

**Marquette Unitarian Universalist Board of Trustees**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**April 9, 2017**

Call to order: 12:38pm

BoT Members: Dharmini Robertson, Anne Stark, Kathy Klos, Dea Kowalczyk

Other attendees: Heidi Gould, Mary Maki, Susy Swanson, Sari Embley, Barb Michael

Opening words & Chalice Lighting -- Covenant of Right Relations

Comments: None (wow!)

Approval of the minutes: Dharmini moved, Dea seconded

Approval of agenda – Heidi suggested moving budget approval to the end of the meeting.

### **1. Finance and Stewardship**

Treasurer report – Gary is absent, Heidi submitted a report. Dea met with Gary at MBank to get signatures and paperwork. He’s almost signed up, just one signature to go. Darmini asked about finance policy to clarify who’s going to do what with regard to finances.

First month in several that income exceeded expenses – mostly due to pledge payments and decrease in communication expenses. There is money in the budget to revise payroll taxes as long as Jaimie’s hours remain within the current estimate.

Heidi is working with Gary and the CPA to clarify how interest are reported, rather than being lumped together.

Dea said she’s getting mixed messages from Mike about the pledge drive. We have 27 pledges to date. Last year we had 37. We are receiving pledges as they trickle in at the end of the fiscal year. The challenge is having pledges in by the beginning of the fiscal year. Dharmini asked that we emphasize the pledge drive in the This n’ That.

**2. RE Coordinator Report** – Sent an email in the morning. Dea said she is impressed by how Jaimie is handling a recent suicide in our community. Dharmini said she was impressed that Jaimie is listening to the kids on the pacing of how quickly they are processing. On Friday, there was a bowling event and we had 80% participation.

### **3. Board Liaison Report**

**Buildings and Grounds** – Tom Sullivan and Sarah Redmond have been informally taking care of this. Barb said there is plaster falling off the corner. Heidi said she’d ask Bill Joswiak to take a look at it. Dharmini said she’d help. So would Sari. Suzy said she’d like to look into a flag pole. Mike Erdman had been looking into it. Suzy said a new flagpole could be \$500, and she’d like to have the board make a decision of where a flagpole should be and what size flags we should use to prevent bending. Heidi stressed the importance the rainbow and earth flag as a public relations and marketing effort. Mary asked about putting multiple flags at the same time, including a UU or USA flag. Sari Embley said the durability of flags is a significant concern. The Earth flags simply aren’t sturdy enough to fly in the wind tunnel that is in front of our building. Suzy volunteered to look into a flag pole.

**Communication** – We're doing ads in the Mining Journal. Dharmini asked if that has an impact on newcomers. Heidi said regular members are using the Mining Journal, where newcomers are using word of mouth or the internet.

**Faith in Action** – Barb has a new banner from UUJME. Sari suggested putting it up in the entryway.

**Music** – Dharmini said Music committee sent out surveys and are looking forward to hearing back from people who have sung.

**RE** – Jaimie is looking into a credentialing program. We will address it in the budget

**4. Finance Policy** – There was a discussion about the status of new members who have pledged and may or have or have not signed the membership rolls. For Heidi, it is confusing when we have donation made later in the year and voting meetings are earlier. Heidi would like to see the draft be pared down to essential language only. This draft is not succinct. Perhaps a bullet list. Dharmini asked if we could have a final policy approved in June. Heidi said that working with Gary and the Krause Accounting/CPA is an ongoing process. It is her goal to have a fresh start at the beginning the fiscal year with a set budget of pledges.

