

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Galveston County

Board Minutes – Thursday, September 16, 2021

Item	Summary
	Present: Ali Tranquilli, Kathy Link, Mary Case, Steve Townley, Carlos Price (via Zoom), Shirley Adams, Suzette Tardif, Jo Ross / Timekeeper: Kathy
Opening	Ali called the meeting to order at 6:10p with the lighting of the chalice. (A Zoom issue had to be resolved.)
Minutes	*Board minutes from 8/19/21 were distributed for comment via email by Jo. Kathy made a motion to accept the minutes, Steve seconded, and the motion passed.
Finance Committee Proposal	<p>Carlos Price, Finance Committee Chair, discussed the 9/10/21 email (below) that he sent to the Board. He said approval would have to come from percentages of the Board members and the Fellowship membership (in a called meeting), but he is only asking for consideration at this time.</p> <p><u>“Proposal for Endowment Fund</u></p> <p>I would like to propose the designation of a fund called the Endowment Fund. The original money to be included in the fund comes from 3 sources in our existing funding designations and general fund.</p> <p>First, a few years ago we received \$29,363.97 from UUA as our percentage of a gift to several churches from an estate. The money has been sitting in a board designated fund entitled Board Discretionary Fund in our Frost checking account. As such it earns no interest. The second source of funds is a recent \$10,000 left to us by Neil. The third source is a \$20,000 fund that the board decided to invest in long-term CDs that was in University Federal Credit Union and earning only .01% interest. The money was invested in four \$5000 CDs tied to the stock market. If held to maturity, the principal was insured against loss and the interest was based on market returns. The first of the four matured on Aug. 30, 2021. The value is now \$5,983.58. That represents a gain of \$983.58 over the 4 years it was invested. That money is now in a cash account with the CUSO portfolio. I suggest we reinvest it. One other \$5,000 CD matures next August. The final two in 2024. If the money is needed the CDs can be sold on the secondary market at whatever the current market value may be. Even if the stock market declines, the principal is guaranteed. These funds were invested in CUSO Financial Services based on the recommendation of Rodney Nelson, investment advisor for UFCU.</p> <p>My proposal is to round the initial investment to \$60,000 for our endowment fund. The fund would provide a designated place for bequests from wills, memorials and honorariums. It would allow for investments at a better earnings rate than short term CDs, checking and money market funds.</p> <p>Most of our largest contributors to our annual budget are in their 70s and 80s. We have recently lost some members who have either passed away or moved. By having an endowment, we can ensure that our work in the community can continue if we run into difficult financial times in the future.</p> <p>Rules and procedures for maintaining the Endowment fund will need to be adopted by the board. I suggest we start with the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Funds can only be withdrawn from the Endowment in time of severe financial crises. 2. After the fund exceeds \$100,000, one-half of the earnings each year may be used for normal budgetary needs or left in the fund at the board’s discretion. 3. The Fund assets may be used to secure a loan for future building needs.

