

UUFBR Board of Trustees Meeting March 25, 2019 Final Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM. Present were Carlton Devot, Linda Harmon, Barb Jensen, Betty Tilton, Sandy Troiano and Rob Valdez. Donna Musial, Ari Siegel and Carrie Viles subsequently joined the meeting. A quorum was present and acting throughout. Guests present were Paul Libert, Mitch Major and Patricia Rogers.

Rob noted that the Minutes for the prior meeting have been corrected, there is no BP Report and Rev. Harris Riordan has sent the Minister's Report. He moved to accept the Consent Agenda, Barb seconded and it was unanimously approved.

The Board turned to old business. Rob said that, in addition to officer positions, people should be designated to deal with Sharex, personnel, membership, volunteers, fundraising and outreach.

Betty then gave a membership update. She passed around an invite for an event on April 7 to honor people in the congregation who have been members for five years or more and who have pledged. There will be a second dinner for new members on May 4. Harris and one of the Co-Presidents will speak at the dinner. Betty felt the last service at which new members were called out and given ribbons went well; she received good feedback. She returned to discussing the April 7 service. Because there are 106 people who have been members for five years or more, the service will start by honoring those who have been members the longest, for 30 or more years. They will be called by name or group and receive chalice pins. Her committee will meet with Harris on April 2 to plan the service; all are welcome to attend this meeting.

Two new members wish to start groups. Elon Bateman would like to start a men's group in the fall. Betty will help him. Louis Merlin wants to host a small group ministry or chalice circle. Small group ministry is a UUA program in which small groups meet to discuss spiritual topics on a monthly basis. The Board discussed whether the time for the group meeting would matter, noting that Vespers has been tried several times but has failed to attract sufficient participants to continue though that could be due to the manner in which it has been conducted. Rob asked if the group would meet in the host's house but Betty felt it would be better to hold the meetings at UUFBR. Rob said he would send out information about the proposal, noting that the main purpose was to create intimacy among the group participants. Betty would like to start the group in the fall and keep the number of participants small at no more than eight; if more want to join, other groups can be formed.

Rob then raised the topic of electing new officers. At the prior meeting Ari was elected Treasurer and Sandy Secretary. Two Co-Presidents and a VP Facilities need to be chosen. Linda nominated Donna and Carrie to serve as Co-Presidents and Rob seconded the nominations. Both consented to run and were unanimously elected. Rob gave them a list of potential transition items. He then turned to the position of VP Facilities. Carlton was asked if he would consider it. He asked what it would entail. Rob said he would need to stand in for the Presidents if neither of them were available when needed. He would also have to be on call to hear about and find the appropriate persons to fix any problem that may arise in the UUFBR facilities. Carlton replied that being on constant call could be problematic for him.

Rob again mentioned the six areas in which leaders are needed; they do not have to be Board members. Betty has already spoken to two persons about possibly becoming the volunteer coordinator. She added that there is a serious need for help in the kitchen and thanked Patricia for her efforts to assist there. Linda said Dave McKinna works for a PR company and may be able to advise on outreach. Rob noted that UUFBR maintains both a Facebook page and web site but they do not set forth a well-coordinated vision. Carrie advised that a new ministerial intern would start in August who is interested in working on the web site.

The Board then considered fundraising which Linda said contained diverse buckets including the flea market, the silent auction and ABD, the annual budget drive. Rob is good handling ABD. Would a video urging giving such as other UU congregations use help increase contributions? Rob said he has collected the most pledge cards ever but the total amount pledged is not the highest so he would like to extend the pledge drive into April in the hope of collecting up to fifty more cards. Carrie suggested placing a pledge card on every seat at Sunday's congregational budget meeting and Board members thought this was a good idea. Sandy volunteered that some people may not feel a part of the UUFBR community and, thus, may not offer much. Donna replied that people will give if they perceive value and, if they do not feel connected, they will not perceive value. Paul proposed that an outgoing person, such as Rob, make a personal request to persons who have not pledged. Carrie felt that many people do not understand the actual costs of running UUFBR; perhaps this could be shown on a slide. She mentioned the time and effort it had taken to make glitter globes for one service.

