

Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

October 17, 2017

Attendees: Board of Trustees (Warren Wright, Chair; Chad Ohlandt, Paula Bendl Smith, Janice Morris, Andrea Ryon, Al Himes, Emily Goodin, Hieu Nguyen, Art Stevens); Hannah Connolly (Secretary), Peter Vitaliano (Treasurer), Aaron McEmrys (Senior Minister), Tamara Srader (CAO), Christin Green (Intern Minister).

Open, Call to Order, Chalice Lighting, and Check-in

Board Chair Warren Wright called the meeting to order at 7:39PM. Board Members checked in.

Intern Minister Christin Green read [“Ministry Is All That We Do”](#) by Gordon B. McKeeman for the Chalice Lighting.

Following up on the blog post, [“Men, Wake Up,”](#) that he recently wrote on the Board Chair blog, Warren asked that the men at the meeting take a step back in the conversation and let the women in the group speak more often and first.

Communication Team Report (ATTACHMENT 1)

The Communications Team (Emily Goodin, Janice Morris, and Heiu Nguyen) reviewed a draft Strategic Communications Framework to outline objectives, strategies, and tactics to increase Board engagement among the Congregation. The draft framework described alternative communication modes and a tentative schedule for communication activities. The Board plans on implementing Phase One this church year.

January “Leadership” Meeting (Warren)

The Board discussed the history of the annual January “leadership” meeting. Previously, the Board ran the January meeting as a “state of the church” type-event. The Board took a step back and Bill Fogarty and Allen Keiswetter have been leading it for a few years. For the January 2018 meeting, the Board would like to facilitate the meeting, while also recognizing the amount of work that staff also contributes to the event. The Board discussed potential topics, themes, structure, and timing of the event. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 27, 2018.

Consent Agenda

[Minutes of 19 September 2017 Board Meeting](#)

Treasurer’s Report (ATTACHMENT 2)

Peter Vitaliano reviewed the report. For the first quarter of the year, UUCA exceeded our revenue goals, and had lower expenses. The reason for the decrease in expenses is in large part due to CAO Tamara Srader’s continued efforts. The increase in revenue is mostly due

to delayed collections from pledges from last church year. The report also highlighted areas where financial Executive Limitations are currently or imminently out of compliance. The Board discussed the need for clarity regarding the Share the Plate process and disbursement. No Share the Plate funds have been disbursed from this church year. Next month will focus on the consolidated financials for FY16-17.

Emily Goodin moved to accept the consent agenda. Janice Morris seconded. PASSED.

Budgeting Process Discussion (ATTACHMENT 3)

Al Himes presented a draft of a budget process for the FY18-19 budget. The Board discussed how the proposed process would impact planned meetings, the stewardship process, and staff resources. The Board also discussed whether the Board determining the process needs to be formalized as an Executive Limitation and how to have a productive discussion around the budget, as it can be complicated and challenging. The Board considered the possibility of drafting multiple budget scenarios to inform congregants about the interaction of the stewardship campaign, pledges, and the budget. Peter Vitaliano highlighted that there is a potential upcoming Capital Campaign to consider as the church continues this conversation. The Board also discussed the potential of Tamara and Peter presenting a version of what was briefed to the Board in August as an informational session about some of the strategic budget considerations, or having the draft January 2018 budget be a 3% increase across the board. The Board tabled the budget process decision and would continue working on a draft process.

Share the Plate

Paula Bendl Smith, representing the Policy Committee, presented an existing bylaw that requires the establishment of a Benevolent Team who participates in how funds are disbursed, consistent with the benevolence policy set by the board, to congregants or other in the community. The Board discussed whether and/or how this bylaw relates to Share the Plate process and program or whether this relates to an established designated fund to assist congregants and community members in need.

The Board then discussed the current status of the Social Justice Partnership Team's progress and the Share the Plate program. Tamara described the composition and work of the Social Justice Partnership Team, who are working toward stronger partnerships in the community, to include holding information sessions and clearly communicating the model. The Board Communications Team may also participate with the Social Justice Partnership Team to assist.

Emerging Opportunities (ATTACHMENT 4)

Executive Limitations: Finance and Endowment: To be reviewed in November due to time constraints/overrun at October meeting.

Adjourn Regular Meeting adjourned at 9:16PM.

Executive Session began at 9:25PM and adjourned at 10:06PM.

UUCA Board Strategic Communications Framework

Situation:

- The Board has an opportunity to better engage the congregation.
- Some congregants have expressed the desire for the Board to be more visible and transparent in what it does (policy-based governance, activities, decisions, etc.).
- There's an opportunity to educate congregants about what the Board does and doesn't do as well as can and can't do.