	<p>4. Any withdrawal of funds or pledging the assets for loan security would require a three-fourth majority vote of the board and a majority of the fellowship's members in a member poll or an annual or special meeting.</p> <p>5. Investment criteria should be set by the board.</p> <p>6. The direction of the fund and investment decisions shall be guided by an Endowment Investment Committee comprised of the Board President, Board Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair, and two members appointed by the board. (For the initial appointees, I recommend Stan Blayzk and David Bowers).</p> <p>At the present time, our budget has been stable for several years. The money from the two bequests presents us with an opportunity to do something to help ensure our work can continue even in difficult times. We have not needed the \$20,000 designated by the board for long-term investments. It seems like the perfect time to set up an Endowment Fund.”</p> <p>Carlos also proposed securing a loan from Frost Bank, if we want to expand the building or in case of a major catastrophe. The Fellowship has good credit, since we paid off our loan early. No money would be taken from our Frost Bank accounts.</p> <p>Ali said she would like for us to do capital planning in the future, and we will utilize Carlos' information. She thanked him and the Finance Committee.</p>
<p>Treasurer's Report</p>	<p><i>*The current month's expense report was emailed to the Board by Carlos.</i></p> <p>Steve reported that the bills are paid to-date. He has been talking with Carlos about the liquidity of our funds. The committees are all within their budgets. Pledges are coming in at a steady rate. Our bank account looks good. In response to a question by Shirley, Steve said that the current monthly revenue reports do not show the compassionate offering totals because the Breeze tallies don't come in until later in the month. He again suggested it might be beneficial to move the board meetings to the beginning of the month, in order for the financial information to be more current.</p> <p>Ali said that some expenses have not been included in the budget: 1) Upgrade the projector in the sanctuary, and 2) Roof replacement may include mold treatment and repairing substructure. We will need to designate the funds to use, and the Board can approve a separate line item. Discussion followed.</p> <p>Kathy made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report, Mary seconded, and the motion passed.</p>
<p>Mission-Based Committee Updates</p>	<p><u>Social Action Committee – Shirley</u> <i>*The Social Action Committee Charter was sent to the Board via email.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Committee meets next week; many members are not attending in person yet. - More than 20 UU people attended the Feeding Galveston event on 9/11/21. - Looking at resuming preparing lasagna for the ACCT luncheons. - Sandra Sullivan is a good role model for activities that she's done in the past. - Encouraging people to attend the National Women's March on Saturday, 10/2. - Asking to change the compassionate offering in September to the First UU Church of New Orleans. The minister has asked if the donation can be sent by Paypal. Motion to approve the September change made by Shirley, seconded by Suzette, motion passed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The committee is sending postcards to Florida for first-time voters and will ask people to take a packet on Sunday to complete. - The committee has a \$1,000 budget and will ask for an increase, if needed. - May need to reorder our blue UU t-shirts and On the Side of Love gold t-shirts. Ali said she will find out where t-shirt purchases are charged. Discussion followed about ordering specific sizes for participants or ordering different size lots. Ali said she and Margaret Canavan can talk about making the orders. - For compassionate offerings, we are trying to tie the monthly recipients to the monthly theme of our services. <p><u>Bowlers Group Committee</u> – No update. (Madeleine Baker not in attendance.)</p> <p><u>Welcoming Congregation Committee – Suzette</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The first meeting took place this week on Zoom. - A lot has been accomplished. Michelle Bennett has been doing a good job with the UUA requirements for the congregation to meet. - Need something within our services to acknowledge important dates and dates of observance that relate to LGBTQ issues. - Committee suggested adding language into our BMOD text for Sunday services; this will ensure that we are taking action to get our Welcoming Congregation designation. Ali read the proposed BMOD script, as provided by Suzette. Group discussion followed. The motion to add the script was made by Mary, seconded by Shirley, and the motion passed. Suzette is next Sunday’s BMOD and will send the new text to Ali, who will add it to the BMOD book. Mary requested that she make multiple copies for the BMOD notebook on the podium and to use a larger font. - Committee has had good discussions about overlap between our Welcoming Congregation and events we want to do. - Ali and Suzette said that all of the committee members are engaged, and it is a well-functioning committee.
<p>President’s Report</p>	<p>On August 3, Ali sent an email to the committee chairs and members regarding the upcoming schedule and requesting information and feedback on these topics: Board/committee connection, creating a comprehensive contractor contact list, website update, a five-year look ahead for capital planning, and volunteer coordination and monthly updates.</p>
<p>Committee/ Board Member Reports</p>	<p><u>Coordinating Committee (C-Team) – Mary</u> <i>*Mary emailed the minutes of the 9/10/21 committee meeting to the Board.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The committee met last Friday and did a lot of good work. - It will be good to get other committee chairs to attend. - People are pitching in. - Madeleine Baker told her that they are almost to their goal for the Bowls Group and may find other projects. - Maggie Pinson is helping with the newsletter. Margaret is doing news and events and the monthly newsletter and calendar. Pam Johnson is helping Margaret on the website. People can check their own giving details in Breeze. <p><u>Building Maintenance – Ali</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maggie Pinson is working on a current list of building keyholders. Ali said she is doing a great job. <p><u>Comprehensive Contact List – Ali</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We need a centralized list of outside contractors who can be contacted for work on the building, and she is trying to collect the information. The intent is to