Sandy responded that this illustrated her point; she had not known about the project and would have volunteered to help had she been aware of it. She postured that there likely are others who do not feel a part of what is going on and, therefore, may be less likely to give. Rob replied that this was a good point and that the various areas of membership, outreach, volunteering, fundraising and, to some degree, personnel are really not separate silos but go together. Donna said that, if the focus, stays on money, those feeling disconnected will be lost. Sandy repeated that she found it hard to break into the group that seems to know what is happening. Donna

said she was not the only one that felt that way and Linda asked if Sandy had any suggestion to help fix this problem. Sandy responded that she had discussed it with the other members of Rachel Hayes' ministerial internship committee and none had any suggestion. She said she read the announcements and Chalice Notes but does not find out all the opportunities to join activities. Rob proposed a ladies' night, a guys' night and a members' night where people could connect. Linda said a girls' night had been done before but, when she tried to revive it after it had ended, no one came. Paul said that at his prior church following a Sunday service various groups would set up tables at which they would inform people of their existence and activities. The Board thought this might be a good thing to try in September.

It then returned to choosing a VP Facilities. Donna asked if a facilities manager could be appointed who would not need to be a Board member. The Bylaws require the Board to choose a VP, however. The position should not be too difficult if a good handyman is available. Barb volunteered to take the position if she can rely on somebody to do any necessary work. Linda nominated Barb. Barb inquired what would happen if she were out of town when an emergency occurred. Linda replied Barb would choose a proxy to act in her stead then. Sandy seconded the nomination. Barb was unanimously elected. She informed the Board that a smoke detector in the air conditioning unit is defective. The Board advised her that she has the authority to contact Howard Pearl to fix the problem.

The Board turned to personnel matters. Harris and Gail Larkin, UUFBR's administrative Assistant, have already been interviewed. Amy Wright Glenn, director of religious education, and Stephanie Nixdorf, choir director, still need to be. The purpose is to see if they have any concerns and if they need anything. Robert Duchemin, the new bookkeeper, should be interviewed after his ninety-day probation period ends. Carrie then provided more information about the new ministerial intern, Scott Mulder, who uses the pronouns they, their and them. Scott applied late for the internship as they wanted to finish their PhD program first. They will start in August and are interested in interning for two years, as is now suggested by UUA. This would need to be discussed with the Endowment Committee. Endowment will grant them \$22,000 for their initial year and Harris will provide them with a place to live.

Fellowship Cares was then considered. Carrie noted that only a small number of persons participate. Linda said the purpose was to bring people together. It is too late to plan for early April, however.

The Board then sought dates for its retreat. After discussion, it decided to hold the retreat on the nights of April 16 and 18 from 6:00 until 9:00 PM. Rob may not be able to attend.

Ari then presented a draft balanced budget prepared by the Finance Committee. The proposed budget reduced the prior contemplated total funding amount of \$285,000 to \$245,750 in line with the actual amount of funds the congregation is anticipated to have. It is expected that the total pledged amount will be \$152,500. Everything else on the income side is the same as in the current year. In order to balance expenses with income, reductions will need to be made from what had been originally planned. Harris' salary will only be raised to \$75,000, rather than \$80,000 as had been promised. Robert will be paid \$14,000, rather than \$15,000 as set forth in the previous budget. The congregation will forego paying principal on the note held by the Endowment Committee. Rob said the various stakeholders must come into alignment on a common vision and this would be part of that discussion. Ari noted the congregation's precarious fiscal state which can no longer be kicked down the road as its long term solvency is at risk. Patricia and Paul asked how the Endowment Committee could lend to UUFBR when it is not a separate legal entity but, rather, a part of UUFBR and, thus, would be lending to itself. Paul stated that UUFBR lacks a financial cushion and things such as audits and insurance appraisals are not being done due to lack of funds. Rob said that working toward a common vision among stakeholders as suggested by the Finance Committee should be more important than legalities that have driven decisions in the past. Sandy inquired, however, if there are restrictions on how the Endowment Committee funds may be used based on restrictions made when they were received. Paul responded that only about one-third of the funds are restricted. The Bylaws currently prohibit the use of Endowment Committee funds for items on the annual operating budget of UUFBR; Patricia suggested they be amended to remove this prohibition. Payment to UUA would be cut. Finally, the Finance Committee proposed that Share the Plate be split 80% to UUFBR and 20% to charity, rather than the current 50%-50% split. \$500 would be given to a designated charity once UUFBR collected \$2,500. Rob mentioned that there is a Share the Plate committee which should coordinate with the other stakeholders. He noted that various Board members do not know who is on the Endowment Committee or the Share the Plate committee and said that, while this is being discussed with respect to the budget, it illustrates the larger cultural issue that people do not feel connected.

Carrie moved to adjourn the meeting, Betty seconded and it was adjourned at 9:05 PM.