



CEDAR LANE

WHERE **LOVE** WORKS

CLUUC Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
September 20, 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, John Dunn, Sandy Shaw, Nancy Floreen

Absent: Nate Hultman (Past President), Stephanie Williams, Marilyn Emery, Eduardo Hernandez

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

Opening

The meeting began at 7pm. Rev. Abhi provided the centering words. John Dunn read the Vision/Mission and the Board of Trustees Covenant, and Mmamohau Tswaedi read the Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church Covenant of Right Relations.

Consent Agenda

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

Approval of Rev Ali's Relocation Expenses

Since neither Roger nor Sandy Stalzer (the two current members of the group planning this process) were not able to make the meeting, this item was deferred until the August Board meeting.

Review of the Board Covenant and the Church Covenant of Right Relations

Bob asked for volunteers for a group of Board members to review these Covenants and report back to the Board with recommendations at the October Board meeting. Roger agreed to lead this group, and Sandy Shaw, John Dunn and Nancy Floreen agreed to participate in it.

Action Item: This group of the Board will review the Board Covenant and the Church Covenant of Right Relations and report back to the full Board with recommendations for changes at the October Board meeting.

Reconstituting the Generosity Team

In the past, the Generosity Team included up to a dozen people, working together to lead the annual pledge drive. This past year, most of the work of this Team (requesting pledges for '22-'23) was done by Marilyn Emery and Jen Morley. For the coming year, we need additional volunteers to join the Generosity Team. We also need congregational engagement activities to begin earlier in the year, starting with checking in on individuals and groups and listening to what is going on in their lives and what draws them to Cedar Lane (without asking for money). Abhi wants the Board to join him in leading these engagement activities, and he has specific ideas about this process, which he has written down and will distribute to the Board, for further discussion at the October Board meeting.

Action Item: Recruit more Cedar Lane Board members and other members to join the Generosity Team.

Reimbursement of Rev. Ali's Moving Expenses

In the package negotiated with Rev. Ali for his employment as Cedar Lane's next Assistant Minister, the allowance for moving expenses from Atlanta to Bethesda was only \$5000. The first estimate he has gotten for this move is \$11,400. He is getting additional estimates, but it is clear that \$5000 is too little. Sandy Shaw made a motion that: *Cedar Lane will reimburse Rev. Ali or pay his moving company up to \$11,400 in moving expenses, with the excess over \$5000 to come from the Cedar Lane reserves.* Mmamohau seconded the motion. *All in favor.*

Generous Gift to Support LGBTQ+ Ministry

Kathleen Knepper recently gave a gift of \$10,000 for the reproductive justice work of the LGBTQ+ Ministry Team, through which she wished to honor her father, a Unitarian who was deeply committed to such work. Bob Essink made a motion that: *The Cedar Lane Board of Trustees recognizes Kathleen Knepper for her generous gift of \$10,000 for the reproductive justice work of the LGBTQ+ Ministry Team, which she has given in honor of her father, a Unitarian who was deeply committed to reproductive justice.* Sandy D seconded the motion. *All in favor.*

Pledging Update

Jen reviewed the latest data on the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 pledges. The pledges for 2021-2022 are now 93% paid, a rate similar to the previous year at this time. The number of pledges and the total amount pledged for 2022-2023 are about 10% below the same amounts at this time last year. Jack Rodgers noted that for several years we have been losing adult pledgers and pledge amounts; new members don't replace those leaving, and many new members don't stick around; we have a problem this year, and should plan/adjust the budget consistent with the expected loss. Jen said that we would look at this again in November, and if needed make changes to the budget in January.

Contacting Congregation Members Who Have Not Yet Pledged

There are still 50-60 congregation members who pledged last fiscal year ('21-'22) but have not yet pledged this fiscal year ('22-'23). Jen will share the list of these members and ask Board members each to call 5-10 of them within the next few weeks (before the next Board meeting). The main purpose of these calls will be to listen - to check in, thank them for their commitment to Cedar Lane, ask them how things are going, and ask them what Cedar Lane can do for them. There should be no request for a pledge unless the members bring this up. Along with the list, Jen will also send talking points. Roger volunteered that his wife could send handwritten letters to members on this list who could not be contacted.

Action Item: Jen will distribute the list and talking points, and Board members will call the members on the list.

Dare to Dream Raffle Fundraiser

Sandy D reported that the Dare to Dream 2022 Raffle Fundraiser has now begun, and tickets can be purchased online or in person at Sunday church services. Sandy emphasized that, having not had an Auction this past spring, this is the most important fundraiser for CL this calendar year, and he encouraged the Board members to take the lead in purchasing tickets and asking others (other CL members, family members, friends, etc.) to purchase tickets.

Small Group Discussions

The Board members present were divided into 4 groups and spent 15 minutes discussing what challenges/issues they would like to prioritize and what they would be willing to give up to accomplish progress on these priorities during this Board year. Priorities included having the Board reach out to current members to engage them more fully, working to attract new members, especially new families with children in RE, having more parents with children on the Board, and revamping the RE curriculum to better serve today's youth. Several groups said

there were too many committees and teams, some of which could be consolidated so there would be fewer meetings and more time to devote to these new priorities.

Construction During 2023

There was a discussion about the renovation construction that will probably begin in the next few months, and what options we will have to minimize disruptions and the stress on our staff. Jen said that identification of an owner's representative (to represent Cedar Lane's interests throughout the construction) was proceeding well. Abhi said that he wants to have both in-person and online options for services throughout the construction time (~12-14 months). Options for in-person services include using the chapel and/or the chalice house, relocating to River Road (which they have already offered, eg. for us having Sunday afternoon services), and relocating to a public school building (which is what we did during the last renovation ~20 years ago, and such buildings are usually not used by the schools on Sundays). It was noted that going elsewhere for a single long period (eg. 6 months) would be less confusing for everyone and would probably allow the construction to be done more quickly than trying to match our use of our campus more closely (eg. week to week) with the (often changing) construction schedule. Jack Rodgers noted that rental costs for off-campus site(s) would need to be taken from the construction budget, not the general operating budget.

Approval of Rev Ali's Housing Allowance

Rev. Abhi distributed a written motion (Board packet Appendix I) setting Rev. Ali's annual housing allowance, effective September, 2022, at \$45,600 and designating \$15,200 of this annual allowance to be his housing allowance for the 4 remaining months of the 2022 calendar year. This motion was moved by Sandy Shaw, and was seconded by Mmamohau Tswaedi. *All in favor.*

Closing

The Participant Observer, Sandy D, observed that the meeting went well. Rev. Ahbi then read the closing words that Stephanie Williams sent to him, "A Power at Work in the Universe" by Tom Schade. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.