

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, NH (UUCN)
Meeting of the Board of Trustees**

Feb 6, 2020

Final Minutes by Jodie K. Holway

Reviewed by: John Burkitt, Lindsey Sylvester, Carol Houde, Burns Fisher, Brenna Woods, Lindsey Hedrick

Meeting Attendees: Victoria Agnew, John Burkitt, Burns Fisher, Lindsey Hedrick, Jodie K. Holway (Clerk), Carol Houde (President), Rev. Allison Palm, Rick Spitz, Lindsey Sylvester, Brenna Woods

Full Agenda: APPENDIX A

1. Consent Agenda

1. **MOTION** to accept the [January 2020 minutes](#)
2. **MOVED** by Brenna Woods, **SECONDED** by Lindsey Hedrick, **PASSES** unanimously

2. Monitoring Task Force

1. Congregational survey baseline will be ready by end of February
 - i. We'll release it to congregation by end of April
 - ii. Don't want to burden congregants with too many surveys at once
2. UUCN's [Governing Policies](#) have several areas that need to be fleshed out
 - i. Currently printed in red
 - ii. Past president Dave Hudson has graciously agreed to help us now

3. Monitoring: Governance Policy Changes

1. Background check for Cemetery Treasurer
 - i. Last month we said we had to specify this requirement in our policy
 - ii. Good news, Carol found this is already implied and thus satisfied
 1. Cemetery Treasurer must be on the IFC, which requires background already
 2. Would this ever change? Not soon anyway, so we're OK for today
 - iii. Cemetery and UUCN funds are commingled, so the Cemetery committee are equally motivated to invest these funds wisely
 - iv. Note, most churches have cemeteries which are not governed semi-independently
 1. Churchyards are just considered part of the church
 2. In prior years ours was more independent, open to public etc.
 3. So now we just need some legal input to know what our options are
2. Discussion of whether the UUCN Board of Trustees should ever endorse any organization
 - i. Suggestion to amend our Part II Policy E: "Board Committee Principles"
 - ii. Propose new 3rd paragraph: The Board shall not provide endorsements or recommendations for any for-profit company, business, or organization.
 - iii. Discussion allowing case-by-case exceptions by the board, e.g. what about a solar-panel company partnership if we redo the building, etc.?
 - iv. Proposal to amend was withdrawn for further study

4. Annual Ministerial Evaluation of Rev. Allison Palm

1. Discussed the results from all reviewers, consolidated by Rick Spitz into various analyses
 - i. Good participation from many teams this year
 - ii. Some discussion of where scores are pretty different than last year's
 1. Last year's responses mainly came from the Board
 2. Maybe that makeup contributes to the difference in certain scores
 - iii. Big percentage improvement in area 9, Leads the Faith into the Future
 1. This is strongly related to hiring our intern Ben Atherton-Zeman
 2. We should be sure to tell Rev. Allison where she's doing very well
 - iv. Big discussion around communication, taken from several free-text comments: how and how often to give news to the congregation that may be surprising or new
2. How can we collect and present our Board recommendations to Rev. Allison?
 - i. Provide her with the full straight responses and all the comments
 - ii. We must tell her which few areas to focus on
 1. Giving constructive feedback helps her remain challenged and grow with us
 2. We must resist the temptation to find a few things to focus on, and then next year ask her to focus on stuff she let slide this year – whack-a-mole style!
 3. Self-care message is important: don't let her overwork and burn herself out
 - a. Area 7, Pursues Personal Renewal and Professional Development
 - b. Tell her WE the Board need her to work on this area for our sakes
 4. Rev. Allison has spent lots of energy and ingenuity building systems and teams and structures for governance
 - a. So she can step back a bit, rely on Ben A-Z and Worship Associates
 - b. Trust that the systems will work, she can get a fresh perspective
 5. Careful of the contradiction: "Yes focus on self-care PLUS a Capital Campaign"
3. Rev. Allison's self-evaluation is underway now
 - i. She will provide it to the Board in March, in time for next month's board meeting
 - ii. Last year her self-evaluation didn't request help – that question got shortest answer
4. Recommendations for increasing her salary
 - i. Remember we are en route to raising it year-by year
 1. Getting her salary to where it should be, based on [UUA's scale](#)
 - ii. Methodology/tool was developed by Rick Spitz with Steve Hedges, ex-Board member
 - iii. Rick will bring treasurer Lindsey Hedrick up to speed now on this approach

5. The Many Faces of Radical Hospitality

1. Pooled our ideas and experiences on how to approach people in sanctuary and coffee hour
 - i. Greet folks nearby during service, invite them to fellowship right afterwards
 - ii. Make a beeline to the back at end of service, before newcomers tend to bolt
 - iii. If you're good at remembering names, that shows respect and welcome
 - iv. Engage in conversation for a bit, then politely pass off – introduce to next person
 - v. Extricate both of you politely by saying "Well, I won't keep you"
 - vi. Bring a friend over to welcome them too – now the newcomer knows two people!
 - vii. Asking "What brings you here today?" gives opportunity for wildly varied answers, which allows people to answer superficially or deeply as they feel moved to do

2. Discussion about what not to say, since it may cause anxiety or misinterpretation
 - i. “What do you do?” could be judgmental about class, intelligence, etc.
 - ii. “Where are you from?” could be judgmental about ethnicity, neighborhood, etc.