Objectives:

- Increase the Board's engagement with and visibility among the congregation.
- Educate congregation on what the Board does.
- Implement Linkage activity.

Strategies:

- Implement tactics that position Board members more visibly with congregation.
- Equip Board members with messaging and other information to ensure consistency in how they talk about the Board's structure and activities.
- Engage congregation in Linkage activity.

Tactics:

Note: When possible, informational and engagement tactics should discuss the same topic and deliver consistent message. The content of the bi-weekly content is led by one Board member.

Phase 1 (October 2017 through June 2018):

- Moving Board pictures/headshots to more visible location
- Board participation in one activity/training to ensure consistent message delivery
 - Talking Points
 - FAQ
- Board-drafted communication to congregation – bi-weekly but rotating between nine board members. Delivering information about the Board, its activities, and its members (Note: With written communication, accompany Board member's headshot with their bylines.)
 - Insert in the weekly Order of Service (~400-500 words)
 - Article in Connections (~200 words)
 - UUCA Facebook post (~450 characters)
 - Testimonial-style video (60 seconds) (optional)
- Board direct engagement with congregation – once a month, but rotating between board members.
 - Time during service to update congregation on board activities (once a month before or after the Board meeting)
 - Table in Fellowship Hall between/after services (middle of whatever service you speak at)

- Opportunities for congregation to communicate with the Board (beyond email)
 - Comment box
 - Social media
- Linkage activity/activities – maybe toward End 1 (Possibilities: Wondering Out Loud, Board Town Hall, Suggestion Box, etc.)

Phase 2 (June 2018 and on) Activities to add on as appropriate and able:

- Visiting specific groups:
 - RE community
 - Covenant groups, young adults, etc.
- Board town hall (semi-annual or annual)
- Bulletin board of Board updates in high-traffic area
- Participation in welcome desk

Phase 1 Approximate Time Commitment Per Board Member on Communications Activities through June 2018:

- Message consistency delivery activity (existing Board meeting, 1 hour materials review)
- Two instances of leading Board Communication content (4-8 hours)
- One monthly engagement day (4 hours)
- Congregation engagement with Board (TBD)
- Linkage activity (TBD)

Phase 1 Editorial Calendar for Board Communications Content:

Note: Connect content of the week with the pre-determined theme for the month. When possible, bring in one of the three ends into content:

- People feel they belong and are cared for.
- People of all ages experience a vital faith community and have opportunities for personal and spiritual growth.
- The Church is a force for service, social justice, and environmental justice.

Monthly Themes (UUCA Sunday Service themes):

Courage

- Week of October 23 – Wake Up – men, Caucasians, rich, and others in positions of privilege (Warren)

Abundance

- Week of November 6 – One UUCA (New UUs & Veterans; Young & Old) (Hieu)
- Week of November 20 – Topic TBD (Emily)

Hope

- Week of December 4 – Discernment and search for/hiring of second minister (Janice)

- Week of December 18 – Modified budget process and annual pledging (AI)

Intention

- Week of January 1 – Topic TBD (Chad)
- Week of January 15 – Topic TBD (Paula)

Perseverance

- Week of January 29 – Topic TBD (Art)
- Week of February 12 – Topic TBD (Andrea)

Balance

- Week of February 26 – Topic TBD (Warren)
- Week of March 12 – Topic TBD (Hieu)
- Week of March 26 – Topic TBD (Emily)

Emergence

- Week of April 9 – Topic TBD (Janice)
- Week of April 23 – Topic TBD (AI)

Creativity

- Week of May 7 – Topic TBD (Chad)
- Week of May 21 – Topic TBD (Paula)

