

**Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist**  
**Minutes of the Board Meeting**  
**March 18, 2015**

The following members of the Board of Trustees were present in person at the meeting:, Matt Briddell, John Conneely, Mike Gilley, Alan Greenland, Mary Johnson, Gloria Kinney, Deb Quentel and Sheryl Skifstad. Karen Noorani participated via Skype and was not counted as part of the quorum under the terms of the Bylaws. Mike Berry and arrived during the meeting, as noted below.

Senior Minister, Reverend Hilary Landau Krivchenia, was present as well.

The following individuals were present: Dan Yokas, Nominating Committee; Judy Ball, COREM; and Reverend Colleen Vahey.

There was an in-person quorum at all times.

President Mike Gilley called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

**Board Covenant**

At the September 2014 Board Retreat, the members of the Board of Trustees wrote a covenant intended to shape the trustees' interactions with each other that reflected this year's Board of Trustees. The trustees read the board covenant out loud.

**New Business**

**Consent Agenda Items**

Matt Briddell made a motion to accept the following Consent Agenda items:

- Meeting Minutes from past Board Meeting
- Ministers & Staff Reports – Rev. Hilary Krivchenia and Rev. Colleen Vahey
- Operations Team Report
- Strategic Planning Team
- Membership Committee Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Music Director Search
- Preliminary Budget Prioritization with Ministry Council

John Conneely seconded the motion and President Mike Gilley opened the floor for discussion.

The Board noted a comment in Rev. Krivchenia's report about congregation "burnout." The Board commented that Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist is a great congregation with a lot of great ideas. And, each idea creates a team which is then too busy to work on the various projects. The Board noted that this meeting is not the place to address this issue.

The Board was reminded that as a congregation, and as a Board, we need to look at the array of tasks and projects that must be taken care of. The Board cannot consider eliminating leadership positions until we determine what tasks are critical. The Board should consider large term list of items we are working on. From there we can prioritize activities.

Presently, the Ministry Council is trying to determine if CCUU has too many committees. For example, there is presently a Search Committee, Personnel Committee, Ministry Council and numerous task forces that exist. More significantly, perhaps is that many of the same people serve on the different and overlapping committees.

The Board our habit of creating a task force to address each new problem or issue that arises rather than considering what existing entity could address it. The President reminded the Board that there are stakeholders outside the board meeting room who had a concern about what changes get made.

Discussion concluded and the Board voted on the motion; the motion to accept the consent agenda items passed unanimously.

President Gilley stated that the Strategic Planning Committee will provide a report in April. Briefly, the Board recognized that voting during the March 8<sup>th</sup> event was broad; congregants were instructed they could vote for as many items as they wished.

Michael Berry joined the meeting.

The Board noted that while it did not think people did cumulative voting for items if many congregants voted for an item of lesser importance to them, the overall vote could be skewed if for example on item was choice 10 for 50% of the participants.

There being no further discussion the President called for a vote. There were eight votes in favor and Mike Berry abstained. The motion to accept the Consent Agenda items passed.

## **Unfinished Business**

### **Stewardship Campaign - Next Steps**

As a reminder, members of the Stewardship Campaign were identified: Karen Noorani, Mike Berry, Mike Gilley and Alan Greenland. Treasurer Mary Johnson reported that 139 units (of 233 units) or 60% of congregants have pledged 67% of next year's target number. We are now at the point of assigning calls to request pledges and thank everyone who has sent in their pledge form. The Ministry Council is creating a strategy for assigning calls. President Gilley suggested a training / celebration evening for members of the Ministry Council and Board. After pizza and training, everyone would begin to make calls. The Treasurer was asked what additional percent of pledges would be contributed by members who have been on Countryside Express and who have not yet submitted their pledge forms.

President Gilley asked that the Board set aside 7 p.m. March 25<sup>th</sup> for training and pizza.

### **Budget Process – Next Steps**

President Gilley reported that the prioritization has been set by the committee. He stated that the top priority was to take care of the building. Additionally, funds must be added to the Capital Reserve account. The Board discussed comments from congregants raised during the Town Hall meeting suggesting that half of the proceeds of any fundraising benefits go to Capital Reserve. Gilley reminded the Board that this was on the agenda for later in the discussion.

The Budget Team Group will be getting together again to further consider prioritization keeping in mind the prioritization dots from the Strategic Planning Committee event.

President Gilley requested that the Ministry Council prioritize their committees' and budgets.

