, letter to Membership Tracker, August 6, 2018, archive

Schuyler, Carolyn, staff request, August 24, 2018, archive

Schuyler, Kevin, staff request, August 24, 2018, archive

McKie, Martin, August 26, 2018, phone conversation with Membership Tracker, archive

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of August 31, 2018: 426 members

Sally Taylor

Membership Tracker for Membership Committee

Personnel Committee Report

TJMC Personnel Committee Meeting

July 25, 2018

6:45 PM

Minutes

Present: Bev Ryan, Donna Redmond

Absent: Sherri Edgecomb, Elizabeth Breeden, Donna Baker

We discussed the charge to the committee; reviewed the several references to the committee in the Church By-Laws, Church Policy Manual and the Personnel Policy Manual; and reviewed a draft to-do list. We also discussed the ongoing projects, to revise the Personnel Policy Manual and to develop templates for offer letters & letters of agreement.

Handouts (already printed) will be distributed to those who missed the meeting.

Bev Ryan will be helping to complete the review of the Personnel Policy Manual, and Donna will be working on completing the job descriptions needed for the updated Letters of Agreement.

The next meeting will be on August 27th at 6:45 pm, in the Lower Hall Kitchen.

CORRESPONDENCE

August 7, 2018

Dear Board of Trustees:

We'd like to acknowledge the effort you put in to arranging Sunday's opportunity for our congregation to come together -- we know it was much more than just a weekend's sacrifice. It took time away from more pleasant summer pursuits, and we are mindful of the time, effort and intention you have been giving to this community of faith we all care about so deeply.

We send you our very best wishes for the dialogues ahead, and look forward to more opportunities soon for all congregants to gather and talk through the challenging questions that have been raised.

In covenant and in faith,

MMC Steering Committee

August 8, 2018

Dear Adam,

I have been honored to have served on the Thomas Jefferson Memorial board with you for the past two years. As a result of me heading off to college, it is with bittersweet feelings that I must resign from the board.

I am thankful for each and every board member whom has supported me to not only grow within my Unitarian Universalist beliefs, but as a person.

Thank you for all the hard work you have done and all you will continue to do for the bettering and growth of our church.

In faith and gratitude,

Annalee