Blessing

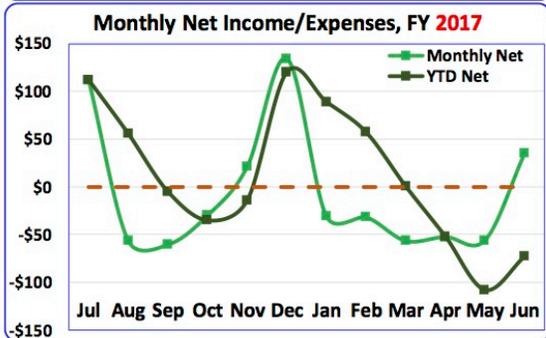
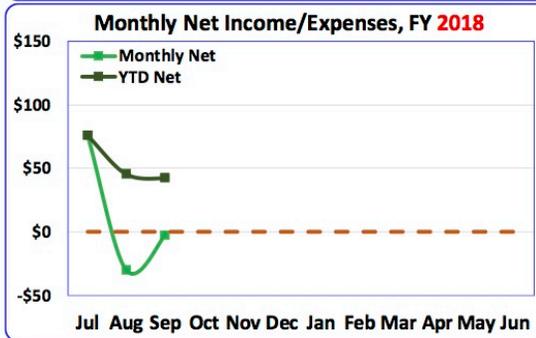
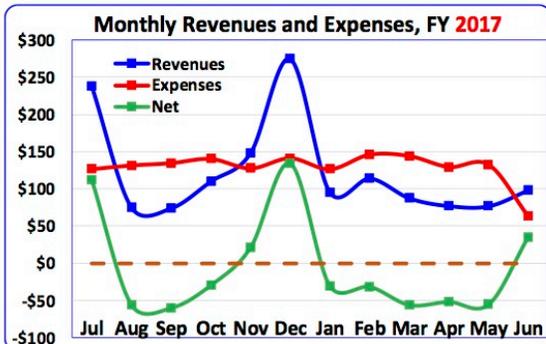
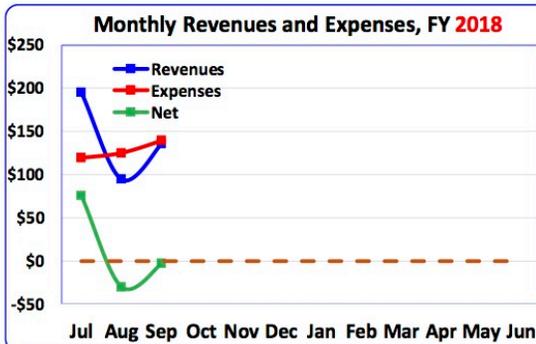
- Week of June 4 – Topic TBD (Art)
- Week of June 18 – Topic TBD (Andrea)

**Report of the Treasurer
 UUCA Board of Trustees
 October 17, 2017**

Fiscal Year 2018 to-Date Operating Results – Highlights for Q1, July-September

- YTD revenues were \$3 K ahead of budget, \$39 K ahead of last year
- YTD expenditures were \$39 K below budget, \$8 K below last year
- YTD net revenues over expenses were \$42 K ahead of budget, \$47 K ahead of last year

UUCA Operating Revenues, Expenses and Net Revenues									
Fiscal Year 2018, with Comparisons									
<i>Thousand Dollars</i>									
	<u>Fiscal Year 2018, Actual</u>			<u>Fiscal Year 2018, Budget</u>			<u>Fiscal Year 2017, Actual</u>		
	Revenues	Expenses	Net	Revenues	Expenses	Net	Revenues	Expenses	Net
Jul	\$195.0	\$119.3	\$75.7	\$142.4	\$142.4	-\$0.1	\$238.2	\$126.2	\$112.0
Aug	\$94.5	\$125.0	-\$30.5	\$142.4	\$142.4	-\$0.1	\$74.8	\$131.2	-\$56.4
Sep	\$136.0	\$139.2	-\$3.2	\$137.8	\$137.8	-\$0.1	\$73.7	\$134.3	-\$60.7
YTD	\$425.5	\$383.5	\$42.0	\$422.5	\$422.7	-\$0.2	\$386.7	\$391.7	-\$5.1



Operating Reserves

The **operating reserves** of the Church consist of:

- A reserve of funds to cover the current assets of designated accounts,
- A general operations reserve, and
- A replacement reserve, which is restricted.

These funds are all invested in several Fidelity mutual funds, which are managed by the Executive in consultation with the Investment Committee.

At the end of September, balances of these funds were as follows:

UUCA Operating Reserves - September 30						
<i>Thousand Dollars</i>						
Designated Accounts	General Operations	Restricted Replacement Reserves	Total Operating Reserves	FY 2018 Expenditure Budget		Months of Reserves
				Annual	Bimonthly	
\$120	\$29	\$47	\$195	\$1,677	\$280	1.4

Executive Limitation 4.6.2 under Board policy requires the Executive to operate with at least two months (1/6 of the annual budget) of liquid operating reserves, unless otherwise approved by the Board. The policy further specifies that, if the operating reserve at the end of the current fiscal year is projected to be less than 2 months of operating expenses, the following year’s budget must be balanced. At the end of September, the operating reserves totaled 1.4 months of the annual budget. The budget for the current fiscal year, approved by the Congregation on June 4, is balanced.

