



# CEDAR LANE

WHERE **LOVE** WORKS

## CLUUC Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes February 21, 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, Stephanie Williams, Nancy Floreen

**Absent:** Mmamohau Tswaedi, Marilyn Emery

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

**Guests:** Larry Stalzer, Jean Moyer, Jack Welch, Mary Means, Maryann Dillon, Greg Falcigno

### Opening

The meeting began at 7:00pm. For centering words, Rev. Abhi played a video of Farid Johnson singing *Wade in the Waters*. Bob Essink read the Vision/Mission statement and Eduardo Hernandez read the Board of Trustees' Covenant.

### Consent Agenda

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

### Strategic Initiatives Fund

Bob led the discussion of criteria and guidelines for using the Strategic Initiatives Fund, which is the 15% of Capital Campaign funds (which will total about \$400,000) set aside for "Strategic Initiatives", which have not yet been defined but are understood to be projects that are outside of the normal operating budget and are strategic in that they will enhance the long-term viability of the Congregation. Bob had earlier distributed recommendations for these criteria and

guidelines created by a small Board-appointed group (Appendix F). These recommendations suggested five categories of allowable uses for these funds, including Consulting, “Seed” Money, Initial Investments, Direct Operational Funds (of no more than one year), and Capital Equipment and Software, and gave examples of possible funding priorities, including New Revenue Programs, Expansion of New Member Outreach, Replacement of CLUUC Website and Social Media, and Improvement of Virtual Program Capabilities (examples only). The recommendations proposed that groups wishing to access these funds would answer “Requests for Proposals”, and these proposals would be judged by the Board according to S.M.A.R.T criteria. They suggested that the Board vote on funding criteria and priorities for this program at the March Board meeting, followed by in-person and virtual Workshops in April and May to gather Congregational input and reactions, so that the program could become functional in FY2024 - FY2025. Further details are available in Appendix F.

Eduardo suggested that we include the Congregation as much as possible in this process, and we strive for some very innovative projects. Nancy F said that we should use this money to actually do something, not just create more meetings. Mary said that this fund was seed capital for change, to create a larger and more vibrant Congregation. Abhi said that some of these initiatives will inevitably involve the use of staff time, and some of the funds must pay for that staff time. Roger said that we may get many more proposals than we can fund, which may lead many people to be disappointed, and Mary agreed that we need to think a lot about how we are going to solicit and approve projects, to keep from raising expectations too much.

## Review of the Board Standing Committees

Before the Board meeting, Bob also distributed his proposals for revising aspects of the Board Standing Committee structure (Appendix G), for the Board to think about and return to discuss in more detail at the March Board meeting. He proposed three new Board Committees. *The Membership Outreach and Engagement Committee* would take over the functions of the current Membership Engagement Ministry Team, but also add proactive outreach to those in the DC area whom we can best serve and add proactive efforts to retain current and new members, and upgrade the importance of these functions by making this a Board Committee. *The Alternative Revenue and Fundraising Committee* would replace the current Development/Fundraising Committee and lead the analysis, planning and implementation of all non-pledge facility and program revenue sources. It would focus on large projects designed to supplement pledge-giving by at least \$300,000 per year. *The Financial Structure and Policy Committee* would be a restructuring of the current Financial Policy Committee, with a renewed emphasis on the policy and structural aspects of our financial management processes and systems. One other change to the current system of Board Committees would be that from now on all Board Committees would be chaired by a Board member. Further details are available in Appendix G.

Jack Welch said he liked this, especially the upgrading of the Membership Engagement Ministry Team to the Membership Outreach and Engagement Committee, because he thinks we need to prioritize reaching out to multicultural populations. Nancy F said that she thinks we need fewer committees and more actions. She asked what Cedar Lane, as a congregation, is known for? Nothing. She thought we should work with the Potomac Partnership to come up with something

we (together) stand for, and then act to support these purposes. Stephanie said she was all for consolidating Committees. Eduardo asked what Cedar Lane is known for? Many small actions. He said that we have about 55 Committees and Membership Teams, many of which have about 3 members in them, and you can't do much with only 3 members. Eduardo said that if we want to stop losing a net of 50 members each year, we need to emphasize increasing membership, and to do that we need to have the committee or team in charge of this have more than 3 members.

