

**The Community Church of Chapel Hill Unitarian Universalist
Minutes of Board Meeting of February 12, 2008**

Present: David Abels, Alyson Grine, Mary LeMay, Erich Lieth, Susan McDaniel, Joan Meade, Richard Perry, Susan Spalt, Penny Ward

Ex Officio: Morris Hutchins, Jay Miller

Absent: Barbara Chapman, Joel Grodensky, John Leopold

Minutes: Laurence Kirsch

Susan Spalt called the meeting to order at 7:00. Joan Meade lit the chalice.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda consisted of the following items:

- Minutes of Board Meeting of January 15, 2008
- Minutes of the Board Executive Committee Meeting of February 5, 2008
- Interim Minister's Report of February 2008
- endorsement request entitled "Conversations About Peace"
- Request from Joan Garnett, Peace and Justice Committee
- Re-Activation of the Manse Committee

Richard moved acceptance of the consent agenda. Alyson seconded. Unanimously approved.

GENERATIVE EXERCISE

The Board reviewed the current statement of purpose/vision, not to change the mission but to refine it. Susan Spalt began the discussion by noting that the Community Church has achieved substantially all of the long-term vision expressed in the Vision Statement of August 18, 1996. She asked the Board to discuss what is unique our church and what it does better than other churches. The ensuing discussion included the following points:

- The Church gives room for individuals to grow, and offers community, caring, acceptance, nurturing, and spiritual engagement for people who come here.
- The Church offers individuals the ability and even mandate to build one's own theology. Supporting spiritual journey is at the core of the church's purpose. Spiritual home is important in this church, for those of many creeds or no creed.
- There was debate about whether the Church's lack of a focused theology is good or bad. Some Board members said the Church is more of a community than a spiritual place, lacks consensus about what we are, lacks focus, and does not really do community things.

Others expressed support for diversity of thought and noted that the Church has different groups of people working on many community projects. There was debate over whether these various groups were an indication of weakness (e.g., isolation among the groups) or strength (e.g., many opportunities for people to express different passions).

Susan Spalt suggested that the Generative Committee meet during Executive Committee meeting or at some other time to further discuss these issues.

REPORTS

1. Treasurer's Report

Jay Miller has produced but not distributed financial statements for January, as he does not think that one month of results for 2008 is meaningful.

Jay reported that the parking lot management is in transition and has been made difficult because the new manager person has not been trained by the outgoing manager. Jay expects that the system can work and that we should be able to collect accounts receivable for 2007. He said that there is no need present for Board action.

The Church needs to replace its adjustable-rate building loan with a long-term fixed mortgage. The Church's financial plans anticipated that the long-term interest rate would be around 8% per annum, but rates have recently fallen to 6%, allowing a \$5,000 per year savings. The Finance Committee requests the Board's authorization to lock-in a \$490,000 at 6.5% per annum. There was discussion of whether the Church should wait to re-finance in the hope that interest rates might drop further. Mary LeMay moved to accept the Finance Committee recommendation to lock in a \$490,000 15-year fixed rate loan at a rate at 6.5% or lower as soon as possible. Richard Perry seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Alyson Grine moved to explicitly authorize the Finance Committee to act on its recommendation. Seconded by Erich Lieth. Unanimously approved.

2. Workshop in March

There is a multi-congregational event on March 8, with registration at 8:30 am and the event running from 9 am to 4 pm, at ERUF. This event is seeking to find ways for the congregations to work together on social justice issues. The Board's authorization last fall anticipated that at least half of Board would attend.

3. Ministerial Search Committee

Penny Ward reported that 26 ministerial applicants have been narrowed down to 4. Pre-candidating weekends are scheduled in February and March. Steve Warshaw wants good communication around the candidating week: April 26-May 4. Erich Lieth aims to get as many congregation members involved as possible.

DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION

1. Seussical Money Report

Mary LeMay presented the recommendation of the Seussical Funds Task Force. The Task Force memorandum of February 12, 2008 recommends:

- i. “That we follow the same procedure that we would have (and should have) followed at the time the Seussical was proposed. The Music Committee should tell us which existing fund they want proceeds from Seussical to go toward.”
- ii. “That in light of the current budget shortfall, the Board put 20% of the proceeds of Seussical to the operating budget.”

The ensuing discussion included the following points made by some (but not all) members:

- The Board should have followed its normal procedures of determining how the disposition of funds should be disposed of. Church procedures do not allow Committees to raise money for whatever purpose that they want, but require that they go to existing funds. The Board has the responsibility to determine how money is spent.
- 20% is a reasonable or even low allowance for recovery of the Church’s overhead costs.
- The Board’s policy should be set to apply to all similar situations.
- The Board should have a discussion with the All Church Council on how to handle this situation because this situation raises culture change issues that need consensus building.
- The Board should not punish Glenn for doing a great job. The Seussical was an event that brought the whole church together. Susan Spalt would be happy to write a letter to Glenn expressing the Board’s appreciation for the Seussical.

Mary LeMay moved that the Board accepts the Task Force’s first recommendation and table the second. Seconded by Richard Perry. Unanimously approved.

2. Church Signing on to the Landfill Letter

The Peace and Justice Committee has asked that the Church sign on to the landfill letter. Richard Perry opposes any transfer station that send our county’s trash to other counties. Mary LeMay asked whether this Board is in a better position than government officials to figure this situation out.

Penny Ward moved acceptance of the proposal to sign the letter. Seconded by David Abels. The vote was 4 yes, 1 no, 3 abstentions. The motion failed because an 80% vote of all Board members, present or absent, is required for approval; so 10 yes votes are needed to pass.

3. Services Auction—Youth Programming Committee

The Youth Programming Committee has offered to conduct a Services Auction in September, and has requested Board authorization to do so. Susan Spalt noted that this request raises some of the same financial issues as did the Seussical. Susan McDaniel moved to accept the Committee’s offer to run the auction, but to not approve their proposal for how proceeds would

be allocated. Seconded by Alyson Grine. Approved. The financial allocation issues will be considered next month.

4. Benevolence Policy

This issue was postponed to the March Board meeting.

5. Nominating Committee Report and Recommendations

No action was taken.

6. Committee on Ministry

This Committee is now setting its first meeting.

7. Ministerial Search Committee

Steve Warshaw, head of Ministerial Search Committee, reported that the MSC saw its first candidate for dinner on Friday night, an all-day interview on Saturday, and a Sunday sermon at a nearby UU church. The Committee was impressed by the candidate. At the final meeting after Sunday lunch, the Committee asked if the candidate had any misgivings about our Church, at which point the candidate expressed concern about the cleanliness of our Church.

The Committee is concerned that we not unnecessarily lose candidates,; so the Committee wants the Church to be cleaned up before next candidate visits about February 23. The Committee proposes that two of its members (Cathy Cole and Gayle Ruedi) walk through the church and identify all problems of cleanliness, tidiness, and repair, and that Cara-Clean be given the list and take care of everything on that list before the next pre-candidate comes.

The ensuing discussion debated whether the Church should be overly clean for the candidates, and indicated that the Building and Grounds Committee Chair should be informed of the situation. Richard Perry moved to authorize the staff to take the list developed by the MSC and to rectify the identified problems up to a maximum expenditure of \$1,200 over the current operating budget allocation, and to involve Building and Grounds. Seconded by Penny Ward. Unanimously approved.

8. Facility Contract

Pat Smith has developed a new contract form that includes several clauses that address several important issues.

ADJOURNMENT

The next Board meeting is Tuesday 11 March at 7 pm. Erich Lieth will chair in Susan Spalt's planned absence.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm.