

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

October 17 , 2018

MINUTES

In attendance: Jeanine Braithwaite - Treasurer, Cindy Shepard, Leia Durland-Jones - Ex Officio, Donna Baker - Vice President, Elizabeth Breeden, Christina Rivera - Ex Officio, Adam Slate - President, Beth Jaeger-Landis, Ann Salamini - Secretary, Kelsey Cowger

Absent: Erik Wikstrom - Ex Officio

Guests: Janine Jakim

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

Opening words – Ann

Check in

Community Time / Public Comment

Janine Jakim presented a fundraising idea for our church. She has followed the work of John Pavlovitz, a blogger and author, who was helpful to many in dealing with their mourning after the 2016 election. He has spoken at many UU churches. Her idea is to invite him to Charlottesville to speak at an open event on Saturday and then preach on Sunday in our pulpit. Sojourners, Community Church and other liberal faith communities would be very interested in the event. She feels we could easily break even on his expenses and possibly make some money as well. Janine volunteered to advertise the event. She asked if the board is interested in the idea and how she should proceed.

Discussion -

- Donna volunteered to help as well.
- A fundraiser request requires that a form be submitted to the Finance Committee. Chris emailed Janine the form.
- If the form is submitted before the November Finance Committee meeting, it could potentially be approved and brought to the board meeting in November.
- Mr. Pavlovitz suggested some dates in March 2019 as appropriate in communications with Janine.

- Several board members are familiar with Mr. Pavlovitz and are very excited by this idea. He appeals to liberally religious and nonreligious people alike.
- Leia provided the following links:
 - <http://www.chicagotribune.com/lifestyles/stevens/ct-life-stevens-john-pavlovitz-be-a-superhero-1017-story.html>
 - <https://indyweek.com/news/raleigh-s-john-pavlovitz-went-fired-megachurch-pastor-rising-star-religious-left/>
 - <https://johnpavlovitz.com/>

Thank you, Janine.

1. Acceptance of Agenda

Let's defer the tutorial on how to read the financials to another time.

MOTION: Accept the Agenda as amended.

Unanimously approved.

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

- Marlene Jones - Adam has responded on behalf of the board. This matter is in the hands of the UUA and Christina's family.

II. Reports

1. President's Report (verbal) – Adam Slate

These are the major points of his written report which will be submitted soon:

- Retreat - please fill out the doodle poll again as it has been expanded. There is no Saturday before the end of the year that is available. We will look for two consecutive evenings.
- November 10th fall auction and talent show – We hope for lots of board participation.
- November 4th is bring a friend Sunday – the service will be relevant for newcomers.
- Ruth Douglas' had extended her COM term to finish the work on the Pulse Survey. She has now resigned. - Beth Jaeger-Landis, who serves on both the board and COM, reported that Katherine Parsons has resigned as she is moving to Richmond and Pete Armetta has also resigned. That leaves Beth, who has served on COM for four years, Cathey Polly and David Shutt as members. Does Wik bring new names for board approval? - Yes, that is the process.

- Last week Adam ran into the chair of the Blue Ridge Chapter of the United Nations Association, who expressed gratitude to TJMC for providing space for their meetings.
- Exec this month will be discussing the idea of starting a task force on intergenerational dynamics and representation. There have been suggestions that we look at intergenerational representation, intergenerational conflict and intergenerational dynamics at church as well as considering adding a youth advisory committee to the board. This task force is a potential action in response to feedback we've gotten from the congregation. The board would need to write a charge. – Is there a consensus what “youth” means? - Youth generally means under 18 - a minor but too old to be called a child. Young adult ranges from 18 - 35. The task force might broadly represent the generations of the church.

2. Vice President's Report (none) – Donna Baker

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

- Our financials are current as of August.
- The Finance Committee met early so no September numbers were discussed.
- The Stewardship Team has met for a second time, setting up a covenant and goals. Their understanding of stewardship is broad, going beyond financial matters, but their actions will focus on financial stewardship. They hope to get everyone involved in church. Dialoguing about what TJMC means to people will be part of the stewardship visits. There is a goal of making thirty visits this church year, starting after the training session.

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

5. Director of Faith Development Report (written) – Leia Durland-Jones

Religious education is moving along well. Leia is finding the loss of the order of service insert a real communication problem, especially for Adult Faith Development classes. We need to revisit that line of communication.

The board asks senior staff to recommend a solution.

