

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF HARTFORD
Board of Directors Meeting
Date 09/13/11

Members Participating: Cedric Woods, Peter Meny, Liz Garmise, Christina Davies, Don Reichler, Joe Rubin, Ed Savage, Barbara Jamestone (ex officio member)
Others Participating: Ann Carnevale, Patrice Fitzgerald, David Newton, Janice Newton, Edith Savage, Mike Winterfield
Members Absent: Carol Davidson
Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 1902

Subject	Discussion	Action Required/Responsible
Opening Words	Cedric announced that, in accordance of recently adopted practice, the initial 10 minutes would be devoted to congregational comments. Four observers present wished to speak; 2 minutes 30 seconds were allotted each, and the first commenter was invited to begin.	
Patrice Fitzgerald (member comment)	Question of whether board has made plans for dealing with the post-vote aftermath? Cedric responded that he has been in close touch with district representation (USH falls within the Clara Barton District) and, whether the vote results in termination or retention of the current minister, district resources were available. Should the vote favor termination, the minister would be given 90 days' notice as specified.	Cedric will notify CBD representative immediately following the 9/18 vote.
Edith Savage (member comment)	Endorses working w/ district for healing ; we should have things planned out. This is analogous to a hurricane — we know something's coming; it's been coming for a while, and now it's here, so we should have supplies laid in & some rescuers lined up. No matter what happens with the vote, the following Sunday (9/25) will be difficult, so those putting service together are trying to make it as healing as possible. She (Edith) has written a chant on healing & unity; some may join in, others not. From tonight until 25 th there needs to be something said via various media on how we think about healing & community. Perhaps we need a totally neutral person for the sermon? We need to focus on making USH as comfortable & understanding as possible; the board must be proactive, not reactive. While bringing in a district person will help, the primary message must come from board.	
Ann Carnevale (member comment)	Ann is here on behalf of the Religious Education (RE) subcouncil. The subcouncil needs information on a plan for hiring an RE person, & what is the timeline? Cedric responded that Carol Davidson, who has been out of town, is working on it. Ann — we have heard nothing. We'd like a timeline. Who's going to handle things Gail is doing that we can't do? Joe Rubin suggested that this discussion be addressed in the body of the board meeting, as the scope of discussion was obviously beyond the realm of pure comment.	See below for continuation of discussion
Mike Winterfield (member comment)	Regarding last Sunday's (9/11) meeting centering on the report by the Committee on Ministry (COM) — this was terrific, and will help with this week's impending vote. He has concerns about stewardship, and has been active particularly with supplemental pledging. We have to encourage people to continue as members, stay, and contribute during the next drive. The one-time money will not be there, at least to the same extent, next year, and these donations allowed funding of only a "2/3-time" ministry. Mike re-read the COM report 2 or 3 times, noting discussion of some problems the minister inherited... ambivalence around SJ, advocacy work; tension around role of minister. To the degree there are problems they should not be laid entirely on one person.	
Minutes	Previous meeting in executive session. Minutes not published.	
Business Manager	While Brian Mullen was not in attendance, he had provided a membership list and draft ballot for review. This member list is somewhat more liberally interpreted than strict criteria for reporting to the UUA would imply, and currently shows 257 individuals as members. This list will be used on Sunday to determine membership.	Liz to communicate with Brian regarding final ballot format, including creation of provisional ballots.

