



# CEDAR LANE

WHERE **LOVE** WORKS

## CLUUC Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes January 17, 2023

### Attendance

**Officers:** Bob Essink (President), Roger Santodomingo (President-Elect), Sandy Dawsey (Secretary), Sandy Stalzer (Treasurer), Nancy Janssen (Assistant Secretary), Jack Rodgers (Assistant Treasurer)

**At-Large Members:** Sandy Shaw, John Dunn, Eduardo Hernandez

**Absent:** Nate Hultman (Past President), Stephanie Williams, Mmamohau Tswaedi, Nancy Floreen, Marilyn Emery

**Staff:** Ali K.C. Bell (Associate Minister), Dayna Edwards (Assistant Minister), Jennifer Morley (Executive Director)

**Guests:** Larry Stalzer, Jean Moyer, Tod Chernikoff

### Opening

The meeting began at 7:00pm. Rev. Ali provided the centering words. Sandy Dawsey read the Vision/Mission statement and Bob Essink read the Board of Trustees' Covenant.

### Consent Agenda

Sandy D asked if there was any discussion of the Consent Agenda. Eduardo said he had not received the Senior Staff Report in a readable form. but there was none. Sandy Shaw made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, and John Dunn seconded it. *All in favor except Eduardo, who abstained.*

### Construction Task Force Report

Larry Stalzer gave a well-organized report of the recent activities of the CTF. The construction contract has been signed and returned by the general contractor, and the expected permits are ready for pickup at the Montgomery County permit office. There was a preconstruction meeting

of the CTF on January 9 at which ~20 activities were identified that needed to be done before construction could begin, and there was another CTF meeting on January 14 at which plans for Logistics (relocating things, and the use of the building) and Communications (with the congregation) were further reviewed. At this point, March 6 is the target for beginning the construction. There are now a monthly payment plan and cash flow estimates in place (which may change if change orders are approved). The contractor may also ask for payment in advance for long-lead items (eg. the elevator). We must pay all invoices within 15 days of submission.

Eduardo stated that he appreciated this report, and he had total confidence in the CTF, and he asked how the Board could help communicate with the congregation. Sandy Shaw said that the Communications team would communicate with the congregation and with the Board. John and Sandy D said they thought it was important for the CTF to report monthly to the Board, to keep the Board fully informed. Jen said that we should all respect the time of the very busy CTF, but that anyone on the Board should ask if they are not clear about what is going on.

## 2022-2023 Pledge and Budget Status

Jen reviewed the highlights of the P&L and the narrative Financial Report. She said that we have received an unbudgeted \$170,000 Employee Retention Tax Credit for keeping our staff onboard during the pandemic, the last of the pandemic support programs for nonprofits that we can expect. She said that we have now received \$846,000 in pledges for FY23, still less than last year but closer than a month ago to our \$900,000 goal. She also noted that this year's Auction team is up and running and doing well under the direction of Kathie Bryant and Mindy Jones.

## 2023 Generosity Campaign

Jen reported that the 2023 Generosity Campaign will run from February 26 through April 9 (6 weeks), and our public goal will again be \$900,000, which she said would be ambitious but reasonable. The campaign will overlap with the building construction, so we will all need to be flexible and creative to make the campaign work. The focus will be on engagement and connections, which will be especially strained this year because of the construction. She said that the Board's role will include engaging openly in conversations about money (trying to make these conversations normal), some 1-on-1 conversations about pledging (for which the Board will be trained in a joint session with All Souls UU Congregation), and phone calls after the drive is over to people who have not pledged.

## 2023 - 2024 Budget Development

Jen said that we are now starting the budgeting cycle for FY2024. We will receive the first draft budget for FY24 that is created by the Financial Policy Committee, Jen and Rev. Abhi within the

next month, for discussion at the February Board meeting. This year, for the first time, they will be sending us a multiyear (3-year) budget. After discussions in February and March, the staff will bring the final budget to the Board in April for final discussion and a vote. This timing is so that if we need to ask the congregation to approve taking >5% from the Endowment for FY24, we can prepare them for this decision and vote at the June Congregational Meeting. Bob mentioned that we might also need to consider taking money from the 15% Special Programs Fund for the FY24 budget, and Jen said that if this is so, this decision should be made by the end of the March Board meeting, so that it could be included in the final April budget draft.

## 15% Special Programs Fund

When the November 2019 Congregational Meeting voted to go ahead with a Capital Campaign to fund a building renovation project, it was stipulated that 15% money raised should be set aside for a Special Programs Fund. But there was no further definition of what would be covered by "Special Programs" (other than it should not go for construction). During the past several months, John Dunn, Jean Moyer and Mary Means met to start a discussion of what they thought might be covered by this fund, and John presented a list of suggestions from their discussions. Sandy D said that it was his memory from the November 2019 discussions that those who proposed it thought that most or all of this Fund should be devoted to social justice activities that could not otherwise be funded, and Sandy Shaw said that that was also his memory.

Sandy Shaw suggested that we have a series of congregational discussions/listening sessions to discuss this. Eduardo said that the first task would be to identify goals for this fund (eg. increasing membership, social justice activities, multicultural activities), and then think about what concrete strategies/activities could get us to these goals. Rev. Ali suggested that we should consider things that could build capacity for the congregation and allow us to do greater things, rather than just one or more finite projects. Bob asked who from the Board would volunteer to work on this (along with interested non-Board members of the congregation), and Sandy Shaw, Eduardo, John, Roger, Bob, and Jean Moyer agreed to do so, with the first meeting within the next two weeks, convened by Roger.

## Revenue Projections

Jean Moyer and Jack Rodgers discussed the Financial Policy Committee's table of revenue projections for the next 5 years (Appendix G). Jack noted that we have been losing 25-30 pledging units/year for the past several years, and the income from pledges is expected to continue declining in the future unless something is done to reverse this trend and/or we develop strategies to raise money in other ways. Jean said that developing new strategies to raise money is central to the purpose of the Financial Sustainability TF, and it would be central to the discussions at the upcoming Board Workshops to consider the FSTF final report presented to the Board in December.

## Board of Trustees Financial Sustainability Task Force Workshops

These Workshops are now scheduled for Feb 18 and March 4 at 9 am-12 noon. The first meeting will discuss the facts and the current situation identified in the FSTF's final report, and the second meeting will focus on problem solving ideas. The discussions will focus on how to increase revenues, not how to cut expenses.

## Adult Faith Formation Programming

Rev. Dayna reviewed the extensive thoughts that she and Rev. Ali have developed for building new adult faith formation programming (outlined in Appendix H). These ideas included programs for a congregational Common Read (Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime*), a revamp of Soul Circles, revitalized Affinity Groups, a Leadership Development Retreat for the Nominating Committee, development of a weekly Podcast, Stewardship classes after services (explaining how the congregation works for those who did not grow up in a church), a Transforming Hearts Collective Class (for people who wish to experience a closer relationship with the divine and/or the God of their understanding), Stories of Cedar Lane, a monthly Social Justice Meet-up (to highlight SJ activities that are going on), and Parents as Primary Sexual Educators. They also said they are looking into joint workshops with other regional UU congregations. Thanks you, Rev. Dayna and Rev. Ali, for this extensive, creative planning!

## Joint Potomac Partnership Retreat

The Joint Potomac Partnership Board of Trustees Retreat will be held on Saturday January 28 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, both in person at UU Congregation of Fairfax and online.

## Closing

The Participant Observer, Sandy D, observed that the meeting went well. Bob Essink then read a poem that Mmamohau had sent him for the closing words. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.