

Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2016

Call to Order: 12:37pm

BoT Member Attendance: Dea Kowalczyk, Kathryn Klos

Other Attendance: Heidi Gould, gg gordon

Opening words: #487

Open Forum: gg is relieved and encourages the board to carry forward without concern

Reading of Board Covenant - ✓

Approval of Minutes - ✓

Approval of Agenda - ✓

Treasurer Report – According to the summary we spent about \$2000 more than we took in in the Month of November. The communications committee has nearly spent their budget (89%) including the Open House Invites (\$424.98 to Pride Printing). Mining Journal payments, did Communications Committee formulated budget to include MJ the gift (Bill Joswiak gave \$ to pay for the Saturday Church page ads), the Marquette Monthly, and the quarterly Health & Happiness magazine. November 30, 42% of the year. Admin. Expenses are at 56% with Gregory Roulliard pay and food for the weekend. Placement of expenses in which line items is a “judgment call”. Heidi has not spent much on office supplies. Heidi & gg worked out a way to track visa expenses. B&G mostly fixed expenses, internet, garbage, utilities. GA Scholarship, visa charges that did not get paid until this fiscal year so according to the data \$337.05 of the \$750 has been spent, (but not really). Review details of listed line items... Emmy Lou Belcher & Chris Rothbauer, plus February Sky... Emmy Lou can come back once according to the current budget. Gg will continue preparing documents to hand over her files and is relieved to be doing so. This is, however a critical time of year to be transitioning as there are year end tasks that need to be completed. (see .pdf)

Administrative Assistant Report – The congregation is in such a state of flux...the AA is looking forward to a time of resolution and clarity of mission, vision goals, attempting to transition tasks from dissolved committees, there is so much that needs to be done to continue to sustain our congregation and so few people, energy and resources to maintain that...”Just keep swimming” Other issues were questioned, ie forums.

Religious Exploration Coordinator Report – RE Chair is needed, esp. for performance Evaluations. (See report attached)

Board Liaison Reports As Needed:

Buildings & Grounds – not currently attended to, people step up as needed, needs to continue to be a line item in the budget. Tom, Nancy, Sari, Bill...ie broken window – follow up, thank you Bill Joswiak!

Communications – Anne Stark (board liaison)

Faith in Action – Anne Stark (board liaison)

Finance and Stewardship - Dea Kowalczyk (Board Liaison), Sarah Redmond (Chair)

Dea received in the mail, the paperwork for Joan Steindler’s IRA gift to MqtUU.

Music – Dharmini Robertson (board liaison), Barb Michael (Music Coordinator)

RE – Kathy Klos (board liaison), Jamie Kuehnl (RE Coordinator)
Sunday Service – Kathy Klos (board liaison), Tom Sullivan (Chair)

New Business

Accountant/Treasurer – please see page 4 for further discussion.

Dea follow up with appt with accountant, Brandon Krauss, Friday, December 16.

Old Business

New Year ~ New to UU info – Dharmini and Heidi working on a curriculum

Start in February?

Mediation Council – Contracted with Marquette Alger Mediations? Confirmation? Heidi will follow up with Dharmini for documentation.

Review/Revise Bylaws – Barb & Heidi – on hold until further notice

January Congregational Meeting – scheduled for January 29, 2017.

Dea's State of the Congregation (to include summary of "Conversations over Coffee" and Heidi will summarize a comparison to the "Community Conversations" from the Wrights & the Steindlers)

Congregational Covenant of Right Relations

Dissolve "Real Property Fund Trust"

Dissolution of the Mediation Council – and alternately contract with professional Mediation.

Diverse Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries
(DRUUMM)

Bylaws – request for volunteers to review/revise Bylaws...Dea suggests reviewing/revising bylaws a few at a time...

Heidi suggests expand on congregational discussion on the current state of the congregation, the need for clarity, "strategic planning", mission, vision, goals...Since GA 2016 the theme has been "Renaissance or Legacy" the hope and energy has been for a Renaissance, rejuvenation, renewing covenant and personal commitment from the members of the congregation...Heidi questions the "falling back" on the resources that have been utilized in the past, ie Emmy Lou, and is very appreciative of the resources expended to bring Gregory Roulliard here for the Beloved Community Weekend, but suggests continuing to pursue guidance from the UUA and regional congregational consultants as an INVESTMENT...Dea is considering the shock factor of asking the congregation "what if we have to close our doors?" A "Professional Audit of our Congregation" will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Next Meeting Date: January 8, 2016

Adjourn: 2:10pm with additional finalizing of paperwork from gg, and she mentions holiday bonuses for employees.