	Ballots — the ballots will be numbered; USH members receiving ballots will be checked off on the list; provisional ballots will be available for anyone who thinks s/he is a member but is not shown on the list.	She also will verify membership criteria Brian employs in determining inclusion on his list. (Done 9/14)
DRE	This position is currently vacant. Ann Carnevale, representing RE subcouncil, references e-mail from Gail Syring dated 8/30/11. This outlines how duties and responsibilities are allocated. The volunteer subcommittee cannot take on staffing /supervision of the nursery; childcare for other events; supply orders; budget decisions; or committee representation other than if they're already on said committee. Professional staffing is needed to cover supervision and coordination.	Ann confirmed via e-mail exchange with Gail that childcare for the meeting 9/18 has been arranged. Carol will contact the RE subcouncil about recommendations, guidance, or concerns for a search. Cedric will see what procedures have been developed to supplement staffing in the nursery if regular staff is ill or overwhelmed.
Minister schedule	Cedric provided clarification of the budget adopted in June, addressing concerns of the minister's recent announcement of reducing to a "2/3-time" schedule. Her previous claim had indicated no cut-back in commitment, and this lack of congruence has created some confusion. Cedric commented that the intended ministerial pay reduction had always included a reduction in scope of work. When the minister was called, her proposed contract granted 1 day off/week. Last spring, in negotiating with (past president) Sue Kinney & Worship Arts & board, 2 days off/week was determined acceptable. The minister now works 5 days per week, Wednesday through Sunday, and will officiate at Sunday services as in the past. She will not look at e-mail or come to USH Monday or Tuesday (barring emergencies). Cedric recalls this arrangement. Following discussion, Joe Rubin proposed the board formalize this arrangement. Ed Savage moved: "the minister is to have 2 days per week off"; seconded by Peter Meny; a voice vote registered all in favor.	Minister's work week is Wednesday through Sunday.
President — board development	During the mini-retreat, Cedric offered a goal to consistently add processes contributing to board understanding & development. Cedric has contacted Sue Huntington about HR practices, theory, & policy, and our responsibilities with respect to employees & employment contracts. She will be presenting a short module on these topics. We may contact Sue regarding specific areas we'd like to see addressed. The presentation should last approximately 15 – 30 minutes.	Board members to contact Sue Huntington if they desire. Cedric checks with her on possibility of recording for posterity (video or audio).
President — 9/18 meeting	Roles and responsibilities were adopted for the congregational meeting and vote on Sunday, 9/18/11. Cedric will preside. Tina Davies and Liz Garmise will verify membership and dispense and count ballots; Peter Meny and Don Reichler offered to act as timekeepers, with red and yellow semaphore-type signs for signaling. Stu Spence will be contacted to ensure the microphone works, & we have extra batteries. Ed Savage will record meeting to preserve dialogue. David Newton will serve as parliamentarian. Membership status was discussed. Brian Mullen furnished a master list of 257 USH "members", and it is noted that for a variety of reasons this list interprets membership more liberally than the strict interpretation for reporting to the UUA. Financial considerations enter into this. It was agreed that Brian's list would suffice to vet status on Sunday. Provisional ballots and blank white envelopes will be available should people assert membership and verification is not evident from the master list. If someone asserts s/he is a member but not on the list, that person will be issued a designated provisional ballot with a blank white envelope. S/he can vote, place the ballot in the envelope, seal the	Liz Garmise will contact Brian Mullen to inquire of his criteria for including people on the membership list. She will also request one ballot per member, and 30 provisional ballots, be printed, with the yes/no option being the sole choices.

	<p>envelope, and indicate his/her name on the outside. If the vote is close enough to warrant count of provisional ballots, membership status can then be researched via more extensive inquiry, and if the individual has been established as a member his or her ballot will be included in the final count.</p> <p>Regular ballots will indicate the question before the congregation, and respondents will be offered two choices: for termination of Barbara Jamestone's ministry at USH, or not.</p> <p>The motion is non-amendable motion. Two major perspectives be represented by Patrice Fitzgerald and Mike Winterfield, each of whom will be allotted 4 minutes to present. General debate will follow, alternating "sides" and with strict time limits on comments. When the time set for debate is over, a motion will be requested to execute the vote, followed by the vote count & announcement of results..</p>	
Council on Social Justice	Ed Savage's report detailed in Appendix A.	
Council on Administration	<p>Joe Rubin noted several areas to report.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have a new custodian, and are sorting out the issue of an evening attendant. The subcouncil, plus Greg Nickett (personnel) and John Bengston (sexton) have selected Briana Bittel to work 8 hours per week at \$10/hour. She will be supervised by John Bengston; Briana and John will work out her hours. Brian Mullen has no responsibility for Briana. 2. Finance and B&G recommend that, for meetinghouse groups and organizations meeting on nights when the building is not otherwise open, these groups have responsibility for letting themselves in and out. Keys or keycards will be provided to board members, subcouncil chairs, and select other individuals who lead established activities. For outside groups, we will charge \$10 per hour to cover the cost of an attendant. If the custodian chooses to be that attendant (and it does not interfere with other duties), that is fine... otherwise, someone else will be recruited. AA is regarded as part of the congregation; their liaison, known to us in a long-time relation of trust, will receive a key and there will be no additional charge. (Currently AA contributes \$40/month for use of space.) 3. Regarding distribution of keys, Joe offered a motion as follows: "The Board shall establish a policy that access to building, outside those hours it normally is open, will be available by keys to board members, subcouncil chairs, or a designated leader of a USH-affiliated group or activity at the request of the chair of the relevant subcouncil. Meetings still need to be scheduled in advance through the business manager or other staff. Outside groups shall be charged \$10/hour to pay an attendant. AA will be treated as a church organization & given a key." Seconded by Peter Meny; all in favor. 	
Council on Community Within	Don Reichler is encouraging the subcouncils to communicate about architectural bus tour (October 16) to gain additional participation. (Cedric comments — Roy Cook is happy to assist in marketing this... info on sandwich board, for instance. Joe has asked Roy & Hugh Schweitzer to be available to explain building during the tour; they're on board.)	
Council on Spiritual Life	Carol Davidson is out of town.	
Treasurer's Report	Liz Garmise notes finance meetings have changed their start time to 6 p.m. Finance meeting minutes are available separately.	