6. Director of Administration and Finance Report (verbal) – Christina Rivera

September financials will be out by the end of this week.

The regular Monday rental by a homeschool group is working out well, though there are a few issues to work out. The renter and Chris leave about the same time Mondays so Chris can't check the area before Wednesday.

The Nuts and Bolts stewardship item this month will deal with the adjustment of church doors that have been sticking.

7. Membership Report (written) – Sally Taylor

We have a total of 426 members this month.

8. Board Liaison Reports

- Personnel Committee – Elizabeth

Personnel is working to update job descriptions and to make sure the letters of agreement fulfill legal requirements. They want the job descriptions in a format that flows into evaluations smoothly.

The end of church year review for senior staff is currently with Donna Redmond. Personnel Committee should have a say in the process. – Typically the Personnel Chair sits in on this review. Adam wants their input.

Personnel wants to suggest an evaluation process, but not for this year.

- Nominating Committee – Donna

The committee meets on the first Monday of the month. Donna and Erik spoke about senior staff giving input on some of the names which might be considered for nomination as they might know of some concerns.

- 75th anniversary – Leia

The Fall Auction / Talent Show is the next 75th Anniversary event. Lorie Craddock will help with the dinner.

III. Consent Agenda / Electronic Motions

Request pulling #4 for discussion.

1. Approve September 2018 Board Minutes.
2. Approve September 2018 Extra Board Meeting Minutes (Pulse Survey).
3. Accept verbal and written reports as submitted.

MOTION: Approve the first three items of Consent Agenda.

Unanimously approved.

4. Approve Finance Committee's request to change the threshold to invoke use of the line of credit from \$100K in the business savings account to \$80K.

This policy was quickly drawn up last year with a conservative threshold of \$100K. It represents a fairly fluid cash flow between the church's savings and checking accounts. We didn't need to use the line of credit last year at all. The liabilities listed on our balance sheet are in terms of dedicated funds, such as food pantry, minister's discretionary fund and sabbatical fund. These funds are outside of the operating budget and are carried over from year to year. They total \$60-65K, but they won't all be called for in any one month. Reducing the trigger level for activating the line of credit to \$80K (\$65K for liabilities plus \$15K for cash flow) is still a conservative number. There is a fee for activating the LOC and interest to be paid once we do, which would be avoided this year by lowering the trigger level.

Finance Committee discussed and unanimously voted not to pay the costs of LOC for this \$17K deficit.

MOTION: Change the trigger level for activating the line of credit from \$100K to \$80K.

Discussion –

- The LOC can be activated at any time. (For instance, if the boiler breaks down.)
- The \$80K trigger leaves \$15K for cash flow fluctuations.
- It doesn't make sense to take on the activation fee and interest payments when we have \$100K in liquid assets.
- We need to listen to the advice of Finance Committee. Their decision was unanimous.

Passed with one abstention.

IV. Old Business

1. Debrief on Pulse Survey - Donna (50 min)

Elizabeth reported on the two open conversations the board held after the results came out. The in-person meeting had 15-20 non board/COM attendees and there were a handful at the webinar. People looked at the results for how we could improve the functioning of the church. After the 2015 survey the board worked hard to address the issues raised. This survey was quite similar in results, though more people took it.

Donna continued the debrief. The bulk of the results don't separate neatly into positive and negative sections according to the wording of the questions. There is some change from 2015 but not a lot.

- Some people saw the messaging around the survey to encourage people to take it as designed to encourage positive responses. The wording was actually just to encourage participation. Such messages came from staff, the COM, everyone.
- Distribution of the survey was overly wide. The entire mailing list includes people who haven't been involved with the church in years, so the relevance of the results might be affected. - There are thoughts on parameters to clean up the constant contact and survey monkey lists.
- It was cathartic to be able to give open ended answers.
- There is a lot of interest in the methodology of the next survey.

First questions: Lift up something that is especially positive or negative or needing more work:

- The majority of comments are positive, but is a slim majority acceptable? At what point is improvement needed? What will we do to show the congregation that leadership is encouraging us to do a better job?
- Yes. We need to consider all the feedback, including the survey results, comments from the monthly congregational conversations, what the bylaws and job descriptions say we're responsible for, interactions with congregants and our own inner compass. All of these things will help us set board objectives.
- We need to encourage proactivity among those who are dissatisfied. A work group on building strong connections, for example. We can reflect the challenge back to them for their positive suggestions.
- The work that Paul Cole Jones will do when she comes back will address this too.
- The issue of dissatisfaction with worship is difficult. Accountability for how Wik is doing his job tends to fall entirely under worship comments. Some of the dissatisfaction with him may be over things that are not even his responsibility.

