

## USH Board Meeting – February 13, 2023

Present – Eve Pech, Dana Donovan, Judy Sullivan, Tina Davies, Paul Cipriano, Peter Meny, Jon Covault, Sarah McKenzie

Absent – None

Guests – David Newton, Janice Newton, Stanley Kemmerer, Nancy Kemmerer, Stu Spence, Bev Spence

6:32 – Check ins

6:40 – opening words from Eve - an Architecture Professor at the University of Hartford emailed Karolina about bringing their class over to tour the building sometime in the Spring.

6:41 – Dana read the Board Covenant

6:43 – Update on status of the Minister Search. We have a fifth applicant as of today and we are meeting on Wednesday to discuss the applicants. Eve had also forwarded a UUA email regarding a church finances and salaries training that is happening on the 15<sup>th</sup> (and re-airing on the 21<sup>st</sup>), she will re-send the link.

6:54 – Planning for the Semi-Annual Meeting – Minister Search, Stewardship, and Security Task Force. Also, Karolina has prepared an OOS insert that answers a lot of the questions the Worship Associates had for the Board, will go in the OOS on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Paul will present on the Security Task Force, Dana thought Judy Robbins would be the best person to talk about the Search, and Jon and potentially Carolyn Carlson will present about Stewardship; as well as a statement from Jon regarding the current financial situation. Judy Sullivan will give an update on how the 50/50 Good Neighbor Offering is going. Additionally, information on the upcoming governance vote that will happen at the Annual Meeting; and an update on membership.

74 – Eve has been meeting with Karolina weekly. She feels that the rental pricing is very low, and the system isn't well organized. Eve asked her to come up with a proposal for the Board to review. Eve asked the Caring Network to weigh in on the potential costs for 'life events' for members (weddings, funerals, etc...). Karolina also had a question regarding an upcoming 48-hour rental. Karolina needs some guidance as to how to handle the key turn-over. She would also like to overhaul how we handle these larger rentals in the future.

7:29 – Pamphlet on who to go to in the absence of a minister. It will be circulated via email. If there are no objections we can give Karolina the go-ahead to print it out and insert it into the OOS on Sunday.

7:30 – Security Task Force – how to communicate the info regarding the alarm. Info will not go out in the enews for various reasons, but it will be discussed at the Semi-Annual Meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

7:47 – Council Reports (see attached)

Treasurer's Report – Jon hasn't heard back from the Knox folks regarding the water bill. Audit committee has met, and will start on their task in the near future.

Social Justice Report – Big thank you to everyone involved in the Reproductive Justice service.

Spiritual Life – Services are planned through the end of this church year, WAs are looking forward to hearing about the minister search. We had 15 kids in the RE program this past Sunday (largest # of kids since Covid). Reminder that Annie is our Temporary RE Coordinator, and that terminates at the end of the church year. We need to focus on creating a job description and posting the position in the Spring for the upcoming year.

Administration – Carolyn Carlson will need help in March to man the Stewardship Table during coffee hours.

Community Within – Renewal of First Sunday Under The Stairs has had positive turnout, last Board Under The Stairs had about a dozen people show up. The Caring Network table has been successful also.

Motion to accept the Council Reports made by Peter Meny, seconded by Judy Sullivan

Aye – 8

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

8:07 – Guest Comments – Janice Newton offered to use a larger table for Caring Network and share the space with Stewardship during March

8:12 – The Board took a short break prior to Executive Session

8:20 – The Board went into Executive Session

9:00 – The Board came out of Executive Session, and the meeting was adjourned.

## USH BOARD MEETING AGENDA - 2/13/23 at 6:30pm –Zoom meeting

6:30pm Check in - 15 mins.

6:45pm Opening Words, Eve – 2 mins

6:47pm Board Covenant, Dana - 2 mins.

6:49pm Approval of board January Minutes, Sarah - 2 mins.

6:51pm Status of minister search - 10 minutes.

7:01pm Planning for Semi Annual Meeting - 20 minutes

....Stewardship, Minister Search, Security Task Force...

7:21pm Rental policies, questions from Karolina- 15minutes

7:36pm- Pamphlet on procedures during minister's absence- 5 minutes

7:41pm- Security Task Force updates - 10minutes

... how to communicate info on alarm

7:51pm -Acceptance of Council Reports, Comments, Questions - 15min

8:06 pm Guest comments – 10 min

Executive Session

## Treasurer's Report – February 13, 2023

### Financial Status/Cashflow

The USH financial status and cashflow remains healthy. Pledge payment response remains excellent with 80% of pledge dollars collected by end of 2022 (50% of pledge period). We continue to not use funds from the endowment.

### Sunday offering/ GNO 50:50

For the January - \$1,005 was raised for Operation Fuel.

### Audit

Treasurer met with chairperson of the 3-member audit committee to orient her to records including for Schwab and UBS accounts

### Finance committee.

Abbreviated minutes of January 26, 2023 meeting appended below

Respectfully Submitted,

Jon Covault, USH Treasurer

### Finance Committee Minutes January 26, 2021 By Zoom

Present - Jonathan Covault, Jim Venneman, David Newton, Carolyn Carlson, Greg Nickett, and Paul Cipriano

Treasurer presented the following items that were discussed

#### 12/31/22 balance sheet

##### M & T checking

\$ 110,354 (12/2021 - \$ 45,177)

##### Schwab cash reserve brokerage account

\$ 136,250 (12/2021 - \$ 258,970 including a \$ 50,871 pending transfer to endowment and \$36,000 for lighting project)

Consisting of:

Major reserve funds in Schwab →

\$ 51,394 prior years' accumulated budget surplus (raining day fund)