Minister

The minister indicated that a main goal currently is to complete the conflict management program.

Two additional initiatives undertaken by the minister need board accession: allotment of additional space downstairs, for the Junior Leagues backpack program, and an approach by the Village for Families and Children to collaborate at some level on cooperative programming.

Ed Savage asked whether these projects fit our model of governance & sustainability? Has a leader of SJ groups been involved in discussions? Will this Village project drain resources from other efforts? We can continue to provide current level of space to the Junior League & request meeting with them to find out more about their initiatives. Ed recalled that, in our history, choosing new projects was done very carefully in terms of impact on community and meaning to the congregation. He is loath to short-circuit that process, given our limited resources. There's no reason not to assume we can develop relationship, but we need not to make a commitment based on very short exposure and whim. USH needs to plan what we're doing, and who we're doing it for. Meetings for initial information-gathering and mutual familiarization are fine, as long as we do not prematurely over-commit ourselves.

Peter Meny opined that a gestation period is good for any major project, and training may be involved (as with our tutoring program). However, interest and energy is lost if only the big, long-term programs are considered. We also need small steps, small projects, and informational meetings — otherwise, interest is lost. So both are necessary.

Edith Savage (visiting) asked to comment, as she was principal at the Village for a year and knows the staff, children, and procedures. The Village has a very long process of vetting any volunteer working with any of the children there. The children are not there for minor reasons. They have no families, no place to go when they leave, some are extremely fragile; and extensive volunteer training is essential. Interaction or activity cannot be undertaken lightly. The kids may not react in expected ways; volunteers cannot take things personally; there are major privacy issues (DCF). These can be very complex situations, and must be treated that way. The children can be hurt easily. Also some are very transient. Utmost care & understanding, patience, & communication is needed in any dealings with them, and this may not be a good fit for USH volunteer commitments.

The board thanked those present, and went into executive session.

Meeting was adjourned at 2115.

Board members (Peter Meny, Ed Savage) will meet or at least speak with representatives of the Junior League and Village. The Junior League will be able to use our shelf space, but conversations will need to happen with them and the Village to determine if there's a fit for a wider relationship.

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Respectfully submitted,

Christina Davies, Secretary

Appendix A

Social Justice Council Chair Report – September 2011

Actions:

Ed Savage met with leaders of the following groups to get some ideas for 2011-12

Green Sanctuary – continue the Green Sales table, perhaps on a reduced schedule, sharing resources with Fair Trade. Focus on sustaining educational efforts through e-news and other events. Support the PACE meeting in November, if it turns out to be relevant.

Information and Advocacy – Try to recruit more members, in order to continue Fair Trade, Food Pantry. Link to organizations in Hartford area on Muslim immigrants issues, peacemaking, LGBT rights, poverty through GHICEJ.

Education Partnership – continue to recruit tutors, especially to expand Rawson School presence, link to Christian Activities Council. Continue the annual service collection (May 2012) dedicated to ICEJ.

Interweave – continuing to sponsor booth at PRIDE gathering in September.
Develop an action agenda.

We are planning to have a SJ team attend the Clara Barton workshop on October 1 on the topic of Congregation-based Social Justice organizing. 3 persons have committed, tentatively to attend; BJ and Green Sanctuary are also invited.

Plan for 2011 – Ed developed the following personal calendar, subject to change:
This will be shared with the various sub-councils soon.

September – Survey attendees at the COM workshop on 9/11. Analyze results and seek broader responses. Check Church Windows database. Continue interviewing individuals, especially for Education Partnership at Rawson Middle School.

October - Leadership development -- attending the Clara Barton District SJ workshop with a team; encourage sub-groups to develop action plans/calendars. SJ Concert in tandem with Worship/Music task force sub-group on Peacemaking theme.

Indigenous People's Day is October 10.

November - Green education event (PACE workshop), Transgender day of Remembrance, recruiting SJ folk from membership list.

December : meeting / seminar on SJ starts - to initiate new SJ goals and group solidarity.

Feb - try to get a school vacation trip to Haiti or other UUSC service site for youth and parents.

April: Progress assessment to the Congregation / from congregation.

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