

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbia

MINUTES Board of Trustees Meeting, Jan 17, 2024 (approved Feb 21, 2024)

Attendance

Marc Drews (President*)

John Logue (President-Elect*)

Karen Brown (Secretary*)

Jeanette Walton (Treasurer*(Z) present for first part of meeting)

Deb Matherly (Past President*)

Board Members, in-person: Regina Moody, Nancie Shillington-Pérez, Susan Legacy, George Johnson (Z), Rev. Stephen Robinson (Minister**)

Not Present: Ginny Verne (Finance Chair**), Jeanette Walton (Treasurer*(Z) not present for 2nd half of meeting)

Visitors: Pat Mohr (Z), Cochair Denominational Connections Committee

*Executive Committee; **Ex Officio; (Z)=attended by Zoom

Call to order

Marc (President) called the meeting to order at 2:30pm. The meeting was held in-person at the church and online over Zoom.

Chalice lighting

Susan lit the chalice and shared opening words.

Covenant and check-in

We will treat each other as we would wish to be treated by listening to the opinions of all members with equal respect and responding in a kind and thoughtful manner.

APPROVALS

Accept the agenda

Nancie moved to accept the January 2024 agenda. (seconded, carried)

Approve the minutes

John moved to approve the December 2024 minutes as amended. (seconded, carried)

Accept the consent agenda

Susan moved to approve the January 2024 consent agenda (Recent Committee Reports, December Revenues & Expenses Reports, Restricted Funds; and Balance Sheets). (seconded, carried)

UPDATES

From the President

Marc noted that Sunday service attendance has been steadily increasing each quarter. The UUA Annual Certification of congregations is underway. Cyndi Alexandre (Administrator) is coordinating the collection of information that needs to be submitted by February 5th. We need to work out how to count the number of children enrolled and/or participating in CYRE, given that CYRE registration forms were not completed this year. Certification is required to send delegates to represent our congregation and vote at GA 2024.

Treasurer's report

Jeanette (Treasurer) briefly reviewed the highlights of the financial report, noting that several special donations have been received recently. Technology Services funds have all been spent. Jeanette noted that UUCC needs a policy on donations by stock transfer. When pledges are paid by stock transfer, the actual cash value is typically higher or lower than the pledged amount when the stock is liquidated. The bookkeeper must find a way to reconcile the difference. If the cash received is greater than the pledged amount, the bookkeeper asks the donor whether the overage is to be refunded or allocated some

other way. Alternately, if cash received is less than the pledged amount, the donor is asked whether they prefer to pay the balance or have it forgiven. Jeanette said the church needs a policy on how to handle this. The Finance Committee will be asked to propose a policy.

Minister's report (including staff update)

Rev. Robinson reported that it had been a very busy month with three deaths, people to care for, and memorial services to plan. He has started planning worship services a quarter of a year in advance so the other people involved (music, worship committee, website, publicity) have more lead time. With staff evaluations having been done, the Personnel Committee is moving quickly to prepare draft LOAs.

There is a question about the Music Director's retirement benefits. The Music Director is not eligible to participate in the UUA retirement program until the end of this fiscal year. The understanding of the Board, at that time, was that the retirement benefits would not start until eligibility requirements were met [e.g., working a minimum of 1000 hours for a twelve consecutive month period]. Marc asked Karen to research the minutes and documentation to see how that was communicated. This issue was re-addressed prior to adjournment and reflected below.

The City repaired a sidewalk by sanding down concrete to even the pathway. Bill Dolley (Custodian) would like to make improvements to the repair, but he will first check with the City before making any improvements.

Liaison's Highlights and Additions to Committee Reports

- Leadership Development Committee (LDC) – Nancie (Liaison) reported that nine people had already signed up to participate in the UUCC 101 course. Assistance will be needed on that Sunday to clear the social hall and move the food so the class can start at 12:25pm when the bell is rung. Nancie thanked the board for generously allocating more money than requested to pay for the lunch and snacks, but as it turns out, sufficient funds were already budgeted and therefore won't be needed.
- Security Grant Update – Regina reported that, at its January 11, 2024 meeting, the Building and Grounds Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the UUCC Board that any activity to procure and install security bollards be terminated. No more reimbursements need to be requested. Regina moved that any activity to procure and install security bollards be halted (seconded, carried). [Further documentation for this motion can be found in an addendum to these minutes.] Rev. Robinson said we could still use the security grant to fund other security-related strategies -- safety training, perhaps door safety. Rev. Stephen said he would review the grant to see what might be possible. Regina said she wanted to be sure to thank all the people who had been involved in the project. Nancie said she was surprised how easy it was to get funds, and that perhaps we should consider applying for other grants.
- Article II Forums – Deb (Denominational Connections Committee, Cochair) reported that the DCC has developed an application form for becoming a UUCC voting delegate to General Assembly (GA) 2024. UUCC Conversations are scheduled for February 11 and March 10. A UU group in Connecticut is having a conversation online, and DCC is thinking about planning a state-wide conversation. Regina noted that certification of our congregation as a member of the UUA by the due date is critical for our congregation being eligible to send delegates to the GA to vote on behalf of the congregation. This is the plan that the DC committee has as we prepare for GA 2024: The DCC will (1) publish a letter about becoming a delegate on the UUCC webpage, in the Unigram, Facebook, eblast with paper copies in the foyer; (2) collect interest / application forms and review them before the March board meeting; (3) nominate three delegates for board consideration and decision its March meeting. Please email input, corrections and edits emailed to denomconn@uucolumbia.org.
- Ad hoc Bylaws Subcommittee – Regina noted that this year is the time to review the bylaws, rather than rewrite them. The committee will first study how things work, regarding the goals and mission of the congregation, and then envision how the structure for this work should be reflected in the bylaws. George said the next step is to ask committee chairs to review their committee's description for possible changes. He would like to formalize a procedure for getting board input.