\$ 41,119. Paycheck Protection Program unspent funds (in 21-22 budget not used, in 22-23 budget but anticipate will not be used, will likely be needed in FY 23-24 if full-time contract minister hired)  
 \$ 12,891 Covid Emergency Funds  
 \$ 10,329 GA Scholar funds  
 \$ 4,604 Memorial garden funds

UBS Endowment funds  
**\$ 1,164,330 Unrestricted**

(12/2021 \$ 1,374,995; \$ 47,665 used in FY 21-22 budget; \$11,946 in FY 22-23)

\$ 138,378 Capital improvement fund

*(12/2021 \$120,282) B& G small projects fund and related expenses were discussed. Depending on what is planned, and targets of opportunity, funds may come from either place. Recommended Treasurer discretion for the pending costs of upgrading Toilets to new comfort/height with dependable low water use. standards. Preliminary efforts are ongoing for repaving the driveways and area in front of the West entrance. Costs may be in the order of 60 to 75K.*

*We discussed the desirability of having cash type instruments invested as we may be near the end of a downturn in the economic cycle. Jon will see if he can get the paperwork moving with UBS and he subsequently has arranged for a paper document to be signed by officers a week Sunday Feb 5<sup>th</sup> granting access to Endowment Chair.*

**Stewardship Pledges**

Church Year Pledged	Given		
20-21	\$224,295	\$276,747 (123%)	66 pledges 99 donors
21-22	\$275,050	\$288,990 (105%)	85 pledges 103 donors
22-23	\$297,292 (8% increase)	\$231,922 (through 12/31/2022)	92 pledges 81 donors
<b>23-24 draft</b>	<b>\$316,720</b> <b>(7% increase)</b>		

The proposed 7% increase by FY 23-24 was discussed based on our history to date. No change is proposed though the usual doubt exists. Jon reported continued steady donations for meeting of current pledges with only 10 pledges with no donation to date, and the positive outlook of those making inquiries about how to complete payment.

*Jon mentioned difficult in getting Knox Gardens to pay the water bill as agreed. May recommend no water turned on for this spring.*

## **Update provided by Carolyn about planning for March Stewardship month**

### **Personnel expense**

#### **Budget impact of expanded office administrator position (now 30 hrs vs 25 hrs / week)**

25 hours/wk temp employee - \$44,467 annual (20% more time would be \$53,360)

30 hours/week USH employee with benefits - \$50,867 (\$53,900 if 4% cola given July 2023).

#### **Full-time minister**

\$94,000 salary + housing allowance (same as Rev Terry, rate is consistent with UUA guidelines of mid-point salary of \$90,800 for our region and church size)

Pension contribution – budgeted at 5% to be consistent with contract for office administrator (USH personnel policy states “USH will make an annual contribution reflecting a percentage of the annual salary of each eligible employee, subject to the availability of funds. The percentage of contribution will be determined by the Society Council and shall apply equally to all staff members.” If the minister negotiation resulted in higher contribution this would need to be reflected in Office Admin plan as well.

*The personnel projected costs were discussed at some length. It was determined that the COLA probably should be in the order of 4.6% which is the expected national average increase for 2023. We should also see that the Minister contract when negotiated carefully specify our needs and agreements, not a recommended standard contract suggesting things we do not agree with or are at odds with our understandings. Also, we may desire certain benefits deferred until an initial period of employment is successfully completed.*

*Generally, continuing with the same RE Coordinator position and associated costs is recommended. Suggested that John Bengtson’s continuing volunteer efforts leading the youth soup making be recognized in some manner.*

*Jim noted in our usual budget we have some passthrough numbers which might better be listed as net changes as our total operating expenses budget is the basis of calculation of our payments to mother UUA*

*Our active member base falls in the church size “B” 120 to 230 category for recommended minister salaries. We reported 136 active members in our annual UUA report this year.*

*Other items in any negotiation with a potential minister might include moving expenses, etc. impacting the budget.*

### **Proposed draft 23-24 budget highlights/questions**

*Time was invested in review of proposed budget going forward. Various lines were discussed, clarified or subject to some changes. In general, as submitted appears to be very close to what is desired and OK with group.*

## **Social Justice Council Report**

### **February 13, 2023**

The Social Justice council met on January 17 via Zoom. Jessica Puk, co-founder and president of The REACH (Reproductive Equity, Access and CHoice) Fund of Connecticut joined the meeting. REACH is the designated organization chosen for the Good Neighbor Offering this month. This organization is a newly formed 501 ( c )3 which grants funds to providers delivering abortion care in CT to both residents and non-residents of our state. They currently work with Hartford GYN in Bloomfield and 14 Planned Parenthood clinics throughout the state.

On Feb. 5, Dana Donovan, Louise Harmon and I were pulpit guests here at USH and presented the values of UU's regarding Reproductive Justice. We were joined by Sarah McKenzie, Miriam Byroade and Paula Bleck, who contributed relevant music and poetry. Dr. Nancy Stanwood, Chief Medical Officer, Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, co-founder and board member of REACH was the GNO speaker.

The GNO for January, Operation Fuel, will receive a check for \$1,005, and the GNO for March is The Village. Annie Wetzler will attend the next SJ meeting, Feb. 21, to discuss the youth choice of GNO for June.

Diana Heymann, Louise Harmon and I met with Katherine Wilson to discuss and train for the Backpack program at the Fern Street Food Ministry (Universalist Church of West Hartford). Dana Donovan and Sherry Manetta have also participated at the Food Ministry's Food Pantry. We will set up opportunities for USH to volunteer and/or donate food items this month.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Sullivan  
Chair, Social Justice Council