### **Online Voting - Language for Bylaws Amendment**

Alan Greenland reported that the team had proposed modified language to the Board in December 2014. The Board discussed the value of allowing the Senior Minister to call a special meeting as well. The Board still intends to submit this to the congregation at the May Annual Meeting. The Board decided to discuss this in more detail at the April meeting to allow the members of the Board of Trustees the month of March to consider this issue more deeply.

Issues of concern included the need to take minutes – It was thought that minutes should be kept at these shortly drawn meeting and if the secretary is not present to take minutes, then another board member has to assume that role. Additional issues discussed included the need for a large enough quorum so as to be inclusive and the need for proper and timely notice to the congregation.

Mary Johnson left the meeting.

The Board noted that in creating any changes for special meetings, it has to consider how this will work with a less cohesive board.

Mary Johnson rejoined the meeting.

It was agreed the task force would meet again to re-draft the language.

### **Safety Team Recommendations**

President Gilley reported that he had talked with the Palatine Police and CCUU's insurance company about removing the "no handgun" sign. A compelling argument to remove the sign was the possibility of liability because of an interaction between the Church Administrator and CCUU's insurance company. However, the insurance company advised President Gilley in writing that CCUU incurred no extra liability by having the sign.

However, if a member of the staff or board member knows someone is coming into the building with a gun, we are obligated to tell that person that they have to remove the gun. If the staff or board member does not direct the person to remove his or her gun, then there are liability issues for CCUU. The Safety Task Force has also suggested hiring an armed security guard during service.

The question was raised whether CCUU had received any threats. No one present was aware of any direct threats. The Board expressed a concern that our core values could make Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist a target. Regardless of whether the sign is posted, the Board affirmed its concern about the safety of our children. The board discussed whether the sign's posting keeps us safer.

The Board noted that the Safety Task Force has made an advisement. The Board is sharing the letter form the insurance company with the Safety Task Force. The Board discussed the extent to which the Board's decision should be influenced by the task Force's suggestion. The Board discussed alternative solutions such as hiring someone to watch the service from the back of the sanctuary and panic buttons.

Reverend Colleen Vahey stated that several years ago she met with a Palatine police officer, whose role is to help schools and worship centers identify needed items for safety planning and procedures. He did a walk-through of our building and made recommendations. She will send that report to President Gilley. She noted that he might be a good resource to consult again.

The Board deferred a vote to consider the issue further.

### **New Business**

#### **Revisiting policy on fundraiser events: partner donations vs. operating budget support**

Considering the time, this issue was deferred to allow Judy Ball and Reverend Colleen Vahey to address the Board.

Rev. Vahey stated that she had met with COREM, Reverend Krivchenia, President Mike Gilley, and President-elect Karen Noorani to inform them that she does not plan to renew her contract after its expiration June 30, 2015. Reverend Vahey wants to spend more time with her family and pursue new possibilities for ministry. This was a decision made after much careful thought and discernment.

Members of the Board expressed how much they will miss her.

Reverend Krivchenia has made preliminary inquiries to the Unitarian Universalist Association to get our congregation listed for interim RE directors. This is the standard procedure. Additionally, as the senior minister, Reverend Krivchenia is creating a small team to consider applications from interim religious educators. A letter to the congregation is going out tomorrow morning - the morning of March 19<sup>th</sup>.

Turning to another aspect of the religious education program, it was noted that someone could be hired for the RE Assistant position as early as April. The interviews are scheduled later this week. Reverend Krivchenia and Reverend Vahey wanted to wait until Reverend Vahey's departure was announced to allow for transparency in the hiring process.

The role of interim religious educator was explained to the Board; their primary role is to be an interim religious educator. So whether the role lasts one or two years does not have to be decided now.

Importantly, there will be a leave taking ritual in June to bless Reverend Vahey in her future adventures.

Attached to these minutes will be the letters from Rev. Colleen Vahey to the congregation and from President Mike Gilley.

### **Action Items**

#### **Recap of action items and confirmation of owners**

The Board members reviewed all Action items from the meeting.

#### **Closing Reading and Process Check-out**

Following the closing reading, the Board of Trustees implemented its process check-out for the benefit of the Trustees.

**Adjournment**

After the reading, Alan Greenland made a motion to adjourn. Sheryl Skifstad seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board of Trustees meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees is Wednesday, April 15, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. at Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Deb Quentel, Secretary of the Board of Trustees, CCUU