Endowment Fund

The assets of the **Endowment Fund** at the end of September totaled \$868 thousand in liquid assets invested in a dozen different Vanguard mutual funds, which are managed by the Executive in consultation with the Investment Committee. The assets of the Endowment Fund at the end of September represented 52 percent of the Fiscal Year 2017-18 expense budget of \$1,677 thousand. Executive Limitation 4.8.4 under Board policy specifies that the Executive shall not “allow the endowment balance to be less than 100% of the annual operating budget. As an exception, the Executive may plan a balance of not less than 50% to refinance the mortgage in the year 2017.” Accordingly, the Fund was in compliance with Executive Limitation 4.8.4, under the exception clause, as of the end of September.

Long-term Liabilities

The balance of the refinanced, single mortgage was \$3.196 million at the end of September. At the end of September, the Church’s ratio of total liabilities to total assets was 0.43.

Peter Vitaliano, Treasurer, UUCA

FY19 Proposed Budget Process
October 2017 Draft

Purpose:

- Create a higher visibility for the budget process
- Better link the relationship with pledges and our budget goals
- Provide additional time for dialogue during times where an impact can be made

Proposed Timeline / Milestones:

January 2018 – Executive presents revenue-neutral budget to Board

- Following Board meeting, budget made available to congregation
- February 2018 – Annual Stewardship Campaign

March 2018 – Board discussion with executive on budget adjustments with revised revenue estimates

April 2018 – 2 open budget meetings with congregation

May 2018 – Executive presents final FY19 recommended budget to Board

- Following Board meeting, budget made available to congregation

June 2018 – Final budget presented to congregation for approval at Annual Meeting

Emerging Opportunities Report October, 2017

Worship & Music

- **The Through Line** - we have begun integrating the “through line” an original monthly composition to provide a kind of thematic soundtrack for each month. This is something we have wanted to do for over two years. Each week the Through Line shows up in different forms at different times. So far they are being written by Maya Rogers, and Mimi Bernstein may write some as well.
- **Soul Sounds** - This month we began an experiment: Soul Sounds. On Tuesday evenings we are offering different small group style opportunities for people to explore the intersection of spirituality and music. Maya Rogers started us off with Circle Singing, and will be joined by Sophia Moreales offering Sound Healing and Christin Green leading a monthly drum circle.
- **Pick Up Choir** - this new choir has also been launched. An opportunity for a wide range of congregants to sing with little preparation, training or commitment is off to a good start.
- **Gospel Choir** - Starting in November, Director Charles Brown (of Zion Baptist) will be re-joining us periodically to help us build a multiracial, multi religious, multicultural choir. His next time with us will be on November 12.

Faith In Action

- **Share the Plate** - the Partnership Team continue to make slow, steady progress both toward fully operationalizing STP but also the partnership paradigm more broadly. They hope to have their recommendations to me soon, and I hope to announce and implement them the moment they do.
- **VOICE** - the VOICE Electoral Forum last week was powerful. UUCAers made up more than 10% of the total participants (165 offs attended), and were a visible source of leadership.
- **Peace Concert** - on November 18 we will be hosting a special multi faith Peace Concert, featuring Muslim, Jewish and Unitarian Universalist musicians.
- **Allyship** - Our Allyship trainings continue to flourish, with another 20 participants participating in the multi week Wellspring Wednesday version this month. This is a special one because it marks the first time one of our newly trained facilitators is leading a group without our mentor Whitney Parnell! The ability to generate and lead our own programming in-house is crucial to the long term success of this part of our ministry.

Pastoral Care

- **Care Team** - our PC Vision Team is meeting again this week as we tighten our focus on communications, application review and official launch of the program. Our plan is to accept/ solicit applications in the first two weeks of November and officially “Commision” the Care Team on Thanksgiving Sunday.
- **Counseling and Care** - we are seeing a spike in need/requests for pastoral counseling. Because our people are not trained to offer that kind of support, I am doing more than the usual amount of counseling and then moving them to other kinds of lay support once they are out of crisis.

Religious Education

- **Youth** - although attendance is good across the spectrum so far this year I want to lift up our youth program, which is averaging more than 30 teens per week! This represents a huge increase over recent years.

- **Multigenerational Activities** - we continue to offer a wide range of multigenerational activities, but attendance continues to be disappointing for reasons we do not yet understand. Perhaps it is like with UUCA-hosted childcare - people like the idea, but do not actually make use of it themselves. We are committed to Multigenerational Ministry and will continue experimenting and offering programming, but we are a little stumped at the moment.
- **Wellspring Wednesday** - We face a similar challenge here. We know how much the congregation wants adult faith formation programming, but we are beginning to think that perhaps the WW format is the wrong one for UUCA, as attendance relative to staffing/volunteer load is not encouraging. We will tweak the program in the Spring and see if we can find a better balance.

Out of Town

- Rev. Aaron will be out of town from November 1 to November 8.