

DRAFT – UUSJ BOARD MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 9, 2019

Mount Vernon Unitarian Church

Members Present

Martha Ades, at large, Secretary
Peter Bishop, member, Washington Ethical Soc.
Rev. Bob Blinn, member, UU Church of Arlington
Bob Denniston, at large, Board Chair
Linda Doyle, member, Mt. Vernon U
Terry Grogan, alternate, Reston UU
Lavona Grow, at large, Arlington UU
John Gubbings, member, Cedar Lane UU
Osk Huneycutt, alternate, Bull Run UU
Ed Kringer, member, Accotink UU
Jack Lebowitz, member, River Road UU
Gary Magnuson, Frederick UU
Bob McCarthy, member, UU Congr of Fairfax
Mike McCord, at large, Treasurer
Betsy Osterman, alternate UU Congr of Columbia
Rev. Karen Scrivo, member, Goodloe Memorial UU
Congr
David Strauss, alternate, Rockville UU

Members Absent

Al Carlson, member, Reston UU
Carmelita Carter-Sykes, alternate, Paint Branch UU
Bill Cranmer, alternate, Frederick UU
Jane D'Ambrogi, alternate, Towson UU
Pat Karlsen, at large, Cedar Lane UU
Jana Kirkman, alternate, River Road UU
Marti MacKenzie, member, Towson UU
Roger McIntire, member, UU Congr of Columbia
Martha Neuman, alternate, All Souls Church, U
Rachel Perry, member, Davies Memorial
Kalman Rupp, member, UU Congr of Rockville
Armele Vilceus, member, All Souls Church, U
Larry Underwood, member, Bull Run UU

Staff Present

Pablo DeJesús, Executive Director

Guests Present

Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, Webmaster, Mt. Vernon U
Sean McCarthy, UU Congregation of Rockville
Anna Rhee, consultant
Marsha White, Accotink UU

Volunteers Stepping Forward: Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson – bylaws changes for going national; Sean McCarthy – editing work on grant proposal; Ed Kringer – Awards team (with Terrie Barr and Ed Kringer); Larry Underwood – Virginia fundraiser; Bob McCarthy – Virginia fundraiser; Sean McCarthy – nominating; Marti Mackenzie – nominating; Bob Blinn – UU Climate Just transition Movement review

The meeting was called to order at 2:01pm by Bob Denniston. Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson welcomed all to Mount Vernon and provided an opening reading. The mission/vision/covenant was passed around and read out loud by individual attendees. Peter Bishop *moved to accept the minutes from the last board meeting*; Ed Kringer seconded. Motion approved.

Bob Denniston announced that we need several people to be on the nominating committee to find people for several positions on the Board. David Strauss will be leaving his current congregation but would like to remain as an At Large member of the Board.

Awards Gala – Martha Ades presented the tasks necessary to announce the award topics, encourage congregations to nominate awardees, review nominations and select awardees. Lavona Grow says Terrie Barr has agreed to participate on the awards review team.

Admin Assistant Position – Pablo DeJesus explained where we are in the interview process and that we are down to three candidates. He is hopeful we will have someone by May. There was a discussion about what we are offering – 18-20 hours for an 11 month contract position. Sean McCarthy believes we should hire a real employee and pay social security tax for them.

Financial Statements - The Treasurer's Financial Report was presented by Treasurer Mike McCord. The budgeting has been pretty good. Income is up based on the success of the Dec 2nd fundraising event and expenses are down based on not having an admin assistant to pay. It seems the year will end with a positive net income. Also the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) money is arriving earlier than it has in past years. Mike McCord explained that the congregation donation report should be ready by the end of March.

Ideas were floated to assist with collecting the give-or-get from each congregation:

- Have a split the plate with a testimonial
- Provide talking points to Board members
- Have commentaries to promote familiarity and awareness
- Have a session headed by Pablo
- Meet with church Board and lay Social Justice leaders

Advocacy Report – Lavona Grow passed out the “walk sheet” from the February 2nd-year anniversary Advocacy Corps Day as an example. The group of volunteers is growing. In February there were 10 teams, appointments in 17 offices and we went out on four different issues. Lavona announced that Anna Rhee, UUSJ advocacy consultant, will be leaving UUSJ. Anna provided a report of the growth of our advocacy efforts during her three years with us with some suggestions for looking ahead. (see attached). She explained how we are strategic in which offices we target and how we are unique as a volunteer faith-based group with little staff doing advocacy work. Anna thinks conferences like the one we co-hosted with Unitarian Universalist for a Just Economic Community (UUJEC) was great for bringing people to DC who are passionate about a topic.