FROM: Barb Michael, Music Coordinator

Music Committee

Jeanne Trost (chair), Gary Stark, Dharmini Robertson (Board liaison)
Barb Michael, Music Coordinator for Sunday services

The Music Coordinator continues to send out updates to singers for music for upcoming Sundays. Music is set for this Sunday with Chris Rothbauer. The next rehearsal is this Thursday, Dec. 15. We will be leading the songs/carols for the RE kids' offering of *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* on Dec. 18. Shelley Jackson Denham's "Winter Night" is our December song for the congregation. No meeting scheduled until 2017...probably a budget meeting in February.

Faith in Action (formerly Social Action Committee)

Gail Griffith, gg gordon, Heidi Gould, Sarah Redmond, Rolf Swanson, Barb Michael (interim chair), Anne Stark (Board liaison)

Our next meeting is on Sunday, December 18 following the service (about 12:30 pm). It will include an update from gg gordon on her experience at the annual conference for the U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights. Guest at Your Table boxes will be collected on Sunday, January 8th. UUSC is the December share-the-plate recipient. Some of us have been involved online with the Rev. Pinkney FB page, Standing Up for Racial Justice/SURJ updates and conference calls, etc.

FROM: Tom Sullivan, Sunday Service Committee Chair

Regarding the **Sunday Service Committee**, the current membership is me, Kathy Klos, gg, and Barb Michael informally (because she gives me so much programming help). For some time now, we do all of our work by email or phone because that works reasonably well and there are relatively few people to require a meeting.

We have just scheduled for Chris Rothbauer to do a service in January and a service in April. We might be able to get him to do one in May and one in June. If he does all that, it would pretty much deplete the SSC budget.

One issue still in limbo is whether we are going to ask Emmy Lou Belcher to come do things for us more often. The BOT should talk about this Sunday. Do we want her for 1-3 more Sundays? What would we want her to do? How would we pay her (not much left in the SSC budget--see above)? I know Dea talked to her about some of these issues when she last visited, but I don't know the details.

If we decide to have Belcher come more often, who should contact her? Dea? Me? Somebody else? If I'm to contact her, I need details (how often do we want her, how much do we pay, what do we expect her to do?).

(If we don't want her any additional times, we should, as a courtesy to her, let her know that since, as I understand, the possibility of her coming more often has already been broached with her.)

Another thought about the Sunday forum that the BOT might consider at its meeting this Sunday. What about keeping forums on the schedule and having one when someone requests it (as Jamie

did about Standing Rock this Sunday) or when the committee comes up with an idea? And then just saying "no forum" when we don't fill something in.

FROM: Sarah Redmond, Finance Committee

Excellent minutes, thank you Anne. And, thank you to all the Board and others who do the heavy lifting for Mqt. UU.

Finance Committee concern for upcoming Board meeting. We have been asking for formal of expenditures and income report for the past six months and have yet to receive them despite repeated promises. We have a legal and fiduciary responsibility to the congregation.

As chair of the Finance Committee, we are at a loss as to how to proceed and will turn this over to the Board of Trustees. As things stand now, I see no reason for the Finance Committee to continue and will recommend it be disbanded at the end of the year if this situation remains the same.

Our concerns is not a reflection of any concern of wrong doing on the part of the treasurer, gg gordon, but rather a function of our fiduciary responsibility.

Please include the above comments in the December minutes.

I have heard from both Martin and Mike White and they support the above message.

**In re: Discussions concerning the financial future of MqtUU
and the office of Treasurer**

To begin:

I am so pleased that even with so many of us feeling stress at this time of year, in response to personal concerns of our own, and as a result of burnout, as well as in looking at this current stressful concern for our financial well-being.... all people I spoke with today expressed loving concern for all people involved and a desire to move forward with little stress (and support for gg as well as the financial committee). I am so pleased to be involved with a group of people who all start out with kindness, and who want to get something really positive done for this congregation. Thank all of you for being so great today!

Today I spoke with many people concerning the recent email from the Chair of the Finance Committee, Sarah Redmond.

The people I spoke with: Dea, Heidi, Anne, Kathy, Sarah Redmond.
I also attempted to contact gg via phone, email, and text. I have not heard back from her.

