

MINUTES FOR
UU ASHEVILLE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
NOVEMBER 8, 2022

We met via Zoom. Present were Clyde Hardin, Adam Griffith, Julie Stoffels, Laurel Amabile, Karen Dill, Margaret McAlister, Mary Alm, Will Jernigan, Rev. Cathy Harrington and Wendy B. Motch-Ellis. Cliff Hall was absent.

1. Call to Order

6:03 p.m.

2. Opening Words & Chalice Lighting

Will shared thoughts about empathy and empathic listening.

3. Check-in

Wendy joined us this evening. Attendees shared with one another.

4. Consent Agenda

All aspects of the consent agenda were accepted unanimously.

5. Report from Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) and Draft Contract

Report

Gina Phairas joined us to provide an update on the work of the MSC. There are 59 pages of notes from the Cottage Meetings and Focus Groups. 132 persons completed the MSC survey.

Responses from the Cottage Meetings: 40% of responses were from people in the 70-79 age range. Information gleaned from the meetings follows:

We are a welcoming congregation open to differences; interested in inclusion and multigenerational focus. We are committed to social justice. Very happy with the initiatives and energy of Reverend Claudia.

Who do we want to be? Social Justice; Building Community; Pastoral Care and care for one another.

Work to continue: 8th Principle; external pastoral care; grow adult RE; Covenant groups; More LGBTQ; concern about visitor revolving door; grow financially.

Worship: inspired; challenged; surprised; connected. Love: music!; children present; movement during service. Ready to learn new things.

Hope for new minister: worship leadership; pastoral care; social justice; prophetic visioning; live more in UU faith. The minister should have administrative leadership skills that support our Governance model. Our children want someone with a kind heart, a cooperative person, one who is calm, a good listener who pays attention.

What would define a successful choice: Pleased to be attending; Congregation is growing; we are financially secure; we are connected with the Asheville community; We will know the minister and they will know us. Open to Change: Is this the right model: Governance? leadership development; adult education.

What's next in the process: November: we will finish the congregational record, ready for November 15th—reviewed by Rev Cathy and the UU staff. Buildings tour: lagging a bit. Pre-candidating weekends are set. There will be three. Interviews will commence in January.

Draft Contract: Mary moved that we approve the draft contract. Will seconded. Benefits were discussed and the minimum salary of \$86,000. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Update Reports

Meet the Moment (Second Ask)

Will reported that we have \$104,000 toward the \$120,000 goal. The campaign was a success! Mary asked if that amount included the unexpected \$25,000 pledged before the ask. It does not. Only 40% of households gave to MTM, with giving ranging from \$15 to several thousand dollars.

New Administrator Integration

Wendy and Rev. Cathy both spoke to this point. Reverends Claudia and Cathy had a meeting with Wendy this morning which went very well. Wendy has had support as she began. Wendy is focusing on relationship-building. Transactional issues: agreement with Johnson Controls. Workers comp provider is recommending change. Bizwoks negotiating is in process. This discussion will continue off-line as it is assumed that Wendy is empowered to make these decisions.

Rev. Cathy pointed out that social justice information should be shared with the congregation.

7. Kudos!

To Clyde and Will for the service on November 6th. To all who called congregants to ask for meeting the moment. To Will for taking on Meet the Moment. To the MSC for their stellar work. To Rev. Cathy and Wendy for joining us this evening.

8. Board Racial Justice Task Force (RJTF)

Mary suggested that we have a discussion to consider hiring the firm Equity Over Everything to complete an equity audit.

Margaret suggested that some of the questions raised might be unrealistic to request. Karen stated that the UCC information that Clyde shared gave explicit information that this proposal does not give to us. What is the end product? What should we expect?

Cathy suggested that we do know more explicitly what will occur in the three one-hour sessions.

Laurel suggested that it would be responsible for us to determine what time goes into the report. How will the per-diem rate be calculated? “I want to see this happen and I want to be sure we are being authentic in reporting out to the congregation and being responsible for our selection.”

Clyde talked with a teacher who worked with Aisha Adams who said that Joseph Fox would also be a viable choice for this.

Wendy asked if we are looking for additional resources? “I have a suggestion but they are not local. I have heard from the Board of Trustees that they question whether or not we have done due diligence.”

Margaret stated that it appears that we should ask for other bids. If the Board agrees. She stated that Wendy may be an important resource.

Will suggested that we need to have more input into the process. We need to be informed and also accept on faith. We could decide to accept ACRJ recommendations.

Julie asked if we might receive more detail from Aisha Adams regarding the questions that Clyde detailed. Mary responded that we should not expect more information from Ms. Adams.

Adam accepts the questions suggested by other Board members as viable. He stated that he prefers that we continue more exploration.

Clyde stated that we are all volunteers. If the RJTF insists on this choice, and given the resources we have, perhaps we could consider more investigation.

Wendy suggested Self; Community; System as three areas of focus. We do need to be aware of governance focus. Have we thought about the process? Or are we just going to jump in? Does the committee know the process and journey for accomplishing this?

Mary withdrew her motion.

Clyde gave kudos to the RJTF, especially focusing on their commitment to the importance of this work

9. Retreat Follow-up

This will be part of our next Board meeting. Or perhaps we have our work well defined.

10. Racial Justice Check

A healthy amount of our time was focused on this.

11. Process Observation

Thoughtful discussion was accomplished.

12. Closing Words and Chalice Extinguishing

“How to Fly” by Douglas Adams—Will

13. Adjournment

8:03 p.m

Respectfully Submitted,

Julie Stoffels, Clerk