



FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING
6:30 PM, September 19, 2023

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Jonah Berquist, Linda Enger, Lori Lai, Lucy Smith, Megan Lehmer, Sam King, Galen Workman, and Liz Strand.

Guest on Zoom: Diane Allen

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Vanessa Southern, Laura Shennum (Rev Laura)

CALL TO ORDER: 6:36 with quorum

OPENING WORDS: Sam King

PROCESS OBSERVER: Linda Enger

CHECK IN

FEEDBACK FROM BOARD MEMBERS AND CONGREGATION OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS BOARD: Jonah mentioned that the invitation for members to attend board meetings is out there and yet no takers as of yet. Linda mentioned she was glad we were meeting in person.

AGENDA REVIEW: Galen made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Lucy seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS:

Senior Minister: Vanessa said that she has been focussing on getting the church year up and running. She noted that she had also emailed a document to the board which is a proposal created by the staff concerning communication with the staff and how to reestablish and preserve boundaries to protect the off time of staff. It was thought that this was needed due to erosion of those boundaries during the pandemic. Vanessa asked us to read and review it and

give her feedback on it, including our thoughts on whether or not to bring it to the congregation. She suggested we keep in mind the idea that texting is like a tap on the shoulder or a knock at one's door. Email is less invasive and can be saved until later. She also mentioned the fact that staff are very generous in letting their cell phones be used for work purposes. Discussion was tabled to the retreat agenda.

Congregational Life Minister Report: Rev Laura highlighted the following from her report: They launched the program for the year. They have a vibrant Family Ministry Committee this year. Adult education classes are starting. Small Group Ministry is set to start in October. She is working with WEAV facilitators to get that going. Families will be lighting the chalice at some services to enable more visibility for them.

Treasurer's Report: Lori said that due to vacations, the Finance Committee was not able to meet so she does not have financials to report on. She reported that membership numbers have gone on a downward trend but is happy we are close to hiring a membership coordinator. Our event rental income has not recovered completely yet but it is close to the estimated \$150,000 in the budget. The Montessori rental is the same. Investment income has been volatile.

Continued Security Discussion: Sam reviewed the ideas we had discussed at the last meeting to improve security of the building when we are not there, like having artwork made by the children posted on the doors as a way of possibly dissuading people from breaking the glass in the front doors by presenting a more welcoming image of our building. Sam invited more open brainstorming. Rev Laura has presented the idea to the art teachers and they are willing to encourage the children to participate in creating something and if they agree, having it hung on the doors. Linda reported that we have purchased a better camera and it is set further back so it has a better view of the front of the church. A discussion ensued about the pros and cons of motion detector lights. Linda will bring the topic to the Facilities Committee. Lori brought up the idea of how we could attract more rentals by improving parking possibilities and thereby have the building occupied more and thus dissuade vandalism. Discussion ensued about valet parking and availability of parking in the hospital across the street.

Special Congregational Meeting Sept 24th: There will be a zoom option as well as in person gathering. Alicia Cover and Rev Laura will provide the list of members for the check in process, printed on one side.

Board Retreat: October 14, 2023 10:00am to 2:00pm here at the Center, probably the Kincaid Room. Lucy volunteered to order food from La Mediterranee. Galen mentioned he would like to have us introduce ourselves at the retreat and say why we came on the board. Jonah said the agenda for the retreat will include looking at the Strategic Plan. Vanessa said that she and Rev Laura have recently gone over the items in the plan that they are responsible for and will enter them into the strategic plan spreadsheet. Discussion ensued about revisiting the World Cafe of 2019, going over the priorities we developed at last year's board retreat, looking at what board members' assignments are in liaising with various church committees and groups. Vanessa stated that people are expected to have read the materials that Jonah will be sending, the data gathering, the listing of priorities, what are the highlights, what are the priorities we want to see for next year, what did we accomplish last year, what do we still have to work on? If people arrive having gone over the materials thoroughly, we can use our time wisely at the retreat.

Montessori Progress Report: The Board went into Executive session to discuss the current status of the Montessori lease.

