

DRAFT UUSJ Board Meeting

December 9, 2017

Held via Zoom due to inclement weather

Board Members Present:

Martha Ades, at large, UU Congregation of Fairfax
Peter Bishop, member, Washington Ethical Society
Al Carlson, member, Reston UU
Carmelita Carter-Sykes, member, Paint Branch UU
Christopher Croft, outgoing member, Towson UU
Jane D'Ambrogi, incoming member, Towson UU
Bob Denniston, Board Chair
Dave Feser, alternate, Bull Run UU
Lavona Grow, at large, Arlington UU
John Gubbings, member, Cedar Lane UU
Martha Neuman, alternate, All Souls, Unitarian
David Strauss, alternate, Rockville UU
Adam Wasserman, member, UU Congregation of Fairfax
Marsha White, alternate, Accotink UU

Staff Present:

Pablo DeJesús, Executive Director

Guests Present:

Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, Communications Committee Chair, Mount Vernon Unitarian Church
Bill Cranmer, Frederick UU
Gary Magnuson, Frederick UU

Action Items:

- Pablo DeJesús to email CFC flyers to Board members
- Members send to Lavona the immigration and/or refugee contact person
- Martha Ades to organize a data needs meeting with Lavona, Peter, and Martha Neuman
- Bob Denniston to send out Doodle Poll for proposed January face-to-face meeting
- Pablo DeJesús to meet with new Board members
- All Board members to think of who they know that can volunteer on the Governance or Development Committees
- All should look for a volunteer accountant/bookkeeper, Martha Ades to send short job description to Board members

Meeting Notes

Bob Denniston opened the meeting with introductions at 2:05pm. He introduced new members... Martha Ades provided a reading.

Announcements included

- Fair Share letters were mailed on December 8.
- The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) ad has been sent to UU World. Pablo will email the flyer and small ads each person can post at their congregation for UUSJ #17271.
- Board members need to provide a contact within their congregation who should get the immigration and refugee survey being prepared by the Immigration Task Force.

Secretary's Report: Martha Ades

Adam Wasserman moved to accept the minutes from the September meeting as written. Lavona Grow seconded. All approved. A quorum was determined to be present.

Treasurer's Report: John Gubbings provided the treasurer's report and announced the receipt of a \$2500 donation granted from the Milner Family Foundation. It was given because they believe in our advocacy efforts and have a personal contact with UUSJ. David Strauss asked about our reserve level. John Gubbings responded that we are in reasonable shape at this time. We are looking for a volunteer accountant.

Programs

Martha Ades presented a report of the Awards Celebration held Oct. 29th at Cedar Lane. Awards were given to 8 individuals/groups, more than \$1600 was cleared for the grant fund and over 100 people socialized together. Lavona Grow reminded us that in the past we have moved some of the grant funds to other causes when there is a surplus in the account. Comments on the event showed an interest in repeating it.

- David S – It's good to give awards and acknowledge our works; it deepens our mission
- Peter B – it was good to get connected with others at the event
- Bill A-J – the event spreads knowledge of UUSJ in the community; we need to get all congregations involved maybe by assigning tasks to Board members; the awards committee needs extra people on it to avoid conflicts of interest
- Bob D – we might consider making the number of categories smaller
- Lavona G – comments from attendees say we are known for elevating UU work in the area
- Pablo D – we should look for a fundraiser that boosts the income; we need to be able to schedule this event with our other fundraising events

Discussion of fund raising ideas continue. David S volunteered to work on funding/development work.

Advocacy

Lavona Grow reported on work the Advocacy Corps has done recently, continuing to meet with congressional staff and delivering constituent letters. She pointed out what's working and what's not. She referred people to her report for details. Our model for organizing the Advocacy Corps is working. We are recognized in many offices and now known for showing up and delivering UU constituent letters. We are piloting with a church in Iowa the "Write Here, Write Now" (WHWN) monthly letter-writing campaign. We have had more than 100 downloads nationwide of the WHWN kit. The big task is managing, documenting and organizing for Hill delivery incoming letters and for feedback to the congregations, for the State Action Networks (SAN) and for our own tracking. It is also challenging to manage multiple issues at one time both volunteers and Advocacy Corps Day logistic details.

