

## UUSJ Executive Committee Meeting – March 10, 2021

Participating: Bob Denniston, John Peterson, Charlotte Jones-Carroll, John Gubbings, Serena Lowe, Pablo De Jesus, and for Governance discussion Sean McCarthy and Emily Koechlin.

### 1. Updates:

- Widening the Circle of Concern: Pablo has six potential dates/times from Paula Cole Jones for the two sessions we hope to do with her, some in the daytime, some in the evening. He hopes to get a doodle poll out this week to the Board to find the best time.
- Laptop: Not yet purchased.
- UUSJ Grant Work Plan: The team has met once, but a lot of clarification is needed still. Environment Action Team (EAT) is narrowing down the topic(s) to be used to engage non-UU partners. David Shilton prepared an analysis of three likely bills that have potential for advocacy work and suggested the Agriculture Bill as being the best bet. EAT will check with the office of Cory Booker, sponsor of that bill before deciding. It seems challenging to identify the non-UU partners, and one option may be to hire a contractor who does have the contacts with these organizations. Bob urged Pablo to give priority to moving this Work Plan along. Charlotte sought clarification of the extent to which Anna Hooker's consultant costs could be covered by the grant, beyond just the specific environmental work, as Charlotte and Pablo had originally thought, in putting together this year's budget. Serena had a different view, that only Anna's work relevant to the narrow grant focus would be charged to the grant. This option would mean there is no source of funding beyond UUSJ's own limited funds to pay for Anna's other work.

### 2. Membership Matters:

- John Peterson wants to explore how UUSJ relates to CUUSAN, given the understanding that UUSJ would consult with them whenever doing fundraising in their states. Having a campaign to get other congregations to join may raise the need for an amendment to the current agreement. Pablo and Bob will talk with John P separately to develop a plan.
- Expectations for a possible Social Justice Chair Conference have to be clarified so John can get a commitment from a potential leader who has been identified. Martha Ades and Pablo are to be consulted on this.
- Fees for educational offerings: an idea for an anti-racism educational event or program (next FY) for all UUSJ members is being developed as something UUSJ should charge a fee for organizing. Since Widening the Circle and 8<sup>th</sup> Principle are related discussions going on in various congregations, along with a program (Living the Pledge) led by the Racial Justice committee at Accotink UU, UUSJ needs to be careful to complement, not conflict with these. One option, Serena suggested, is to look at different models for addressing racism. Regarding fees, the EC liked John P's suggestion to have a "whatever you can pay" fee, with suggested levels.

3. Budget: Charlotte noted that she came to the conclusion that another revision for this FY's budget was needed (via motion at March Board) to reflect the positive and negative fluctuations in both income and expenses, to make clear what our position might be leading into next FY, for which a separate proposal will be presented, for information, at 3/20 board.

4. Governance Matters: Sean McCarthy and Emily Koechlin, of the Governance committee (of which Charlotte is also a part) walked the EC through the FAQs related to the transition from the current board to the new board. Bob D had developed most of the questions, and these were revised/edited by the Governance team. The objective is to make very clear to the board members – at the March meeting – that everyone’s board membership ends at the June annual meeting, but that some board members may be asked (or could propose, when the Nominating committee consults the board) to continue. The charge made last October to the Nominating Committee was to nominate eleven new board members representing a more diverse (geographic, gender, racial) population than we have now, around half of which are likely to be drawn from existing board (important for institutional memory) and around half completely new. The initial slate will have people who will serve for one year, two years or three years, to develop terms which eventually allow for refreshing the one-third of the board annually without complete turnover. There is an option for someone to self-nominate, when this is supported by 10% of UUSJ membership. All this will be shared with the board at the March 20 meeting.

Separately, the Governance team researched the correct answer to “who can approve staff bonuses,” an issue which came up at the December Board, and concluded that the Board is the appropriate approval level for a bonus for the Executive Director, and the Executive Director is the point of decision for bonuses for staff other than himself, up to 5% of a budget line item, and with specific approvals (Treasurer, Chair Board) per policy guidelines beyond that.

5. Gala: Bob urged us to think whether it would be possible to hold an awards gala in September or October of 2021. So far, few volunteers have stepped up, and the timeline for soliciting nominations for awards, after defining criteria, means starting now. Pablo noted how important this is to raise the profile of UUSJ. Still, the complete overhaul of the board happening in June/July could either provide some unexpected volunteers or distract from planning the event. Bob will get back after the Development Committee meeting this week.

6. PARC status: Serena reported that the Policy Advisory and Review Committee for our advocacy work the rest of this year (Sean, Tanner, Serena) has been formed. Much of the proposed implementation was laid out by Pablo already, and the feedback from the membership survey for new issues areas still has to be digested (one comment – many people made suggestions for issue priorities that are outside of those larger areas in the original survey). PARC will make general suggestions for rest of the calendar year, but the new Board will need to enact these (or not). Perhaps at least confirming with Pablo what the issues to be basis for advocacy over the summer would make sense, as the new board gets itself organized. The current model(s) being tried out over the past six months are important to retain – using various vehicles (letters, alerts, zoom meetings) – as proven effective ways to do our advocacy work, Serena said.

7. Other: Pablo had just been on a CUUSAN regular call and expressed some concern that UUA (Susan Leslie) and CUUSAN are talking about developing grassroots support for federal policies, particularly in democracy and economic justice areas. We’ll need to monitor to maintain and expand our niche.

Charlotte Jones Carroll, Secretary