Process for Board Review of Senior Minister's Performance: Jonah moved this agenda item forward because Kathleen Quenneville was in attendance from the previous agenda item. Kathleen gave the following context: Vanessa wants to have a process where she gets regular feedback in a structured way. The Personnel Committee, because they have expertise on evaluations, have created a document laying out a process that could be used. Linda agreed to work with them on this. So if the board wants to follow this process, then they would execute on that, gathering input from those outlined in the memo and bring that back to the board and everybody on the board would be surveyed as well. Diane asked if the process outlined in the memo looks right to you? Are there things that should be changed? This is not a common process in the denomination. Our bylaws cover the procedure for letting a minister go but it is a place we do not want to go. It is better to have regular feedback along the way; it can be more constructive. This process is designed to be constructive. The Personnel Committee would not be "evaluating" Vanessa, they would be participating in this process with Linda as a representative from the board. The feedback would be gathered in a summary memo, they would talk with the board about it and then there would be a few people who would talk to Vanessa about the findings. The need to convey the spirit of the process to the congregation was discussed—Vanessa is asking the board for this feedback, it is not the result of grumbling or problems with Vanessa's ministry. If we find it is useful, we will expand it to the senior staff as well. Kathleen said the Personnel Committee wants to complete the process before Vanessa goes on sabbatical on December 18, 2023.

Galen moved to endorse the procedure as laid out by the committee. Lucy seconded the motion. All trustees voted in favor of the motion.

Facilities Advisory Committee Housing Feasibility: Linda began by saying she needed to know how the board is thinking about this idea. She reported that the Facilities Advisory Committee met with Sam Moss, CEO of the Mission Housing Development Corporation (MHDC.) They develop projects for low income housing. SB4 has been passed and the governor is expected to approve it. It holds that if a religious institution agrees to build low-income housing on their property, nobody can object. And, we could get funding from the city and the state. So it is NOT like WE have to build this housing by putting money up front. Next step is a feasibility study which MHDC would do for us or we could explore other organizations to do this for us. The study would look at whether or not the cash flow would be such that it would be self-sustaining. We could be co-owners or there are various other possible arrangements as well. We would be able to inject so called "showstoppers" like for example, "Don't touch the Sanctuary" and "We still want a courtyard."

Linda is asking, is it the sense of the board that we should go ahead and explore this idea? It was decided to table the discussion until the retreat. Linda was asked to bring some parameters for that discussion such as, how long would the construction go on? How long would the courtyard be unusable, etc. Linda said the time horizon would be 4-5 years. Jonah clarified that at this point Linda is looking for a vibe check on whether or not the board is interested in looking at this more.

Women's Rights Working Group: The UUSF Women's group is working to have UUSF become a member of SACReD. Our congregation has voted to go ahead with the project. There will be a speaker at the service on Dec 10th. At that time, she will present us with a plaque to be mounted in our Gallery and a banner to be hung outside on the church building.

Galen moved that we approve the concept of the hanging of the banner on the outside of the church and the display of the plaque inside probably in the Gallery. Linda seconded the motion.

Discussion: Administration will deal with where the banner will be hung and the plaque placed. The vote in favor of the motion was unanimous.

Council of Committee Chairs: Sam reported that the next COCC meeting will be on November 5, 2023 at 12:30pm.

Communication Boundaries and Expectations: Vanessa explained that the document she emailed to us was created by the staff recently to clarify how to contact staff in a way to protect their time. This is especially necessary because they are generous enough to use their personal cell phones for church business as well. Please read the document and give her any feedback you have. We will discuss it further at the retreat.

Meeting Norms: Vanessa will synthesize the information on Meeting Norms from an old document that people had shared over a few years and bring it to the retreat for discussion to see what we want to include currently.

GOOD AND WELFARE: Cards were requested for Richard Davis, Judy Clarke, Megan Lehmer, and Bick Simpson.

PROCESS OBSERVATION SUMMARY: Linda reported on her observations.

CLOSING WORDS: Sam

ADJOURNMENT: Sam moved to adjourn the meeting. Linda seconded the motion. All voted in favor of adjourning the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 9:21pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Strand
Secretary