There will be a deep dive zoom call for Board members to get Anna's further insights into our activities. Some additional people will be invited to participate.

Gary Magnuson asked what other help we can give without attending Advocacy Days. Lavona Grow has a timeline of all the support functions that need to be done and can use help accomplishing those tasks. Suggestions included having volunteers adopt a state or district and conduct outreach. Ed Kringer says it is important for us to be a national organization so we can say we representing congregants in non-DMV

states. Jack Lebowitz asked if we can consider non-paid internships. That is a challenge without a permanent office space and designated leader oversight.

Quote from a staffer in Senator Cory Booker's office:

"Be sure to come back even when there is no bill; we want to hear about your ideas."

Grants/Fundraising – Lavona Grow is writing an interim report needed for the current UU Funding Program (UJFP) grant application, a required component of the new grant submission. The application for the new grant from UJFP is due March 15. She was advised by UJFP that this grant should include a matching funds request since we are in continuation funding status - this is the third grant for generally similar scope of work. It will include a new training to integrate "storytelling" -- how to tell stories as part of our letter-writing campaign, talking with legislators or writing letters to the editor.

Suggestions for fundraising – raising dues or raising number of congregations, have funder report on our good work, bring in strategic plan consultant for going national which includes reviewing bylaws; hiring person to do editing. We need to define any fundraising events for a specific reason. Gary Magnuson said one of the big selling points for the Dec 2 tickets was that the amount would go toward UUSJ advocacy work. Sean McCarthy pointed out that we can send IRA contributions directly to our charity to reduce taxable income.

Proposed Budget – Mike McCord presented a DRAFT 2019-2020 budget for discussion. He pointed out that our budget has grown from \$40k to \$60K in 4 years. Based on the results of our grant request and other new information Mike will prepare a final 2019-2020 budget for Board consideration and vote at the June 15 Board meeting. The get-or-give is not included in the proposed budget. Gary Magnuson suggests we break out actual advocacy work and costs in the budget. Mike would like to be able to tell a story with our budget. Sean McCarthy pointed out we need to look at the 20% "safe harbor" clause of how we use our funds to ensure we are in compliance with the 501(c)3 rules.

Development Committee – The committee recommends a mirror image of the Dec 2 fundraiser to be held in Virginia. Larry Underwood is working with someone on Sen. Kaine's staff to see if we can schedule him. Alternates were discussed if Sen. Kaine is not available. Sean McCarthy *moved to move forward with an early June fundraiser*. Peter Bishop seconded. Approved unanimously.

Strategic Planning Process (section missing)-- Bob presented a brief overview of the proposed strategic planning process which would incorporate our plans to "go national" as approved by the Board at the February 2017 meeting. He noted that our most recent plan was adopted in 2013 and a new plan is long overdue especially because of the board vote to "go national." A draft proposal to support UUSJ's strategic planning process from Evan Junker was handed out. The Board was supportive of the proposal and it was decided that the the Core Group should review the proposal further and involve others in the discussion on moving forward. Gary Magnuson offered to review the proposal. Gary has experience in strategic planning. Pablo spoke in favor of moving forward with the strategic planning process.

Nominating Committee – Volunteers on this committee need to be elected. Martha Ades *moved that we elect Sean McCarthy and Marti Mackenzie to be on the nominating committee*. Ed Kringer seconded. Approved unanimously.

Poor People's Campaign – John Gubbings presented the request for us to be involved in the ongoing Poor People's campaign involving work in June 2019 in DC and another bus tour in June 2020 for the

People's Congress. Sean McCarthy *moved that UUSJ provide general support as resources allow for the PPC campaign.* John Gubbings seconded. Approved unanimously.

UU Climate Just Transition Movement – UUSJ has been asked to become a partner and to co-sponsor the Green Sanctuary endorsed proposal to move to 100% renewable energy. The proposal was presented by Jack Lebowitz who said it is really big and has many steps with too much work. He did not recommend UUSJ's involvement. Volunteers were asked to consider the request further before the Board further considers it. Rev. Bob Blinn said he'd review the proposal and see if he could find out more details about this.(a one page summary submitted by Doris Marlin, Green Sanctuary Board member, was distributed)

Bob Denniston read a closing reading. Meeting was adjourned at 5:20pm.

Submitted by Martha Ades, Secretary