

**The Community Church of Chapel Hill Unitarian Universalist  
Minutes of Board Meeting of December 16, 2008**

**Present:** David Abels, Barbara Chapman, Alyson Grine, Joel Grodensky, Mary LeMay, John Leopold, Erich Lieth, Susan McDaniel, Richard Perry, Susan Spalt, Penny Ward

**Absent:** Joan Meade

**Ex Officio:** Maj-Britt Johnson, Scott Provan, George Thompson, Bob Weston

**Visitor** (part of meeting): Alan Spalt

**Minutes:** Laurence Kirsch

Susan Spalt called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. Richard Perry, the Board Member of the month, lit the chalice and offered a reading.

Susan introduced the new Board members and gave thanks to outgoing Board members. Joel Grodensky presented Susan with a gift on behalf of the Board.

Susan led a review of the Church's and the Board's achievements of the past year, particularly the improved organization of the Church that has moved some decision-making away from the Board and toward other Church committees. Hopes for the next year include:

- a. continuing coordination with other UU churches, particular Eno River UU Fellowship and the UU Fellowship of Raleigh;
- b. improving the website;
- c. continuing to improve the Church's financial position and governance;
- d. improving the definition of the Church's mission and purpose;
- e. continuing to increase the involvement of the membership in Church governance;
- f. improving systems for assuring that policy decisions are carried out; and
- g. easing the burden of Board members' responsibilities.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The consent agenda consisted of the following items:

- November minutes
- Use of the sound equipment and sound room
- Charter for Music Ministry Committee
- Charter for the Information Technology Services Group
- Fundraiser proposal for a grand piano sale
- Peace and Justice letter on the Historic Thousands on Jones Street endorsement

- Delete policies per recommendation of Policy Task Force, regarding:
  - hand-held candles
  - Long Range Planning Committee
- Finalize vote on Strikers Funds
- Annual Report
- Interim Endowment Committee additions
- 2009 meeting schedule

Susan McDaniel moved acceptance of the consent agenda. Mary seconded. Unanimously approved.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **1. Manse Rental Fees**

The Manse Committee has met with prospective renters to determine renters' willingness to pay for use of the Manse and to identify problems (like limited parking, two-prong electric outlets, and lack of an existing clientele) that may limit rental income. The Board has instructed the Committee to develop a policy for raising \$6,000 per year through rental of the premises.

Alan Spalt explained the Committee's plan for generating this rental income by renting the Manse for \$50 for blocks of four hours each, so that two or three rentals per week would be sufficient to raise the requested funds. In the discussion that followed, there was general agreement that the Manse building is not yet ready for prime time for both physical and marketing reasons. Several Board members expressed concern about the administrative and other costs that the Church will incur to rent the space. Other members argued that we need to begin with low rental rates in order to develop a clientele. Still other members stated that the Board should allow committees leeway in meeting their instructions from the Board.

Susan McDaniel moved that the Board: a) accept the Manse Committee report and recommendations; b) ask the Committee to review the rental rates after six months; and c) track staff time and expenses that are spent on the Manse. Erich Lieth seconded. The advocates of this motion indicated that this will be a learning experience. Richard Perry stated his opposition because it is not clear what market niche (small groups or large groups) we are seeking, leading him to believe that this six-month experiment will provide little useful information. 7 ayes, 3 nays. Motion carries.

### **2. Interim Study Task Force Governance Report**

Barbara Chapman summarized the report, which supports a shared ministry model.

### **3. Coffee House**

Mary LeMay said that the Coffee House was originally conceived as a small, safe community venue, but has evolved over the past several years into a big-time event presenter. Scott Provan noted that the Coffee House Committee has evolved into an almost independent organization

with independent decision-making capability. Several Board members noted that the relationship between the Church and the Committee, including the financial relationship, is somewhat ambiguous. Penny Ward asked whether Coffee House events were Church events, or whether the Church is just a venue. Joel Grodensky said that the Board needs oversight of fundraising to make sure it meets Church policy and advances the mission of the Church. Erich Lieth said there is need for a new charter under which this Committee operates. Richard Perry said that the Board should have an interest in building upon the skills of the Coffee House managers. There was a heated debate about whether the Coffee House is a fundraising activity or a community-building activity. Barbara Chapman pointed out that there have been scheduling conflict problems. Maj-Britt Johnson asked if the Coffee House helps outreach.

David Abels moved that the Coffee House be treated like any other fundraising event in the Church. After discussion, he withdrew his motion

Susan Spalt suggested creating a task force to figure out how to handle this matter. There was a general discussion about how the Board could have a conversation with the Coffee House Committee about relevant Church policies. Mary LeMay, Joel Grodensky, and Scott Provan volunteered to serve as an ad hoc emissary to discuss Board policies with the Coffee House managers and to report back to Board. It was agreed that the emissaries would lack authority to negotiate. Erich suggested that the Board develop written instructions for the emissary. The Board informally agreed with this suggestion.

#### **FUTURE ACTION ITEMS**

- Staff will work on rental policy.
- By December 23, Erich Lieth will draft and deliver instructions for the discussion that Mary LeMay, Joel Grodensky, and Scott Provan will prospectively have with the Coffee House managers.
- Mary LeMay, Joel Grodensky will report to the Board on the results of the conversation.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The next Board meeting is Tuesday, January 13, at 7 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 9:14 pm.