Lavona said this is not sustainable. We need to professionalize our volunteer efforts. Martha Ades reported that we are working to collect the data we need to support national advocacy. We are looking for data solutions

that are affordable. Other faith communities doing advocacy work have paid staff and can afford systems like CapWiz which costs about \$7,000 per year. Infrastructure needs for both data and communications will need to be addressed by the Board. Martha Neuman worked with Oxfam America and can help with data issues. Peter Bishop, a self-described computer jack-of-all-trades, will help with data too. Both have volunteered to help with data system needs.

David Strauss suggested we review how the issue committees should and do interface with the Advocacy Corps. Bob pointed out we have an organization chart that might be a good place to start the discussion. Gary Magnuson encourages the Advocacy team to build relationships with committee staffs as well as with members of Congress.

Going National

We expect to do a face-to-face Board meeting in January to discuss going national. We need to get more visibility with the UUA, SANs, etc. This discussion will be tabled for now.

The Governance Committee needs volunteers. It should be described as a short-term task force. We have already had one congregation in Colorado ask about how to join UUSJ. Each Board member should be thinking of who you know or have in your congregation that can help with this.

Fund Raising

Pablo DeJesús explained the current funding activities and how they have been fairly successful. The CFC kickoff email was new but so we don't have prior success metrics for this activity. Our e-News open rate is 23.8%, on the higher side of standard practices. For Giving Tuesday, another new campaign, the open rate was a more committed 35%. This activity was only a pilot with a simple message. All these and the end-of-year appeal will be compared to prior year's results. Bob says this is a good start. Lavona Grow asked if we had goals set for these campaigns. The answer is no – the Thanksgiving holiday greetings were soft asks and to test to see if the never-given group would respond. Bob Denniston pointed out that we do need a development plan and we are trying to get both membership and development team together to build a plan.

Next Meeting should be a limited agenda but face-to-face. Bob will send out a Doodle poll. Pablo reminded new Board members he would like to meet with them.

Next Board meetings:

- January, TBD
- March 24, Maryland
- June 2, Virginia

Meeting adjourned, 3:15pm

Submitted by Martha Ades, Board Secretary

POST MEETING NOTE: After the initial request, we learned that the Colorado congregation asked about joining UUSJ because they thought we were local to them.

Attachments: Fundraising Report

Our eNews has an annualized averag open rate of 23.8%

Campaign:	Engagement:				Conversions:							Donations		Notes:		
	Go	number	open rate	opens	click-through rate	distinct email click-throughs	un-subscribe	conver. rate	total conver.	donation conver.	supporter (sign up) conver.	recurring donation conver.	supporter event conver.	donation	amount	Notes
#GivingTuesday (#GT)	Date	sent			rate	throughs		rate	conver.	conver.	conver.	conver.	conver.	donation	amount	Notes
Never Made a Donation	11/26	1,071	18.4%	197	80.0%	9	0	0.1%	1	0	1	NA	NA	0	\$0.00	A,B
Lapsed Member	11/26	119	19.3%	23	0.8%	1	0	0.0%	0	0	0	NA	NA	0	\$0.00	A,B
Members - \$0-\$199/yr	11/26	146	32.9%	48	2.7%	4	0	4.1%	6	3	3	NA	NA	3	\$300	A,B
Large donors - \$200+	11/26	67	37.3%	25	4.5%	3	0	3.0%	2	1	1	NA	NA	1	\$100	A,B
1,403 : Total														Sub-Total:	\$400	
Note A: On #GT (11/28), three (3) web-page donations came in for a total of \$235. We can't specifically attribute them through the eBlast metrics above. At least one of these was from a person citing messaging from the "Never Made a Donation" email.														3	\$235	fig.for (A)
Note B: Some donations came in close to #GT, again we can't track these through eBlast metrics either. Again, we can't specifically attribute them through the eBlast metrics above, but suspect they are responding to the #GT Prompt.														1	\$200	fig.for (B)
														Sub-Total:	\$435	
														Grand Total:	\$835	

Thanksgiving	Go	number	open rate	opens	click-through rate	distinct email click-throughs	un-subscribe	conver. rate	total conver.	donation conver.	supporter (sign up) conver.	recurring donation conver.	supporter event conver.	donation	amount	Notes
Board	11/22	32	50.00%	16	9.40%	3	0	18.8%	6	0	3	0	3	0	0	
Non-Board	11/22	1,416	22.70%	322	0.60%	9	4	0.50%	7	2	4	1	0	3	\$270	c
1448 : Total														Grand Total:	\$270	

Note C: Of the three (3) donations collected, one (1) is a \$10 monthly donation, a sustaining member. We have annualized the sum here, as \$120 expected over the course of 12 months till Nov 2018