**First Unitarian Church of Oakland**

**Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting**

**January 24, 2017, 7 P.M.**

*Present:*

*Board Members:* Rev. Jacqueline Duhart (ex officio), Laurel Egenberger, Michael Fitzhugh, Kate Lenhardt, Janet McFarland, Kenji Oshima, Lisa Rosene, Emily Stoper, Claudine Tong, Suzanne Van Houten, Kris Wedding Crowell (Chair)

*Absent:* Micheas Herman

*Visitors:* Bill Blakely, Rev. Sheri Prud’homme, John Shinnick, Bev Smrha

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Kris read the church’s mission statement and there was a chalice lighting.

Consent Agenda

On a request by Emily, the item “approval of the agenda” was removed from the consent agenda so that an item could be added to the agenda. On a motion by Lisa, seconded by Suzanne, the Board unanimously approved the remaining items on the consent agenda, which included Restoration of Exempt Status to the Church Administrator and Addition of $4000 in Rental Income to the 2017 Budget.

The additional item on the agenda: Emily moved, with a second by Michael, that the church endorse Isabel Call’s attendance at the Ecumenical School for Governance, Economics and Management (GEM) for an Economy of Life in Zambia. Passed unanimously.

On a motion by Janet, seconded by Laurel, the rest of the agenda for the meeting was unanimously approved.

Notification of Actions Taken Since Last Meeting

Approval of December 2016 Minutes (by email)

President’s Report

Kris welcomed Kate Lenhardt as a new member of the Board.

Executive Team Report

Bill reported on the activities of the Executive Team this month, which focused in the area of buildings and grounds, as well as finance.

Stewardship Report

Janet reported that current pledges are at $416,019, with a total of $445,000 anticipated. Board members are working on writing thank you notes to the 171 people who have pledged. There is still much to be done.

Minister’s Report

Rev. Jacqueline stressed the importance to the church of careful exploration and reflection on the question whether to permit staff members to also be members of the church. She mentioned that she is not personally invested in the decision.

Appointment of a Team to Organize the Writing of the Annual Report

Suzanne was appointed to gather the annual reports of the many church committees and teams; Michael was appointed to put them together in a document, following the format developed by Claudia Morgan.

Appointment of a Team to Organize the Annual Meeting

Janet was appointed to take the lead; Laurel will assist her.

Prioritization of Wish List

A number of Board members had submitted their personal priorities. Paying the final 20% of the church’s fair share contribution to the UUA was at or near the top of everyone’s list. Additional funds for the operational reserve (over and above the $5000 already budgeted) were also strongly supported; there was much sentiment that the church should ultimately have at least two months of operating costs in the reserve fund. Part of the recent bequests to the church may go to the reserve. There was also some discussion of the desirability of budgeting funds to hire a new clergy member to do pastoral care, including visits to the homes of aging members who are unable to come to church.

Laurel promised to send out a matrix to help with prioritization. There will be further discussion, followed by a final decision, at the February meeting.

Discussion on Possible Rule on Staff as Church Members

This idea of not permitting church members to serve as staff will be floated at the annual meeting on March 19, after which some meetings with the congregation will be set up to discuss it.

Create a Generosity Team

Laurel made a motion, seconded by Suzanne, to create a Generosity Team to work on building a culture of generosity and support for stewardship and other fundraising efforts. After some discussion of possible amendments, the motion was tabled, with the expectation that a more complete plan will be presented in the future, clarifying the purposes of the committee, the terms of members and other matters.

Discussion: Planning for Rev. Jacqueline’s Sabbatical in Winter and Spring 2018

One possible model would be for Rev. Sheri to expand her work to include much of Rev. Jacqueline’s ministerial duties, perhaps hiring someone to take on some of the pastoral work. Rev. Jacqueline also functions as the church’s interim minister, helping us to prepare for calling a new parish minister who could begin in late summer 2019. In her absence, the church may need help in preparing our portfolio and electing a search committee. Perhaps it could use the services of a ministerial settlement representative to consult in these matters.

Sabbatical plans will be discussed further at the Board retreat in February.

Process Monitoring

In the absence of a formal report, members of the Board informally commented on the meeting’s process.

After a reading and adjournment at 9 p.m., the Board held an executive session to discuss personnel matters.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Stoper, Secretary