What should the board communicate to the congregation now?

- The retreat isn't scheduled yet so we don't have anything to communicate in the way of priorities. But any thoughts we have on strategies to address dissatisfaction could help ease unrest.
- What degree of passion deserves a response? No one fills out a survey when they are happy, so encouraging people to fill it out met a need.
- We need to roll out a strategy for how TJMC will be more sensitive to the racially charged atmosphere that keeps coming up.
- Some people have backed out over how that was handled in the past. They need to be invited back in.

- Where is the assumption of good will when we work together? How can we communicate that to each other? We are in this together.
- There is an upcoming AFD series on topics such as the leadership model which come directly from this feedback. Check the AFD offerings for dates.
- COM feels strongly about some communication to the congregation to show that we're seriously looking at results, we have a retreat coming up, there are AFD offerings coming up, etc.

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. Appointment of Board of Trustees Member at Large - Adam (5 min)

MOTION: enter executive session

Unanimously approved.

MOTION: leave exec session.

Unanimously approved.

Summary: Nominating Committee nominated and the Board has appointed Lorie Craddock to fill the remaining 2 years of Ian Sole's member-at-large term.

VI. Closing Activities (5 minutes)

1. Process Review / (all):

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

- Calm
- Tired
- Exhausted
- Grateful
- Perky as hell.
- Tired.
- Okay
- Neutral

2. Things to do / communicate –
Adam – communicate to Lorie

Everyone – fill out doodle poll for retreat

3. Closing words - Ann

Dates to remember –

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

Minister's Report

Lead Minister Report to the Board — October 17, 2018

I am always sorry to have to miss a Board meeting, yet I am rather excited about the reason I am not with you tonight. As many of you know, last year Skinner House Books asked me to serve as the editor for a new anthology of spiritual practices – something of a successor to, and expansion of, *Everyday Spiritual Practices: simple pathways for enriching your life* (1999). Earlier this year the book was published and is now available (from Amazon – including as an e-book – as well as from the UUA Bookstore).

I'm very proud of *Faithful Practices: everyday ways to feed your spirit*. It has chapters on everything from the traditional (meditation, prayer, etc.) to the somewhat more unusual (walking, art, etc.), to the downright surprising (there's a chapter from an ordained minister who used to play roller derby, and I've got a chapter in there on my hobby of action figure photography). I'd note that there's also a chapter on the labyrinth as a spiritual practice, written by our own Leia Durland Jones.

No doubt because of this book, I was invited to facilitate a three-day retreat about spiritual practice for a UU clergy cluster in New York state. I'll be flying out on Sunday the 14th, and will be in the air on my way home at the time of the Board's meeting on Wednesday. (You will, of course, be in my thoughts, and I'll be eager to read Ann's

minutes.) Connecting to, and serving the larger Association has always been understood to be a part of my ministry to and with this congregation. We are, after all, a covenantal faith tradition – each local congregation being a part of a larger whole, just as our individual members are part of something larger than themselves by virtue of our covenant with one another. I think that it's worth noting that the three senior staff members who serve TJMCUU have often been approached by the larger Unitarian Universalist movement to share our gifts, experiences, and insights. And that work we do for our Association would not be possible without the support this congregation gives to us. So ... thank you.

While on the subject of gratitude, I would be remiss if I did not express my gratitude for Ian Sole, who has served this congregation so well in so many ways. While his departure will hopefully open up a new and rewarding chapter in his life, it will leave us the less for it. Throughout the eight years I have been here Ian and I have not always agreed with one another. I have always appreciated his courage in expressing his convictions, and admired his openness of heart.

Another person whose convictions I deeply appreciate is Glenn Short. Over the years so many people have spoken to his influence on their lives, and his receipt of the Eco-Hero Award was recognized by all as incredibly well deserved. (If you haven't seen his obituary, it is worth reading --

https://www.dailyprogress.com/obituaries/short-glenn-r/article_0e7d9476-7d65-55e3-bfe6-1fb5f776bf67.html. The loving care and support Glenn received from Sharon

Baiocco, Kip Newland, and Dick Somer (as well as Susan Bremer and Laura Wallace) is a model of the kind of ministry members of a faith community can give to one another. Religious community is not about good sermons, or great religious education, or working for justice in the community (or, at least, not about such things alone). The primary purpose of a faith community, many say, is to empower and equip its members to do ministry in the world.

