

UUCR Board Meeting Minutes
February 24, 2022
Virtual Zoom Meeting

In Attendance: Reverend Scott Alexander, Holly Anderson, Kathy Deligianis, Jessie Fortner, Joanne Jessen, Carol Plumlee, Chris Topoleski, Claire Tse

Absent: Mark Sheppard, Anna Wesley

Chalice Lighting and Check-In: President Holly Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm by lighting a chalice and sharing a quote from Ben Horowitz: "If you make decisions that everybody likes all the time, then those are the decisions that they would make without you. So, you are not actually adding any value....Almost by definition a lot of the most important decisions end up being ones that people don't agree with, don't like, and are difficult, and cause people not to like you, at least for a while."

President's Report:

- Consent agenda: There were no changes to the Minutes of the January 27 Board Meeting. They will be sent to Beth for posting.
- Consent agenda: One minor change was suggested for the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of February 21, 2021. Once the change is made, these will be forwarded to Beth for posting.
- Consent agenda: A report from the COVID-19 Task Force with new recommendations (Attachment)
- Holly introduced Chris Topoleski, the new at-large Board member. Chris took a few minutes to talk about his background and interests.
- Sam McClain has been added to the slate for the Nominations Committee.
- Holly attended a recent meeting of the Personnel Committee.
- The Board concurs with a recommendation that minister and staff salaries at least match UUA Guidelines and that all staff should have the same benefits.
- UUCR's 50th Anniversary Celebration did not happen as planned. However, Linda Holloway has volunteered to put together a commemorative book to honor the church's history and is currently gathering materials.
- HVAC orientation meetings were held this past Sunday and Wednesday to describe the proposed system to the congregation and to request additional funds. The new system will be voted on at the upcoming Annual Meeting.
- Annual Meeting, Sunday, February 28 after church. The congregation will be voting on the slate of new officers for the 2022-23 church year. They are also voting on approval of a contract for a new HVAC system for the church. Nonnie Mullins will manage the electronic polling. Claire volunteered to help monitor "raised hands" and questions in the chat box.
- Stewardship campaign: Cara Fortner briefed the Board on the campaign, which kicks off on March 6 and runs through the March 30. She requested the Board's help with phone calls and thank you notes.

Minister's Report

- Rev. Scott has requested staff to write up 3 or 4 goals for the coming year to improve “engagement” among members of the congregation. Rev. Scott also plans on restarting some old activities and initiating some new activities, again with the goal of improving engagement.
- Rev. Scott, along with the Board, acknowledged how very difficult the past year and a half has been for ALL of the staff.

Vice President’s Report

- Jessie reported that the new contract for elevator maintenance has been signed.

Treasurer’s Report

- Kathy reported that, although there will likely be a deficit again this year, at this point it is difficult to estimate because of the unusual circumstances of COVID. Some budgeted costs have increased while others have decreased. Income from pledges has maintained a good level but weekly donations have declined. Rental income is nil, aside from the school.

Strategic Action Plan: The Board’s December meeting was held in person at the church and consisted of a strategic goal setting by the Board. A lengthy list was generated and then prioritized. The following three priorities were identified for 2022:

- the search for a settled minister
- engagement of members/building community
- facilities improvements

The remainder of the meeting was spent discussing and brainstorming on ways that the board and individual board members can work on the priority of improving engagement.

The meeting ended with Board members recognizing and appreciating the contributions of others and adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Attachment:

The COVID-19 Task Force recommends that the Board consider announcing reopening UUCR’s building, as proposed below:

UUCR is beginning a transition back to in-person worship and other activities. This decision reflects the steady decline in cases in Fairfax and Loudoun counties as the omicron surge recedes, as well as the substantial protection from severe disease offered by vaccination and mask-wearing. For now, due to the limited ventilation in the building, we will continue to restrict the number of people present in the sanctuary and require mask-wearing for all while indoors. With improved ventilation, we look forward to easing overall restrictions over time, while providing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment that allows individual members and visitors to take the steps needed to engage in community and still meet their personal needs for safety.

As of March, and until ventilation has improved, the following measures will be in place:

- Hybrid worship will resume so that there is a choice between virtual and in-person attendance. Capacity in the sanctuary will be capped at 60 people. Registration will be open for Sunday services on the UUCR website.
- Each attendee will wear a mask while indoors.
- There will be no congregational singing. Performing vocalists will be fully vaccinated.
- Religious Education classes will meet downstairs with the same precautions as before the omicron surge
- Food and drink will be served outdoors after the service, weather permitting, on our new deck.
- Those entering the building will have the option to use red, yellow, and green stickers on their name tags to indicate their preferences regarding maintaining physical distance. A red sticker indicates a preference to maintain 6 feet of physical distance; a yellow sticker indicates comfort with less distance but a preference to avoid touching; and a green sticker indicates a willingness to return to handshakes and hugs. In the absence of a sticker, please generally maintain 3-6 feet of distance from members of other households.

Small groups and other activities will resume with the same requirements as in early December, before the disruption of the omicron surge. We anticipate that once ventilation in the building is improved, we will be able to further ease restrictions safely.