

Unitarian-Universalist Church of Nashua, NH (UUCN)
Special Board of Trustees (BoT) Meeting
April 03, 2016 at 12:00 PM

Present: David Hudson, Kate O'Shea, Mary Licking, Carol Wagner, Rick Spitz, Ellen McCormick, Steve Hedges. **Absent (excused):** Lance Pratt . **Absent:** Mike Wilt. **Guests:** None.

David performed the reading for the chalice lighting. David welcomed the attendees.

David mentioned that it is possible that Lance Pratt and Mary Licking, because of an ISP issue on David's end, may have not received all the e-mails that served as preparation for this meeting. He recapped the purpose of this meeting, which is described in the next paragraph.

The BoT must come up with a salary number (i.e. percent increase) for the minister for next year in order for the minister to be able to prepare the budget. There was a brief conversation to confirm that our job is to set the minister's compensation (Policy III D was read and is available in the UUCN documents available on uunashua.org), but not the staff's compensation, which is the purview of the Executive Director.

David led a discussion regarding what goes into a salary number (salary does not take into account benefits) and what process, procedures, or guidelines we might use for determining any increase. The UUA website states: Typically, effectively performing employees are at the midpoint of a range within three to five years. Also the UUA website states: Many congregations increase ministerial and staff salaries annually considering: 1) merit increases and 2) cost-of-living adjustments. There was a question about what constitutes a cost-of-living adjustment.

David reached out to the personnel committee to get a sense of historical practices and see if they had any recommendations on process. John Burkitt, their chair, reached out separately to Nancy Chaddock, Compensation Consultant of the Northern New England District of the Unitarian Universalist Association who did not have much insight, unfortunately. David also spoke with the Reverend Allison Palm and (a) discussed the thinking she was using in calculating increases for the staff and (b) what she'd heard from her peers. Allison noted that most of the ministers she spoke to could not point to formal policies or procedures in their congregations for annual ministerial increases. Often compensation seemed to be an afterthought when other budget priorities were met. In addition, the UUA, while its website does mention the Consumer Price Index, has no recommendation on any one specific instrument to use for determining cost-of-living adjustments, not one that is broadly based anyway. It was also mentioned that the COLA that is used in popular discourse currently is heavily weighted toward the price of gasoline.

How to get to the midpoint range in a given number of years requires knowledge of what the UUA publishes yearly in terms of salary considerations churches use in calling a minister regarding church size, geo index (geographical location), and experience (not necessarily defined in just years, there are other factors to be acknowledged such as right person for the job, the training sessions the person attended that the church indicated, etc). Also useful is knowing whether a minister is currently being compensated properly in the first place when all considerations are taken into account, before efforts are undertaken to determine what is an appropriate salary for a particular year. UUCN's minister is currently in the bottom of the range

that contains the factors germane to her career and job. There was discussion that getting to the midpoint in five to seven years is a plan the BoT wants to formulate in the event implementation is desired and knowledge of the Midsize 2 scale as a determinant for church size is a necessity. In calling a minister, UUCN was oriented toward a blend of the Midsize 1 and Midsize 2 scales because the membership of UUCN was smaller then.

Steve Hedges, who had done quite a bit of work on ministerial compensation during his tenure on the Search Committee, agreed to update his chart with current numbers and circulate it to other members as a basis for further discussion.

Also discussed was determining the most desirable date for a newly determined salary to take effect. Considerations include the church calendar and the anniversary date of the minister. The hiring agreement does not dictate what the salary determination date in the future will be. FYI: UUCN must submit a yearly review to the UUA on the current minister for the next two to three years because of where the minister is in her UUA career arc, but that review has no effect on what date UUCN implements its own salary determinations of the minister, but could serve as a vehicle to evaluate the minister in conjunction with her compensation.

There was mention of a request that the minister provide to the Personnel Committee of guidance for a policy on staff compensation and annual adjustments. That request will not be honored, at least this year, because of time constraints. David shared the percent increase that the minister is currently planning to put into the draft budget for the staff.

In response to a concern that we may want to keep ministerial increases somewhat in line with staff increases, the Board felt that the Minister's compensation and any increases should be determined separately and did not need to correlate. We may want to consider similar criteria in determining a figure, and welcome guidance from the Personnel Committee when it develops its guidance for the Minister, but we do not feel that we need to pick the same number.

The BoT felt strongly that Allison has been a great fit for the congregation and, in addition to compensating her fairly, want to make sure we are paying her appropriately.

The BoT consensus is to, during Executive Session at the April 11th regularly scheduled BoT meeting, come up with an upper limit number for ministerial salary for use in next year's budget and that will give the minister freedom in setting a ministerial salary number for the budget that is up to or equal to that point. There is not support on the BoT for a policy on determining the minister's salary that is mathematically prescriptive. However, while we did not have time this year, going forward we plan to establish a procedure and policy to formally evaluate the minister and lay out a process by which we arrive at recommended increases for the minister.

A motion passed made by Kate and seconded by Carol to enter Executive Session to discuss another matter. The BoT left Executive Session.

The Bylaws Committee has not yet met, but David will get them started ASAP.

A motion passed made by Rick and seconded by Steve to adjourn.

Minutes submitted by,

Mary Licking, Clerk,
Unitarian-Universalist Church of Nashua, NH