Looking at worship, though, I would note that there have been quite a number of visitors in recent weeks, and what they say to me on their way out of the sanctuary and in the Social Hall is that they are finding our community to be the kind of warm and welcoming place we know it can be. They report being engaged by their experiences during Sunday morning worship and in our religious education programs, and, most importantly, they are finding the people who already call this their spiritual home to be demonstrating why they might want to do so also.

Two last things: There most definitely has been a learning curve, and some pretty obvious technical glitches in our move to paperless, all projected, Orders of Service on

Sundays. And there are some questions to which we don't yet have practical, workable solutions (particularly with regard to people with vision challenges). On the whole, though, the feedback I've been receiving has been generally positive. People have told me that they appreciate being able to look up, and that much of the rest of the congregation is looking up, rather than everyone having their heads buried in their own hymnals. These folks have said that they feel less isolated and more connected. I've also had someone tell me that this approach allows her to be more present during the service, because she simply can't look ahead to see what's coming next; she has to focus on what's happening now. I do know that there are people in the congregation for whom these things – and, of course, others – are experienced as negatives rather than positives. This is still very much a work in progress.

Finally, I know that the relative calm does not mean that “the troubles” are over. As Ruth Douglas said so passionately when the Committee on the Ministry presented their survey report to the Board, there is some real pain in the congregation. There are some real people feeling that pain. And I know that we all, as leaders of the congregation, need to listen to that pain to learn how we can address it in both pastoral and practical ways. To use an “I-Statement,” I know that I have already begun to change many of the behaviors that people have named as being problematic. I am trying to respond to the critical feedback that has been offered, just as I made many changes in what I do and how I do it following the 2015 survey.

At the same time, I continue to believe that, fundamentally, we are wrestling as a congregation with a choice between different ways of being a congregation. I have said repeatedly that I believe the majority of people involved in the conflicts of recent days have the health of the congregation in their hearts. On that I truly believe we all agree. Where we *disagree*, though, is just what “health” means, and what our congregation should look, feel, and be like. We are still in our 75th anniversary year, and in looking back over that history we have, time and again, experienced serious divisions. And time and again we have chosen, ultimately, to focus on “coming together” rather than making a clear decision between two visions for our community. And repeatedly, following these times of division, congregational leaders have noted that “the wounds have never healed,” and that “the issues were never really addressed.” Staying with the discussion when things get uncomfortable is hard. Making a decision – saying “yes” to one thing and “no” to another – is hard. Knowing that people will be disappointed and disenchanted, and quite likely will leave – not matter what decision is made – is so hard that putting the decision aside in order to “come together” and “heal” can seem to be the best course of action.

I hope that future generations of members don't look back at this time in our history and say that the issues we are wrestling with were never fully resolved.

Pax tecum,

Rev. Wik

Director of Faith Development Report

Report to the Board October 2018
Leia Durland-Jones, Director of Faith Development

Children's Programming

- September 16 began our 2018-2019 faith development program for nursery through fourth grades with RE programming at both services. With support and leadership from members of the Racial Justice Committee, we offered three sessions of **racial justice themed lessons** for the 4 year-olds through 4th grades in September and October.
- We are using the UUA curriculum "Celebrating Me & My World" in the pre-school class in the lower hall, Spirit Play for 4-K at 9:15 only, the UUA Tapestry of Faith program "Moral Tales" for 1st-4th (at 9:15) and 3rd-4th (at 11:15), "Wonderful Welcome" for K-2nd at 11:15 only and a new to us curriculum "Harry & UU" for a 3rd-6th grade inclusive class for children who need more active learning environments and 5th & 6th grade classes at 11:15. Volunteers in our children's RE program include: Rose Cole, Stephanie Davis, Don McCown, Bart & Jeannie Pfautz, Mary Beth Wiley, Ian Doran, Ellen & David Powell, James Davis, Mark Manis, Lori & Rob Marken, Kara Menfi, Cheryl & Patrik Sandas, Virginia Leavell, Maggie Record, Callie Smith, Karen Moulis, Kristen Taverna, Danny Gray, Dar Megonigal, Jen Schaeffer, Michelle Hilgart, Carol Gardner, Nick Laiacina, Elizabeth Ide, Michelle Benedict, Lonnie Murray, Sharon Snyder, Janine Jakim, Jeremy Gill, Jenny Turner, & Lara Gastinger.

