

**Board of Trustees Meeting  
Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa  
December 19, 2019 6:30 pm**

**MINUTES**

**Voting Members Present:** Natalie Brundred (President), Michael Randolph (Treasurer), Cathie Wiese (Corporate Secretary), Joe Como, Larisa Ashley, Paula Hammett, John Mason, Mike McGirr

**Voting Members Absent:** Sean Freese (Vice President), Karen Simmons

**Non-Board Members Present:** Bob Anderson (COSM Chair), Kitty Wells (COSM), Rev. Chris Bell, Dawn Silveira (Administrative Manager), Susan Thollaug (Recording Secretary)

**Meeting called to order:** 6:30 pm

**Chalice Lighting, Covenant, Opening Words:** Rev. Chris Bell and Natalie Brundred

**Agenda review:**

**Minutes:** The November minutes were approved with one correction.

**Open Mic:**

Sean Freese has prepared electronic maps for planning house meetings. They are posted on the Board's Google Drive.

Several members who have relevant professional backgrounds have been invited to participate in a brainstorming meeting with Rev. Chris on new approaches to communications for UUCSR. He's looking for expertise and burning ideas.

Kitty Wells suggested that the Board consider authorizing a larger and more detailed regular advertisement for UUCSR in the Press Democrat. Based on input from professionals, the limited funds we can spend should go to improving our online visibility in social media. At this time we don't know for sure how people initially find out about UUCSR, and the Board agreed that it would be important to collect that information, if feasible.

**Leadership Experience program:** Natalie Brundred

The Nominating Committee (NomCom) wants to take on a broader charge of developing leaders within the congregation. The Board agreed with this amplification of the committee's scope.

There is a UUA online program that could be incorporated into this effort right away. Board members who are interested were asked to contact Ellen Skagerberg, the chair of NomCom, about participation. Other members of the congregation will also be encouraged to enroll.

**Congregational Assessment:** Bob Anderson, Chair, COSM, and Kitty Wells, COSM member

The Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM) reported to the Board on a pilot Congregational Assessment they conducted. Board members were also asked to fill out the assessment. The results were interesting and complex, with lots of different perspectives.

Bob and Kitty recommended the survey's selected use to find out more about the views and needs of the congregation going forward, especially as we grow. The toolset could be very useful for upcoming house meetings, and a whole-congregation survey could be done, though that would be a major undertaking. Alternatively, shorter surveys could be conducted that focused on specific themes/questions. Results could be fed into our strategic planning process.

**Next steps in Planning for Growth**

Greater clarity around the purpose of house meetings is needed before we approach people to lead that effort. We need to start with appreciation of what we have. This will be a big learning moment for us as a congregation.

We should ask: What are our strengths - that we want to make even better? Where are the areas where we could be more welcoming, doing what we already do, but more effectively? What's most valuable to you here? What do we want to share? How did becoming part of UUCSR make your life better? What does growth look like viewed as a ministry? We know that people are seeking what we do here — how do we help them find us?

People have concerns and need to be able to grapple with them. We need to have avenues for people to express their doubts and concerns about growth.

This isn't a problem to solve. Growth is something that is built in, inevitable. We are preparing for the future.

We don't have a good system for involving new members.

John Mason, Joe Como, Cathie Wiese, Chris Bell will form a "steering committee" to write a guide for and manage the creation of the house meetings.

Perhaps we can do coffee klatches later, if needed.

#### Timeline:

Have house meetings in late February/early March. Have Forums in April for feeding back what people have said and heard. In May we'll have Forums on the 2020/21 budget.

House meeting locations, leaders, and leader training will need to occur in short order. Ideally, the first training date will be before the end of January, and subsequent trainings will go into February. A logistics team will coordinate selection and training of the captains.

#### **Congregational Meeting**

The Board reviewed the proposed agenda, provided additional detail for some sections and approved the agenda.

#### **Treasurer's Report: Michael Randolph, Treasurer**

Pledge income increased significantly in November, after dipping in October. However, we're still behind our budgeted income for this point in the year.

Glaser Center income continues to be behind budget as well. Joe Como said he expects Glaser income to be less than 75% of what was budgeted for the fiscal year.

On appeal of our Sonoma County property tax, the assessor granted an exemption. Instead of paying \$11,000 this year, our tax bill will be about \$5,800, an increase of about \$1,300 over last year.

The Finance Committee is planning to do a midyear budget revision after receiving all income and expense data at the end of December. At this point we're projecting a \$25,000 shortfall. This is about a 5% deviation out of a budget of more than \$600,000. UUA dues money may need to be withheld to close the budget gap.

#### **Appreciations:** Cathie Wiese, Corporate Secretary

Several outstanding volunteers were chosen to be appreciated at the January Congregational Meeting.

**Administrative Manager's Report:** Dawn Silveira, Administrative Manager

Income to date for the Glaser Center is \$42,140.

There are two new administrative policies that address building lockup and reimbursements.

The new Sonic phones and system will be installed soon.

Dawn has requested a bid for carpeting in the common areas, as it's at its 15-year maximum for wear.

The crafts fair in November raised \$450. They received good feedback, and plan to do it again next year.

**Minister's Report:** Rev Chris

He's been very busy and December means lots of services. Preparations for his sabbatical are on track.

**Review Talk to a Board Member notes**

The Board decided to postpone action on proposed "Coffee Klatches" for new members until after the house meetings.

**Pros and Grows**

**Final questions, review of action items**

**Meeting Adjourned** 9:10 pm

*Next board meeting: Thursday, January 16, 2020 6:30 pm*  
*Next Congregational Meeting: Sunday, January 26, 2020 11:00 am*

*Respectfully Submitted by Susan Thollaug, Recording Secretary*