OLD BUSINESS

Ad hoc Committee to Examine UUCC Rental Prices

Marc reviewed the status of the ad hoc committee and said we needed to ask the Building and Grounds Committee to put together an ad hoc committee to review the UUCC Rental Prices (ref: June 2023 minutes). Rev Stephen noted that Linda McLeod would be a valuable resource for the committee, with her background with the Kitchen Committee and memorial service support.

NEW BUSINESS

Security Grant –The board voted to discontinue plans to install bollards (see Liaison’s Highlights, above).

Kitchen Committee FY24 Allocation Marc reported that the Kitchen Committee requested that its financial allocation be increased by \$500. (seconded, approved)

Minister’s Performance review. Marc shared a draft feedback form for reviewing the minister’s performance. Rev Stephen and the board will provide feedback on the questions by Feb 1. Marc plans to add a question for people to indicate the role they are fulfilling when providing the feedback. The form should be filled out by standing committee chairs and the board by Feb 16. Regina noted that the evaluation should not be thought of as being tied to salary. Rev Stephen said he would value having an opportunity to sit down with the board to get feedback about what is working and not, what might be needed so he can serve the congregation better.

Request for Professional Learning Allocation

Marc explained that Rev. Robinson has not been using Professional Development funds for the past few years and it is no longer specified in the LOA. However, with the upcoming trip to Romanian Partner Church Pilgrimage and the extension trip to Krakow, Poland and the Holocaust site, July 26-29, 2024, he was wondering if the board might allocate funds to help pay for that experience designed to expand connection to the history of Unitarianism and the work of Ferenc David. Rev. Robinson absented himself while the board went into executive session. Upon return, Deb moved moved to allocate \$5000 to Professional Development for this purpose (seconded, carried).

Music Director Retirement Allocation

Regina moved that beginning on July 1, 2024, the Board will provide \$1742 to kickstart Anna’s retirement fund to reflect the previous year (6% of salary). (seconded, carried)

Extinguish chalice and adjourn

Susan extinguished the chalice. Marc adjourned the meeting at 4:54pm.

Addendum – Background for motion from the Ad Hoc Committee for Security Grant

At its January 11, 2024, Meeting, with 8 out of 10 members present, the UUCC Building and Grounds Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the UUCC Board that any activity to procure and install security bollards be terminated.

Reasons given include:

- Crash-rated bollards are not needed because:
 - The likelihood of a vehicle trying to penetrate the building is extremely low
 - The great difficulty of a vehicle reaching a high speed, given the terrain surrounding the building
 - Not necessary to penetrate building to cause major damage with explosives
 - Much greater danger from other threats, e.g., active shooter
 - Easier methods exist to cause significant damage to building, e.g., crashing into basement door
- Potential problems with installation and liability (We have had significant problems locating a contractor who has had experience installing the type of bollard specified.) If there were problems with installation, it could result in long-term aesthetic challenges, pending possible legal actions.
- Meeting the June 30,2024 deadline is problematic and could result in UUCC not being able to obtain reimbursement for funds spent (UUCC must spend the funds and request reimbursement)
- The B&G Committee recently obtained information that underscored the difficulty of completing the project by its termination date. Deliberations were significantly impacted by two documents prepared by Civil Engineer and UUCC Member, Richard Culler. The first document *Vehicle Barrier Systems* contained detailed specifications [1] purchase and delivery to the site and [2] labor, equipment, permits, and incidentals to install by a licensed and bonded contractor. The second document *Invitation to Bid (IFB)* contained a detailed *Schedule of Events* to meet the contractual agreements. In addition, the committee considered all direct conversations that had transpired between UUCC and Reliance Foundry Co. Ltd., the most likely supplier.

It was apparent to the committee, also, that many significant details remained incomplete—e.g. design and placement.
NOTE: The Committee would like to extend thanks to Cyndi Alexander, Michele Currie, and Richard Culler for their work on the project.

The information below is not part of the formal minutes.

Karen Brown (Secretary) emailed “draft1 to president” of minutes to the President on Jan 17, 2024.

Secretary submitted “draft1 to board” to Board, Minister, Administrator, Bookkeeper, Kitchen Committee and Personnel Committee on Jan 18, 2024.

Secretary submitted “draft2 to board” of draft minutes to Board, Minister, Administrator, Bookkeeper Bookkeeper, Kitchen PC and DC Committees on Feb 21, 2024.

Secretary submitted board-approved final copy to board, Webmaster, Administrator, Bookkeeper, and the Kitchen, Personnel and Denominational Connections Committees on March 3, 2024.