	<p>collect contact information for anyone who is external with whom the committees interact. She has asked the committee chairs to get any names and contact info from their members.</p> <p><u>Membership – Mary and Shirley</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A visitor’s form will be added to the back of the Orders of Service and a basket placed in the lobby for them. The BMOD should place them in the Membership mailbox at the end of each Sunday service. Suzette will write a draft statement for the BMOD text and submit it to the Board; Ali will add it to the script. Margaret and Cheryl are creating a separate card for the visitor information.
<p>Old Business</p>	<p><u>Dual Platform Services</u> (General Update, UUA Guidelines, Masks, Contact Tracing) – Ali said that we have a good, ongoing pattern for the services for now, and there have been no recent complaints.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Metric-based Guidelines</u> – Suzette has nothing to report at present, due to the Covid vaccination situation. She may have a report for the next Board meeting. - <u>Guidelines for October</u> – Group discussed the current Zoom procedures. Mary said she misses the Sunday potlucks. Suzette said that there has been a steady decline of in-person attendance, that this is a meaningful negative effect, and that we need to do forward-thinking about Zoom for those who think it is beneficial for the future. The motion to continue the current guidelines for October was made by Suzette, seconded by Shirley, and the motion passed. <p><u>Building Use Policy Review and Revised Guidelines and Forms</u> – Mary <i>*The two revised guidelines, three application forms, and a letter from UAA were emailed to the Board by Mary.</i></p> <p>Mary has revised the Building Use Guidelines for 1) Members and 2) Non-Members and discussed them. The Board may waiver fees, and applications can be reviewed individually. She broke the Building Use Agreement forms into separate forms: 3) One-Time Use by a Member, 4) Regularly-Scheduled Meetings by Non-Member, and 5) One-Time Use by Non-Member.</p> <p>A form can be approved online by the Board, if there is not time to wait for a monthly meeting. Our website’s Calendar of Events is maintained by Margaret Canavan and Mary. Maggie Pinson and Pam Johnson will also have access. Discussion followed.</p> <p>Jo asked who will be responsible for giving out keys for building use. Mary said that whoever issues the key can also check the building after the event. It can be handled on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Mary moved to accept the revised Building Use Forms, Kathy seconded, and the motion passed.</p> <p>Mary discussed a request from the UAA-University Area Association in Galveston, a voluntary neighborhood association, to use our building for their meetings. Discussion followed, including whether the Fellowship should join the association as a possible outreach opportunity. Ali said she will contact them to inquire about their annual dues.</p> <p><u>Annual Audit</u> – Ali reported that she and Linda Harvey will participate in the audit, which will entail maybe two two-hour sessions. Shirley said she can assist.</p>

New Business	<p><u>Hardship Fund</u> – Mary said that we still have guidelines for the fund and will send it to Ali, and it will be wrapped into our larger policies and procedures. The fund provides financial assistance for members who have emergencies that interfere with daily living. The Board approves funds on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p><u>Board Workshops</u> – These will include the topics of visioning and organizing our policies and procedures, and there will be three two-hour evening sessions. Discussion followed. The first two workshops will be planned for Tuesday, 10/5, and Tuesday, 11/9. The third workshop will be scheduled later.</p> <p><u>Other Discussion</u> – Ali asked about participating in the Bryan Museum’s Trunk and Treat event. The group consensus was for us to wait until 2022.</p> <p><u>Children’s RE</u> – Suzette asked about developing a Children’s RE program. Mary said that the Fellowship has craft items but no curriculum materials and that the UUA does not provide curriculum for RE. Our RE leader has used primarily craft-based lessons. Suzette said she will look into it. Kathy suggested using the Rosenberg Library as a resource.</p>
Questions and Concerns	<p>Steve again suggested moving the monthly Board meetings to earlier each month, so that all of the previous month’s financial information can be reported. Discussion followed. This change could begin in January, 2022.</p> <p>Steve made the motion to change the Board monthly meeting schedule, Suzette seconded, and the motion passed.</p>
Adjournment	<p>The meeting was adjourned at 8:05p.</p> <p>*Next meeting: 6:00p on Thursday, 10/21/21, at the Fellowship and via Zoom (as needed).</p>

Submitted by: Jo Ross, Board Secretary