6. Potential Delegates for NNED Annual Meeting and GA

1. Northern New England District (NNED) annual meeting in April will take place here at UUCN
2. General Assembly (GA) in June will be in Providence
3. Brenna Woods is collecting a slate of delegates to propose by next month’s Board meeting
4. Please connect Brenna with anyone who is considering attending

7. Continuing Discussions of Next Steps Weekend Feedback

1. What points are still resonating with us?
 - i. Still struck by the power of telling stories
 - ii. No stories are currently told about any people from our congregation’s past, only the buildings and a couple of ministers
 - iii. So why would anyone leave money to UUCN in their will if they can sense that they’re not going to be remembered?
2. Purpose of a Vision statement, per consultant Mark Ewert
 - i. Rev. Allison and Carol met him via Zoom to clarify his request to create a new Vision
 - ii. Turns out he is fine with our recently-created Ends to serve this need
 - iii. But the Ends are too wordy for people who aren’t in the middle of these discussions, who have less information about their development and meaning
 - iv. He pushes for Vision in order to communicate with folks in a shorter/punchier way, highly-distilled informational word-pictures
 - v. This can be created with lay-leaders, no need to go back to the whole congregation
3. Rev. Allison is considering hiring Mark to consult for a year with our Stewardship campaign
4. Invested Funds Committee meeting on Feb. 1 discussed possible uses for our endowment
 - i. Reserved for extraordinary measures associated with having a 200 year old building in a historical district, to preserve it in good working order
 1. Does this include changes? Like elevator? Like new windows? Probably not
 2. But simply maintaining the status quo isn’t flashy nor inspiring for donations
 - ii. Long-term social justice program that people want to support
 1. E.g. becoming a Sanctuary church level 1
 - iii. Discussion of the fact that the Memorial Garden is locked these days
 1. Not accessible to loved ones who would want to visit and/or tend the garden
 2. Back in 1997 there was a spate of vandalism, but we built better relationships with people in the neighborhood and the problems stopped
5. Idea to have an annual Story Service, just like we have a Flower Service
 - i. Tell stories about the people in our church community, today and in the past (not just the ministers, who we already talk about and remember)
 - ii. E.g. Anna Stearns and the depression: She felt that in recession/depression times when people most need the church’s emotional and community support, that’s exactly when it should NOT cut back due to low pledges – so she donated her estate
 - iii. Could ask all congregants to nominate their great stories of the year, then Worship Associates decides its favorites to help polish and have them tell at that service!

6. Deliberate investing for Social Justice – rethinking Bank of America and the role of the IFC
 - i. Being on IFC is a prestigious committee, people with expertise share it with UUCN
 - ii. IFC is comfortable with our traditional investments done via BofA
 1. Our sales person Mike is nice, responsive, working with UUCN for 30 years
 2. Also people do like getting their investment advice for their own use too
 3. Started as Indian Head Bank, a local business, but now was bought by BofA
 - iii. Eye-opening when Mark Ewert said BofA's values are starkly not aligned with ours
 - iv. We didn't know until recently, UUA also has investment funds we can participate in
 - v. IFC members are mainly getting updates from BofA, could switch to getting from UUA
 - vi. IFC members could shift responsibilities over time
 1. Could be liaisons to UUA about their investment funds, plus Lindsey Hedrick, just like they are currently the liaison to BofA
 2. Ongoing, could suggest new ways of raising money, research about other churches' practices, or other investment instruments
 - vii. Agreed: IFC should meet first with UUA and then bring the info to Board of Trustees

8. **Covenantal Checkout and Closing**
 1. Next Board meeting: March 5, 2020

Appendix A: Full Agenda

FINAL AGENDA

Board of Trustees, Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua
February 6, 2020 at 6:30 pm

Our Mission: We are a welcoming community of faith, inspiring lives of wonder, generosity, and courage, serving the world through love in action.

Note: There will be no Minister's report this month as Allison is out for the week.

6:30 [15] Admin: Chalice Lighting (Burns)
Check-in

6:45 [5] Admin: Consent Agenda
• January BoT Minutes

6:50 [5] Monitoring Task Force (Carol, Burns, and Victoria)
• Update on survey
• Elimination of red entries in policies

6:55 [15] Monitoring: Governance Policy Changes (Carol)
• Background check for Cemetery Treasurer
• Proposed: Under **Policy E: Board Committee Principles** under **II. Governing Process**, [new 3rd paragraph]: The Board shall not provide endorsements or recommendations for any for-profit company, business, or organization.

7:10 [20] Monitoring: Annual Ministerial Evaluation (Rick)

7:30 [5] Break

7:40 [10] Linkage: The Many Faces of Radical Hospitality: Ideas and Experiences to Date of a Board with a Range of Talents, Preferences, and Opportunities (Carol)

7:50 [5] Potential delegates for NNED Annual Meeting [at UUCN] and for GA [in Providence] (Brenna)

7:55 [1 hr 20 min] Visioning: Continued Discussion of Mark Ewert's feedback to us from the Next Steps Weekend
• New or emerging thoughts on Mark's vision of us or his recommendations? [10]
• Congregational Vision [5]: Summary of Zoom meeting with Mark, Allison and Carol
• Clarifying use of endowment [5]: Summary of IFC meeting on 2-1-20
• Bank of America/Deliberate social justice investing/rethinking the role of the IFC [30]
• Better support of Stewardship and developing more options for long term stewardship [30]

9:15 Covenantal Check-out

Closing Words (Carol)

Adjournment