

Unitarian Society of Hartford
Board of Directors
Unitarian Meeting House – March 10, 2009

Members Participating: Nina Elgo, Martha Page; Mike Roy; Jim Venneman; Rev BJ Jamestone, Carolyn Cartland; Heather Ferguson
 Hull; Amy Hines
Others Participating: Brian Mullen, Bill LaPorte-Bryan
Members Absent:
Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

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| Brief check-in | | |
| Council on Social Justice | <p>Strategic Update – Vision section: first paragraph is the original vision but includes green sanctuary information. There is a further recommendation as to the definition of social justice in the second paragraph. Survey reveals that there are differences regarding what people perceive as social justice. In other churches, social justice is called outreach. Strategic Initiative (SI) 1 regarding survey results – it was decided to continue to publish this and communicate results in various ways. There was discussion and clarification that the BTWWDA (Building the World We Dream About) should not be included because it is not a social justice project. Building diversity is a direction, vision, a way to be. Social Justice Empowerment Task Force report was discussed - maybe this and other work should be included to document the ongoing work that has been done in evaluating progress in these initiatives. The core goal is to find ways to integrate and earn congregational “buy in” for participation.</p> <p>SI – 2 – Is Expectation too strong a word? COSJ is deeply involved with the Youth Group but wording needs to be improved to reflect more accurately how much work is being done by and with the Youth Group.</p> <p>SI 3 – Survey suggests that people want more specific and concrete opportunities to participate. COSJ received a very clear message to give participants a variety of ways to participate.</p> <p>SI 4 – Green Sanctuary is a change from when strategic plan was formulated, as such it is a recommended new initiative.</p> | |

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| Vision 2018 | <p>Long term ideas for the future: some discussion that it is great that we are beginning to affirm what members are doing both within and outside of the church with respect to social justice. Hands on Hartford is taking a role of project manager in the city, providing support and structure for volunteer work – Mike suggested that there was a lot of potential to use Hands on Hartford as a resource to help our congregation become more involved. Hands on Hartford offers the benefit of flexibility and wide range of potential opportunities. It was also acknowledged that there was some value in having congregation-wide efforts at social justice work.</p> | |
| Strategies for helping members and friends affected by recession | <p>Community Within will take the lead to figure out ways to support people struggling with the economic recession. Also discussed was the concern re: how to help while honoring people’s privacy and being sensitive to their situation. Support Group as well as a multitude of ideas were referred to Community Within to begin assessing and implementing.</p> | |
| E-communication | <p>Heather discussed the possibility of utilizing a project collaboration website; in Manchester UU they have utilized www.basecamp for the past couple of years which provides an online site for discussion and sharing information, obviating the need for duplicative and voluminous email communications. Manchester has had some success with this. We agreed to sign up for trial period.</p> | |
| Music Associate Search update | <p>Mike reported on the meeting last Sunday. He noted that as USH is fulfilling our strategic plan regarding worship and music, our music program has broadened such that we now require staff support for broadening the 'direction' of singing beyond choral direction of chancel choir, to include Joyful Noise (singing group for those with any or no singing experience) and congregational hymn direction. Further, music staff representation at staff meetings and Worship Arts Subcouncil meetings is important for improving communication and community building. We’re trying to create a description that is accurate and meets our needs. Martha recommended we keep all of our options open. Another meeting scheduled this week from this Sunday.</p> | |
| Sexton Search | <p>Casting a wide net for our search including within our congregation.</p> | |

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| CALM | Confidential, Attentive, Listening, Mediators - Heather, Mike Gail and Peter Meny have been reviewing materials from Gail and BJ to determine how to get a group up and running – with mental health professional, NVC and long term member. Where does this committee reside? Community Within or Administration. Group will make a recommendation. | |
| NPR | Heather reported that we are working with the other area UU churches to band together and solicit from our members donations to pool in order to buy ad time on NPR. | |
| NELS and Sunday Service assessment | New England Leadership School – end of July beginning of August. Heather highly recommends. Sunday service options assessment meeting tomorrow at Nina’s house. Nina, Martha, Heather and Jim meeting tomorrow. | |
| B&G | Five year Capital Budgeting Plan – identifying safety issues as priorities. May and June is time scheduled for roof assessment | |
| Nomination Committee | Council Chair on Administration. Still seeking. Also now looking for President-elect and Secretary. Also one or more positions for Endowment committee. | |
| Treasurer’s report | Income a little above and expenses a little below – Doing better than treading water at this time. Very earliest returns – 60 pledges totaling 163K. 8% increase for this group of pledges. Remaining group would have to be 12% increase to meet budget. | |
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| Process check-in | | |

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for April 14, 2009 at 7pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Nina Elgo, Board Secretary