Youth Programming (11:15 service only)

- This year's youth programming includes: The 5th Dimension (based on the Twilight Zone) at 11:15 for our 7th & 8th grades, Our Whole Lives from 4:30-6:30 PM for our 7th & 8th grades and YRUU for 9th-12th grades.)
- The Youth/Adult Committee met in September to set the fall calendar for YRUU
- I am working with ASP (Appalachia Service Project) and making plans for our YRUU group to participate in ASP in July 2019.
- The OWL program had a lock-in (overnight at church) and GLBTQI panel as part of the evening's programming.
- Volunteers in our youth programs include: Larry Moulis, Kim Grover, Karen Ransom, Mitch Powers, Kristin Morgan, Pam McIntire, Greg Townsend, Jen Smith, Amy Wissekerke, Breck Gastinger, Margo Gill, & Dana Redick.

Adult Programming

Fall Semester 2018 Adult Faith Development classes are underway.

- This semester there are 3 racial justice focused offerings including: Seeing With New Eyes: racial justice as a white necessity (led by RevWik), Who Do We Think We Are? (led by Laura Wallace), African American Lives in the 20th Century: The View from August Wilson's Plays (Sara Gondwe & Jean Umiker-Sebeok.)

Additional Adult Faith Development offerings this semester include:

Tai Chi (led by John & Vicki Shackford), Short Story Reading Group, Transylvania Stories and Unitarian Theology (led by Alex McGee), Faithful Practices (led by RevWik), What Will Be Born in You This Year? (online course led by RevWik), Exploring the Dynamics of Congregational Size (online course led by RevWik, Chris and Leia), Shared Leadership—Shared Ministry (led by RevWik, Chris and Leia), Introduction to Church Finances (online led by Chris and Jeanine), Wednesday Wonderings (led by Lou Centore), Pre-Holiday Renewal Retreat (led by Alex McGee.) The Dream Quest Planning Circle is beginning preparations for this year's Women's Dream Quest at the end of February.

Multigenerational Programming

After worship/RE classes on Sunday for three Sundays in September and October, the RE program created, supplied and staffed a table encouraging anyone and everyone to make a chalice to take home and use as a way of uniting our community and living our faith. I have been including chalice lightings in my weekly faith development e-newsletter. Many thanks to Linda Dukes for her initiative and work to make this activity possible.

Worship

Children's Worship

- In September and October Children's Worship focused on stories related to racial justice in support of the RE class lessons. The Story Sunday, *Each Kindness*, on October 7 was also related to our racial justice programming

Contemplative Worship

- Cindy Mick, Maggie Ober, Wendy Steeves and I continue to share the leadership for our midweek contemplative service from 11:30-12:30 PM.

Multigenerational Worship

- September brought two of our beloved multigenerational services—Water Communion and Balloon Sunday. October brings our annual observance of Ancestor Sunday.

Professional Development

- TJMC hosted our Virginia Area Cluster of UU Ministers (VACUUM) in September.

Director of Administration and Finance Report

Membership Report

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of August 31, 2018: 426

Add: Josie Taylor, reinstated, Sept. 4, 2018 (original join date-Feb. 14, 1982), conversation

with Membership Tracker

Karen Moulis, September 9, 2018

Larry Moulis, September 9, 2018

Stephanie Davis, September 23, 2018

James Davis, September 23, 2018

Kyle Ezer, September 23, 2018

Drop:

Short, Glenn, died September 1, 2018, archive

Fogler, Joe, phone conversation with Membership Committee member, September 10, 2018, requested inactive status, make Supporter

Fogler, Robyn, phone conversation with Membership Committee member, September 10, 2018, requested inactive status, make Supporter

Dunn, Mary Anna, phone conversation with Membership Committee member, September 10, 2018, requested inactive status, archive

Dunn, Michael, phone conversation with Membership Committee member, September 10, 2018, requested inactive status, archive

Oots, Christine, resignation via Pledge Tracker, September 14, 2018, archive

Change in Membership Status:

Annalee Durland Jones has changed from Youth Member to Member, request to Membership Tracker, September 12, 2018

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of September 30, 2018: 426 members

Sally Taylor

Membership Tracker for Membership Committee

Correspondence:

Email - October 14, 2018:

I don't know if any steps were taken after the first letter, but I believe it is time to involve law enforcement and forensics, even if we need to raise funds to do so, we need facts.

Marlene Jones