As to Mike's questions –

1. We suggest that the BOT liaison to the Finance Committee be chosen by the current board. If the decision is difficult, this board suggests it's the Secretary NOT the president.
2. Treasurer vs. Stewardship Chair vs. Administrative Assistant tracking pledge payments? Heidi said QuickBooks has ability to keep track of pledges, so the AA would be keeping track of pledge payments, but also the Treasurer and the Finance Committee could have access online banking to track. Dharmini said it would be best to give primary responsibility to the Treasurer for tracking pledge payments, with the Admin Assistant backing up
3. Who should be on Finance Committee? Voting members. Dharmini suggested the Finance Policy spell out the role of the Finance Committee is to submit written reports to the Board as needed. There was a discussion about balance between simplifying the role of volunteers vs. completing the work of the congregation.
4. Who should appoint/evaluate Treasurer – Finance Committee and the Board of Trustees (the Bylaws states the Treasurer is appointed by the Board)
5. Should CPA be evaluated? Yes, by Treasurer and Admin Assistant as an ongoing effort. Heidi is working toward independence and ability to do most of the work on her own. She suggested we purchase QuickBooks for our use rather than paying the \$20 a month to Krause Accounting
6. Should audits be done at regular intervals? It's expensive and difficult, so we may want to leave it to current boards to do it every three to four years. This will be a Finance Committee decision.

Heidi will incorporate these suggestions into the Finance Policy Draft.

5. Mural Discussion –

Dharmini suggested that we discuss this as a board rather than have the larger group.

The mural would be a very big change for the whole congregation and we should approach it with due respect and consideration, letting Katherine know that we need to process it and get the congregation's opinion, and investigate various expenses of projection screens.

We need to send her notification that this will probably be a year-long process, not that we're not tabling the potential gift. Dharmini suggest we send Katherine a letter explaining that we will need to process the decision as a congregation and take into consideration many different Anne will draft a letter to Katherine enumerating the

- We're not committing one way or the other,
- We appreciate the offer of the gift
- we have many functional and programmatic considerations to process
- the entire congregation will need to be consulted about the communal use of the space
- this will probably will take year.

6. Joan Steindler gift. Martin is matching all UPAWS donations up to \$100,000. Sari has trees ordered in honor of Joan. We will make a special moment during the May Congregational meeting to remember Joan.

There is no guidance in the bylaws or policies in place for a major gift.

Dharmini suggested we put a significant amount away for future needs, with mindfulness toward putting a major amount away for the future.

Anne's preference is to spend the money on improvements for the space for now, maybe looking at functional and aesthetic improvements to put our best face forward.

Mary suggested that solar investments, also LED lights.

Dea suggested we get the opinion from the finance committee. Anne will draft an email for the Finance Committee to solicit their opinion on what should be done with the gift. (all of it into the Vision Fund, most of it into building improvements, divide it into thirds – Building Fund, Vision Fund and operating budget).

7. Welcome Packets for Visitors - Anne said the mug would be a big influence on her. Dharmini said a package with a CD or DVD would be cheaper and still impactful. The Board liked the idea of having something specific handed to them rather than try to pick things up from the brochure rack, which is pretty overwhelming. The consensus was a mug was a high-risk, high-reward gift. We're not spending as much money on print advertising, that new visitors are coming to us by word of mouth and internet.

Dharmini suggested we start with 25 mugs. Anne and Heidi will work together.

8. GA Delegates: gg asked to be a delegate and was approved in March. Jamie Kuehnl and Heidi have been suggested as scholarship recipients. Jamie will be contacted by email, since we think she DOES NOT want to go. Heidi and GG would be our delegates, with Heidi receiving the scholarship.

9. Budget adjustments went up to an ideal budget with the caveat that we will definitely HAVE a garage sale and/or fundraiser to make up the difference. Dharmini suggested that the outgoing board members will form a Garage Sale committee to support the new Board. The budget overages will get covered from the high-yield checking account, with garage sale/fundraiser receipts to be deposited back into the high yield checking account. We also have Joan's gift as a backup for our expanded and ideal budget.

10. Barb had an addition to the annual meeting, there is a proposed additional 8<sup>th</sup> UU Principle.

11. Welcome and Announcements:

April 16 – Anne

April 23 – Dharmini

April – 30 Anne

May 7 – Heidi

May 21 – Dea

28 May – Kathy

June 4 – Anne

June 11 – Dea

Budget Forum is May 7

Next board meeting is May 14

The Congregational meeting is May 21

The Transition Board meeting is June 11, 2017

Adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

Ideas for new Board

- Clarify membership policy, -- Joint June Board meeting.
- Flag pole and flag purchase – Suzy is the point person
- Building and Grounds review