## Construction Task Force Report

Maryann Dillon reviewed the most recent tweaks to the budget, which together have increased the estimated cost a small amount (well within the budgeted contingency). Larry Stalzer (our Owner's Representative) confirmed that we are still planning for the beginning of construction on March 6. Greg Falcigno (Logistics) said that we will sign the Notice to Proceed (directing the construction company to proceed) tomorrow. He also said that the Logistics team's use and storage plan about how we will use the building during construction is finished, and 2 of 6 planned "work days" to pack up and remove items in the areas that will undergo demolition have been completed. He said that 6 teams of volunteers have contacted all groups in the congregation (eg. the Auction committee, the Flower committee), and those groups have packed and removed items belonging to them. Two companies are currently being considered for providing the temporary restrooms, and the final permits are being obtained to allow the Nursery School to move to the Chalice House. Mary Means (Communications) said that creation of the 4 phases of the project have helped keep people from worrying about week-to-week changes, and she praised the work of Lori Stone in creating the CTF website. She said that the website will host videos of CTF members (Larry being the first one, explaining what an Owner's Rep. does), and that tomorrow CTF members will have a Meet and Greet with the neighbors on Culver Street.

Stephanie asked if there will be any opportunity for Cedar Lane members to say goodbye to the building they have known and loved. Mary said that this was something for the Ministry Team to plan. Abhi said there will be something in the March 5 service marking the moment, and there will be a separate groundbreaking, so we can make a space for us to be together as a community during this transition.

## 2023 Generosity Campaign

John Dunn said that the Generosity Campaign will kick off this coming Sunday, February 26, and he hopes that all Board members will be there. He said that the best way for the Board to contribute to the campaign will be to have 1-on-1 conversations with selected members, to discuss with them their hopes and dreams for Cedar Lane. He said there will be training for Board members for these conversations two weeks from today (March 7), and the campaign is hoping that all Board members will volunteer for 3-5 such conversations.

## 2023-2024 Budget Development

Jen shared the first draft of an FY24 budget that she and Abhi have been working on, which showed income of \$1.2M, expenses of \$1.5M, and a deficit of \$260K. Jen emphasized that this was a first draft, and the staff now wants to incorporate the Board's suggestions and priorities. Nancy F asked if we would be paying our staff what the UUA suggests in terms of COLA, and Jen said no, that they were suggesting an 8.3% COLA, which was a lot of money, so this draft budget includes only a 3% COLA. Nancy said she thinks this is unacceptable, and we should pay the full 8.3% (an additional \$40K). Jack Rodgers said that we have enough in savings to cover this deficit in FY24, but then we will not have savings enough to cover deficits in future years. Jen asked all Board members to consider what we need to fund to grow the congregation, and what in the current draft budget can we afford to fund less. Bob shared a list of 10 items that had been mentioned as needing funding at Board meetings in the past 6 months, for consideration in our budget deliberations. Abhi highlighted the Minister's Sabbatical Fund on this list, which was given a generous contribution this past year by Raj Mehta and his wife, but which accrues only \$3K in funds from the general budget each year. He said that this could also be highlighted in conversations about the Generosity Campaign this year, because it could be something that people would like to give to. Abhi asked that Board members give serious thought to the FY24 budget before the March Board meeting, so we can make necessary decisions at that time. Bob will arrange for a board discussion relating to Board budget input prior to the next meeting.

## Other Items

Bob said that the February 18 Financial Sustainability Workshop was a good meeting and the breakout groups developed over 30 ideas for increasing revenue that would be shared before and discussed at the March 4 Workshop.

The election of Roger Santodomingo as the next Board President and the election of the next Board President-Elect will take place at the March Board meeting.

The Construction Line of Credit will also be discussed at the March Board meeting.

AIM will present its agenda for 2023 at an open meeting at People's Community Baptist Church on March 12 at 2:30pm, to which the County Executive and the entire County Council have been invited. All Board members are encouraged to attend.

## Closing

The Participant Observer, Sandy S, observed that the meeting went well. Roger Santodomingo then read a saying by Brene Brown for the closing words. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

## Executive Session

The Board then reconvened in Executive Session, during which no minutes were taken.