All people I spoke with expressed concern that we like gg and do not want to create a negative atmosphere for her. We want her as a part of our family. However, there are too many problems with her execution of the office of treasurer for her to continue in this position. All expressed concern that we do not know what is happened for gg right now, but that we want to be support, just not continue the position of Treasurer.

All Board members, myself included, have stated that:

1. We believe gg Gordon should be removed from the position of Treasurer and
2. All papers, documents, cards, Po Box keys, and credit card statements, as well as documentation of the handling of the Property matters should be handed in no later than 12 p.m. this Thursday, December 15.
3. An accountant should be given the documents and an accounting of the year should be performed as soon as possible (preferably by the end of the year, if possible).
4. The Finance committee should be kept well informed of this process as we move forward.

Anne Stark and I have officially voted for the above.

All of the above we expressly stated and confirmed to me personally, verbally, today.

I spoke with Sarah Redmond concerning our ideas (above) as well as the concerns of the Finance committee.

Sarah Redmond stated that:

1. She is pleased that we are taking this seriously and moving forward.
2. The finance committee would agree that hiring an accountant appears very necessary at this time, and would support the BOT in making that expenditure.
3. That the finance committee needed to see some action being taken, and as long as they are aware as we move forward and receive documentation that their concerns are being addressed, she does not see them dissolving the committee.
4. That she has looked into the UUA documents concerning such a situation and that standard practice is often to have the accountant do a “low level audit.” - this can be expensive (i.e. \$1000s). I asked if this was needed, rather than an accounting for the year, month by month. She stated that we will want to discuss this with the accountant and take the accountant’s advice.
5. We need to receive bank statements, credit card statements, fiscal year report from 2015 from gg
6. We need to take the minutes stating that “the Board has passed a resolution to remove gg Gordon from the office of Treasurer” to the bank and have her removed from the accounts, with a possible second person of our choosing while we determine a new Treasurer.
7. We need to request from the bank copies of all statements including credit card statements.
8. All minutes, notes, and accounting statements need to be emailed to the Finance Committee as we work through this process. (Who will see to this?)

In speaking with Kathy Klos: there is more history to this situation. I have asked her to share this history with the rest of the Board.

I understand that Shaun Devlin and Shirley Zimmer have both served as treasurer before, and are currently in our directory. I understand that Shaun Devlin was the one who took charge of the role of Treasurer when gg was relieved of this duty before. It was also a difficult situation. Please see Kathy.

In speaking with Heidi: We need to be sure to receive PO Box key from gg. She is the only one who has it. Also, Heidi has stated that she is willing/would like to **be a liaison from the Board to the Accountant** and can support the accountant concerning what she knows of how various actions were handled, etc. She has retained some documentation/copies, as able.

Heidi has been paid, and it is set up to be regular.

She is unsure of other payments and expressed concern that Kerri and Dylan may not have yet been paid in full, nor paid in the past in a timely fashion (see Barb Michael?).

In speaking with Dea: She has banking privileges and is able to handle checking and signing checks, though it appears the codes she was given are incorrect.

I am hoping that the Board will:

1. officially vote on this issue
2. Offer kindness to gg (everyone expressed this concern as I spoke with them)
3. That we will schedule the upcoming congregational meeting

-Dharmini Robertson

FROM: Anne Stark

I am troubled by these events. The finance committee has had months and many opportunities to bring their concerns to the board before this. Threatening to quit en masse is not the way to initiate a serious discussion using the spirit of right relations.

As a board, we have failed both gg gordon and the finance committee. We have been seeing signs that gg was struggling with the duties of treasurer as early as last year. Instead of protecting her interests, we all sighed a sigh of relief when she volunteered to be our treasurer for another term. We should have gone above her protests and really examined her capacity to serve year after year.

Policies protect people, even from themselves. Therefore, in the reformation of our approach to handling MUUC finances, I move that we adopt congregational policies that prohibit individuals from serving in demanding leadership roles for more than 5 uninterrupted years in a row. I know this will affect other committees with long-standing leadership, such as the music and Sunday service committees. I think this is a good thing, even if it means additional challenges in recruiting replacement leaders.

Burn-out is a significant and dangerous problem in our congregation. We are ignoring our UU principals, our congregational mission and our board covenant if we continue to bemoan the issue of weary leadership and volunteers without taking concrete action.

I am open to friendly amendments to this motion and anticipate this will take more than one or two meetings to resolve. I look forward to a thorough discussion over the next few meetings as we grapple with a heart-rending and persistent problem.