

Unity Church Unitarian: Meeting of the Board of Trustees February 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), John Steiner-Manning, Nila Gouldin, Ruth Kirkland, Clover Earl, Jackie Smith, Justin Cummins, Nancy Evert

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

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

An opening reading was offered by Clover Earl.

A journaling prompt was offered by Kathryn Jay:

- What do you have gratitude for at Unity?

- Use the Unity Ends/Values/Mission to describe what your role and mission is in the coming year.

Board Training on Financial Statements - Ruth Kirkland

Understanding Financial Statements and how our church works.

(Jennifer and Barbara are great resources.)

Three monthly reports that we see:

Report 1- Key Financial Indicators

Dashboard report- Accrual based system. What is coming in and going out over a period of time.

Includes:

- Cash on hand
- Assets and liabilities
- Ratio of these
- Updates on investments
- YTD actual vs budget variance = how far over or under we are on our actual budget (at one specific point in time)

Barbara's considers monthly projections based on many factors - what has already been paid, what are considerations at specific points in time, etc.

Report 2- Summary Statement of Activity

How are we doing at this point in the year compared to our budgeting?

Money coming in and going out.

Report 3- Balance Sheet Summary

What are our assets and liabilities now compared to the end/beginning of a previous year?

Monitoring Reports – ET report

[Policy II H. Communication and Counsel to the Board:](#)

Nancy Evert moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy II E. The motion passed unanimously.

Team Dynamics has begun the work of reviewing and analyzing church documents and has also started doing some interviewing of individuals. A group is being formed, with KP representing the Executive Team. The group will also include a lay person and two people from Team Dynamics. They will be mapping various church groups for Team Dynamics to meet with, and the Board will be included on that list. The Executive Team proposed that Team Dynamics could meet with the Board at our March meeting.

(Discussion: What does “engaging with the Board” mean in regards to Team Dynamics? So far, Team Dynamics has been listening to multicultural conversations, reviewing documents and doing one-on-one trainings with ET. Will begin mapping a plan for additional meetings throughout the community. ET sees this approach as methodical, appropriate, and inclusive of considerable depth.)

Policy I B. Internal Report - Membership:

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

(Discussion: Updates include looking at Unity demographics:

8th largest church by voting

4th largest RE enrollment

4th largest in attendance

4th largest by pledging numbers

4th largest of expenditures)

Policy II.D+E. Financial Condition:

Justin Cummins and John Steiner-Manning moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy II E and policy II E.

The preliminary December financials were not available at the time the February Board book was created, so without the financial reports the monitoring reports were deemed incomplete and the motion did not pass.

Consent Agenda

Ruth Kirkland moved to accept the Consent Agenda (January Meeting Minutes, Unity Church Engagement Letter, ARLT Annual Report 2018, Policy II B Staff Changes). The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion on Future Decisions: Adding KP to the Executive Team

Adding KP to the ET brought up several issues:

- The ET envisions that KP will prioritize our work with the Ends statements and focus on implementing the multicultural aspects of the Ends.
- If KP is on the ET, who will supervise KP in terms of his work as RE Director?
- The representation of RE on the board is needed, but would it require adding administrative time to help KP to develop this?
- If there are 5 ET members, how will this impact our ability to engage new ministers? Will they be concerned that too much executive leadership is problematic?
- It will be 30 months before we have a settled minister, so having three experienced ET members could be beneficial.
- If the ET reports to the BOT, and the BOT creates the ET, why is this shift initiated by the ET?

Jennifer Tong invited comments and questions for further consideration. (Questions will be collected by John Steiner-Manning.)

Prophetic Leadership – Subcommittee Reports

Evaluation Team Report: The ARLT was developed in response to the large task of developing and monitoring the anti-racism charge of the board and how to measure progress toward its vision.

Given the new Ends statements and the strategy and implementation work from Team Dynamics, bringing these tasks back to BOT would be appropriate at this time.

Ruth Kirkland moved to accept the motion to bring the anti-racism measurement work of the church back to the Board of Trustees. The motion passed unanimously.

(Discussion: Was it always a challenge to engage with the Board? The ARLT could not engage the Board in decision making and action. Movement and visibility would come by moving the role back to the Board. The ARLT has increasing confidence in the BOT to be able to take this topic on more effectively through changes in governing policies and new Ends statements.

The role of ARLT was to challenge the church to move toward an antiracist stance. The ARLT was there to impact staffing. We have moved significantly as the church begins to own that work, in some ways this is an act of faith to release this role back to the Board. By “taking it back” there needs to be very conscious attention by the Board to the process, monitoring and leadership around the Ends.

How do we communicate this change to the congregation?

That is the role of the Board. Unity article, work with Beloved Community team.

The Executive Team agreed to plan an event to celebrate the work the ARLT has done over the years.

Future Focus: The Transient vs the Permanent

Knowing what is permanent in the community is critical as we approach change. Knowing this in our own lives is important as well.

Clover Earl offered a closing reading.

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

Respectfully submitted by Jill van Koolwijk, secretary.