

November Meeting Minutes:

Unity Church Unitarian: Meeting of the Board of Trustees November 9 , 2019

The meeting took place at Unity Church-Unitarian, 733 Portland Ave, St. Paul, MN.

Board of Trustees (BOT) members present: Jennifer Tong (chair), Jill van Koolwijk (secretary), Nila Gouldin, Ruth Kirkland, Clover Earl, Jackie Smith, Justin Cummins

Executive Team (ET) members present: Rob Eller-Isaacs, Janne Eller-Isaacs, Lisa Friedman, Barbara Hubbard, KP Hong

Guests: Lewis Campbell, Alex Askew

Jennifer Tong called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

An opening reading was offered by Justin Cummins.

The journaling prompt was: "What helps you move toward creative discomfort?"

Monitoring Reports – ET report

Policy II.E. Financial Condition:

Clover Earl moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy II E. The Financial Condition here refers specifically to the September financial reports. The motion passed unanimously.

(Discussion: We have projected a \$41,000 shortfall for yearend. In part, this is due to insufficient pledges and no fundraiser this fall. Also, a hard winter resulted in loss of programming income. But we saved \$30,000 in salaries, because of no comptroller and no Hallman intern. A drawdown of \$20,000 from endowment income is included in the projections. The shortfall will fold into larger budget for next year.

The bulk of the Currier bequest is scheduled to come in any day now. It is included in the new Operating Budget. The Currier bequest will be spent on our multicultural initiatives, such as Team Dynamics, K.P.'s salary and music/arts programming. Team Dynamics currently is negotiating a new contract with Unity. The monies are already allocated in the new budget.

The new budget for 2020 is set at \$1,350, 000. The current pledges are not at this level yet. If we are \$25,000 short in pledges by Feb 1, Unity will adjust the budget down to \$1,325, 000. In the meantime, canvassers are deployed to talk personally to about 100 congregational households who have not pledged yet.)

Policy II.H. Communication and Counsel to the Board:

Justin Cummins moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy II H (Communication and Counsel to the Board). The motion passed unanimously.

(Discussion: The IDI is used as a measuring tool with different ministry groups. The Board will also take the IDI soon and Team Dynamics will bring attention to the metrics and the monitoring work of the Board.)

Policy II.B. Staff Changes:

Jill van Koolwijk moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy II B (Staff Changes). The motion passed unanimously.

Policy I.B. Internal Report - Membership:

Justin Cummins moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy I B (Membership). The motion passed unanimously.

Subcommittee Reports:

Transition (Jackie Smith)

The Celebration Team is meeting and planning of the Celebration at Harriet Island is underway. Current board members and past board members will be calling congregational members to solicit nominees for the Ministerial Search Team. The Transition team is currently working out how we reach out to everyone and avoid competition among congregants. On Sunday, April 26, the congregation will be voting on Rob and Janne's Emeritus Status.

Board capacity (Ruth Kirkland)

An email came in with a concern about why a board member this year AND last year was nominated for a second term. John Steiner-Manning responded in writing and explained what the process was that the Board Capacity Subteam had undergone and the reasoning behind it. The discussion included the intent to invite the congregation more fully into the process in the future. Ruth Kirkland followed up with a phone call. This questioner hinted that she might speak openly at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation to lobby against this practice to become a habit.

Evaluation (Clover Earl)

A summary report will be generated through BoardEffect of the Board self-evaluation. A point of concern is the contact and communication with our moral owners in the wider community beyond Unity. Perhaps the ET can have a conversation with the BOT at the board retreat about board effectiveness and performance in this area.

Finance (Jennifer Tong)

The Financial Subteam is working on the Investment Policy starting with a statement of belief. The other upcoming topics will be the Gift Acceptance Policy and the Use of Assets.

Break

Policy IV. C. ET Performance Evaluation:

(The link below takes you to the data of the ET Performance Evaluation.)

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1UhH6m1OfoxE-kS8s7Xs5TV3K11CDX2cFk0e-w9JRxeE/edit?ts=5dc6d956#responses>

Justin Cummins presented the results of the ET performance evaluation. He expressed a concern how the multicultural end will be carried through the interim period and to the new senior minister. Janne responded that every worship service embraces voices of color and underrepresented communities. Barbara added that the art team is also very much on board with expanding our gallery displays with multicultural art and artists.

We need to get more comfortable with discomfort. The IDI will show if we are shifting as a congregation. The Ends 1, 4 and 7 concerning multiculturalism came out as falling short of our requirements. Reasonable steps in our ministries are being taken to move forward on these Ends.

Board Discussion: Anti-racism monitoring (KP Hong)

Team Dynamics suggests that we have to monitor not just the performance (outcome and impact), but also the knowledge base (what we are learning) around anti-racism. Policy J is the most concrete way for the Board of measuring our progress towards multiculturalism. Policy J looks at who we do business with in the community, who we give our offering to and how we hire and compensate staff. We understand that Policy J has not yet been fully leveraged by the Board.

Anti-racism work is hard to measure. We are battling with perfectionism at Unity. There are best practices that we know and others that we don't know yet. A conversation with the congregation will be upcoming.

Approval of October 2019 Meeting Minutes:

Justin Cummins moved to accept the October 5, 2019 Meeting Minutes (with amendments). The motion passed unanimously.

Our December Meeting will be on Wednesday, December 11, 2019.
The Board Retreat will be Friday and Saturday, January 3 and 4, 2020.

Meeting evaluation

Jackie Smith proposed that we take an End and think of a story or experience that connects to this End. We shared with a partner.

Justin Cummins offered a closing reading.

Jennifer Tong adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Jill van Koolwijk, secretary.