



CEDAR LANE

WHERE **LOVE** WORKS

CLUUC Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2022

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: Mmamohau Tswaedi, Sandy Shaw, Nancy Floreen, Marilyn Emery, John Dunn, Eduardo Hernandez

Absent: Nate Hultman (Past President), Stephanie Williams

Staff: Abhi Janamanchi (Senior Minister), Jennifer Morley (Executive Director)

Guests: Maryann Dillon, Mary Means, Jack Welch, Shira Elrich, Larry Stalzer

Opening

The meeting began at 7:00pm. Rev. Abhi provided the centering words. Board members read the Vision/Mission statement, the Board of Trustees' Covenant and the '22-'23 Board Priority Statement. Board members then checked in with their thoughts and feelings at this moment in time.

Consent Agenda

Sandy D asked if there was any discussion of the Consent Agenda, but there was none. Eduardo made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, and Sandy Shaw seconded it. *All in favor.*

Planning for the December 11 Congregational Meeting

Bob reviewed Appendix E-1, his draft of the eBlast that would go out to the congregation explaining the reasons for and process of the December 11 Congregational Meeting, including the listing of the Board-recommended new names, the invitation to write in alternative names,

and the voting process. Sandor suggested that we allow members to nominate alternative names before the meeting, and reiterated his concern that the Board had not given the congregation enough time to propose alternative names before calling a Congregational Meeting and recommending two alternatives. Mmamohau suggested that we ask the congregation to vote in two steps, possibly at two separate Congregational Meetings - first to vote on whether or not we want a name change, and second to decide which new name to choose. Marilyn responded that Cedar Lane, and the Board, have been discussing this topic for years (since 2017), and the current process (three listening sessions in the last few months, the Board recommending a name change and the two alternative names most favored at the listening sessions, and including both the current name and a write-in option for another alternate name on the ballot as additional alternatives) was as fair as any alternate process, and that we shouldn't postpone a decision on this topic any longer. CLUUC member Shira Ehrlich also noted that everyone in the congregation had been individually contacted and invited to come and express their opinion before each of the listening sessions, so she felt comfortable that the congregation had been given a sufficient chance to express their opinions. All other Board members were then informally polled, and all stated in turn that they agreed with Marilyn's position. Sandor and Mmamohau then said that they were OK with this and with proceeding as described in the draft eBlast (Appendix E-1).

Bob then reviewed Appendix E-2, the task list for the December 11 Congregational Meeting, and asked Board members to sign up for the tasks not already assigned.

Action Item: Give notice to the congregation, through weekly eNews posts, announcements during Sunday services, and the eBlast in Appendix E-1 that the Board of Trustees is calling a special Congregational Meeting on December 11, 2022 to discuss and vote on changing the name of Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church.

Construction Task Force Update

Maryann Dillon gave an update on the renovation process. All permits have now been approved, and we have hired Larry Stalzer, a Cedar Lane member, to be our Owner's Representative. We have also now received the final cost estimate from the General Contractor, and Maryann and Jen created a spreadsheet showing all sources of funds and uses of funds (Appendix I-2). By their best estimate and current assumptions, the available funds are currently \$636,000 less than the needed funds. To address this situation, Bob proposed a special December 6 Board meeting to review the construction budget in more detail and propose ways to bridge this gap, and in preparation for this meeting, he created four teams to brainstorm ways (1) to identify possible modifications in the construction plans to reduce costs; (2) to identify possible additional capital contributions from members (e.g., contributions from new members and offers of additional support from older members); (3) to identify possible projected construction costs that can be legitimately be included in the 15% of contributed funds that have been set aside for new programming; and (4) to evaluate options for using the endowment, restricted funds or external borrowing to make up part of the deficit. The hope will be that we

can then have a balanced project budget for the Board to approve at its regular December 20 Board meeting.

Jack Rodgers asked if we end up over budget, do we need to go back to the congregation to OK this. Bob said we would revisit this if we could not balance the budget. Jack Welch suggested that if we were going to raise an additional \$600,000, we should use it for something that is more consistent with UU values, such as balancing the operating budget or supporting community needs, rather than raising the roof or removing columns in the social hall. Larry Stalzer responded that making major changes in the construction plans, such as lowering the roof or retaining the columns in the social hall, would not be possible at this time without starting the design over from the beginning, and this might not end up saving money in any event.

Action Item: The Board will have a special December 6 Board meeting to review the construction budget and try to balance this budget.

Sabbatical Planning for Rev. Abhi

Bob discussed receipt of a letter from Raj and Sharmi Mehta suggesting the creation of a *Senior Minister Sabbatical Fund*, a restricted fund to be used for compensation of a substitute Senior Minister to replace a serving Senior Minister during the duration of the latter's approved sabbatical. This letter included the offer of a significant initial contribution to start the fund, it invited the Board of Trustees to invite additional contributions to this fund, and it requested that from now on there be a separate line item in each annual budget, with enough money allocated to this fund so that when it was time for a Senior Minister to take a sabbatical there would be enough money in the fund to pay for a substitute Senior Minister. The Board will send a letter of gratitude to Raj and Sharmi thanking them for their letter and generous offer of support. Sandy Shaw made a motion *to establish a Senior Minister Sabbatical Fund with the above stipulations*. Nancy Floreen seconded this motion, and *all members voted in favor*.

Financial Sustainability Task Force Update

Sandy Stalzer reported that the Task Force's final report has been drafted and sent to Bob and Rev. Abhi to be finalized, and that it will be presented to the Board at its December meeting.

Prior Year Pledging Trends

Jack Rodgers presented data, including a graph and table, that he and Jack Welch had created showing the trends in pledging units from FY2000 - FY 2022, with projections through FY 2024. These data showed a fairly slow but steady drop in pledge units from FY2000 (647 pledges) to FY2022 (347 pledges), with especially steep drops in FY2010 - FY2012 and FY2017 - FY2019 (during the Capital Campaign). Jack mentioned that 1.5 times the number of pledge units was a good approximation of the number of adult members, and that the average member age was increasing over this time. Eduardo commented that this was indeed a sobering report, and that it

pointed out the need for a better balance between facility updates and better programming (that would attract new members). As an example, he said he would not give more to the Capital Campaign, but he would give more to new programs for racial justice.

Closing

The Participant Observer, Eduardo, observed that the meeting went well, including rational discussions of two major issues. Nancy Janssen then stated the closing words: Democracy Dies in Darkness. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.