

Unitarian Universalist for Social Justice In The National Capital Region
Proposed Succession Plan – Draft to Board 9-27-2015; Updated Draft 02-09-16

Background: In formulating our plans to conduct a search for an Executive Director to replace Rev. Terry Ellen, who retired from this position in June of 2014, we believed it would be helpful to think of our succession planning in a similar fashion to that of a congregation conducting a search for a new settled minister. The process began with an evaluation of the needs and desires of the organization. We also took into account the changes in our purpose and objectives that were established in the new Strategic Plan developed by UUSJ in 2013 and assessed the progress and identified the challenges that we have encountered.

It has been over a decade since we hired an Executive Director, and we decided it is essential that we conducted a thoughtful examination of the way our organization has been functioning and to determine what changes, if any, are required. With this information, it informed us in the development of an Executive Director Position Description.

From this process of reflection, including a retreat in June of 2014, analysis of our governance documents in November of 2014, and the Faithify grant received in 2015, we have developed a clearer sense of our goals, needs, and desires as it relates to the Executive Director search. We are now in a position to fully launch our hiring process.

Purpose: To establish a succession plan that will provide the process by which UUSJ will hire essential professional staff consistent with UUSJ's purpose and goals set forth in its most recent Strategic Plan, and within available resources.

Approach: The previous Executive Director worked a limited schedule, roughly 12 hours a week/11 months per year at about \$28/per hour. Given the ambitious scope of work that UUSJ has embarked upon, it is clear we need staff support at a higher level. However, we must be mindful to hire within budget constraints. Therefore we propose to hire an Executive Director at 20 hours per week up to \$30/per hour, by March of 2016. At that same time we must finalize a development plan to secure additional financial resources; the budget for the coming year is very aggressive and ambitious.

Actions Required:

- 1) Gather relevant documents and staffing information about the current and former Executive Director positions and compensation packages. (Completed)
- 2) Take stock of where we are now, "Reflection and Evaluation Period," as an organization and where we want to go in the next few years. Because UUSJ established a new Strategic Plan in May, 2013 it is appropriate to assess progress and make modifications to the plan. Create a realistic scope of work such that we can identify the skill sets and expertise needed for the next Executive Director. (June 2014-Nov 2015)
- 3) Review how we operate. This will include our financial and administrative audit and review of our By-laws and governance structure. (March 2015-Jan 2016)

- 4) Gather information from the UUSJ Board, UU organizations, similar-type non-profit organizations, and from consultants or others with expertise in areas including non-profit management and fundraising. While various people at the UUA can provide assistance in commenting on the position description and compensation package, assist in advertising the position and possibly suggesting candidates, information available to us so far suggest Washington DC-based nonprofit organizations are the closest comparators, i.e., those organizations with most similar functions, compensation packages, etc. (Sept-Nov)
- 5) Draft a position description. Establish a comprehensive employment package, or hire a consultant on a contract basis. (Sept-Nov)
- 6) We should allow at least 45 days for advertising the position, and allow up to 30 days for making a decision. Allow three weeks following the applicant's acceptance of the position for the new hire to begin work.

Who Takes Action: Overall succession planning should fall to the Executive Committee. The recruitment or search shall fall to a Search Committee, the primary hiring decision shall fall to the Executive Committee (or a Selection Committee that they appoint), and the UUSJ Board of Directors serving as the policy guide and to ratify the Executive Committee's decision. The Board shall be requested to delegate hiring authority to the Executive Committee.

Search Committee: The minimum size recommended is three and maximum size is five. There should be an uneven number of members. The committee chair should be appointed by the Executive Committee and should be able to work closely with the Executive Committee, but should not be a member of the Executive Committee in order to avoid conflict of duties and interests during the hiring process. It would be useful if the members have substantial experience in employee recruitment and selection. It would be helpful if at least one member has experience working on a congregational or other UU search committee. Familiarity with the regional job market, especially the nonprofit sector and venues for seeking applicants, is desirable. At least one member shall be a member of the UUSJ Board with working knowledge of the UUSJ organization and operation.

Tasks and Timeline:

Task	Date	Responsibility
Present draft succession plan to Board	Sept 27	Lavona
Solicit input into job description	Sept 27	Jennifer B-D
Present draft job description to ExCom	Oct 20	Jennifer B-D
Compensation package drafted	Nov 3	
Approve compensation package	Nov 7	Board
Solicit input into job description	Nov 7	Jennifer B-D *
Draft job description	Nov 20	Jennifer B-D
Approve job description	Dec 1	Executive Committee
Form search committee	Dec 4	Lavona
Report progress to Board	periodic	Executive Committee
Advertise job & receive applications	60 days -	Search Committee
Review applications	rolling basis	Search Committee
Recommend candidates	Feb 2016	Search Committee
Interview, decide final candidate	Feb 2016	Executive Committee
Board meets final candidate	March 2016	Board
Make job offer	March 2016	Executive Committee
Executive director begins work	April 2016	Executive Director

* telephone interviews, to include recent UUSJ Board chairs, will be conducted by another contractor by Nov. 18.

Submitted by Lavona Grow and Al Carlson