

**APPROVED by BoT  
10/15/13**

## **Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church**

### **Board of Trustees**

#### Minutes

September 17, 2013

#### ***Action items:***

Policies should be developed on:

How to become a member of CL

Split plate collections

Blumenthal Task Forces to be formed at October BOT meeting. To that end:

- John Wing to collect names of people to be on the Task Forces and give to Rev. Janamanchi and Don Bliss.

- Find and review policy previously drafted by Michael Lentz on split plate collections. John Wing and Stew Grubman to develop management practices for the Blumenthal Fund.

Social Justice Council to be asked to submit suggestions for a project the congregation could support, with some financial support from the Blumenthal Fund.

October Board meeting: Appoint three Blumenthal Fund task forces

#### **Attendance:**

**Board members present:** Don Bliss (Chair); Kate Curtis; Maryann Dillon; Stew Grubman (Treasurer); Ariel Mora; Tim Persons (Chair-Elect); Lyn Peters; Paul Strella (Asst. Treasurer); Michael Thoryn; Susannah Vesey (Asst. Secretary); John Wing

**Board members absent:** Anne Fretz (Secretary); Michael Murray (Communications)

**Staff present:** Rev. Abhi Janamanchi; Rev. Heather Janules; Karen Lee Scrivo (Interim DRE); Sara Deshler (Church Administrator)

#### **Opening:**

The meeting convened at 7:15 p.m. and was led by Don Bliss, Chair. Board members read the BOT Covenant. Rev. Abhi Janamanchi gave an opening reading. All present responded to a question raised in *Governance and Ministry* by Dan Hotchkiss: **How has this church moved your spirit in the last month?**

#### **Approval of Consent Agenda**

The Consent Agenda contained the following items:

1. August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013, Minutes (Appendix A)
2. Rev. Abhi Janamanchi Report (Appendix B)
3. Rev. Heather Janules Report (Appendix C)
4. SJC Report (Appendix D)

5. Facilities Committee Report (Appendix E)
6. Grounds Committee Report (Appendix F)
7. GTF Minutes (Appendix G)
8. Liaison sign-up (Appendix H)
9. Interim DRE Report (Appendix I)
10. Financial Report, September 13, 2013 (Appendix J)

During a brief discussion of items in the Consent Agenda, it was proposed that:

- A policy should be developed on how to become a member of Cedar Lane in a meaningful way.
- A policy should be developed on Split Plate Collections that establishes who should select recipients, what criteria should be used for selecting recipients, how often Split Plate Collections should be taken, and monitoring the effect of increasing split collections on church revenues.

Tim Persons moved, and Kate Curtis seconded, the approval of the Consent Agenda. It was approved by unanimous voice vote.

### **Treasurer's Report**

*Stew Grubman*

During discussion of the Treasurer's Financial Report for September, 2013 (Appendix K) the following observations were made regarding pledges, membership and attendance:

To date, we are \$83,000 short of the 2014 pledge goal of \$902,000. Typically, 98 percent of pledges are ultimately collected. Pledge payment bumps occur three times during the fiscal year: during the pledge drive itself, as a number of members write lump checks for their entire annual pledge, another in September as RE starts up, and again before the new year for tax reasons.

There is a core group of Cedar Laners who give generously and who increase their pledges by 3 to 4 percent every year. However, because of death or relocation we are gradually losing those core members, and they are not being replaced.

While the average pledge increases at a good pace, the median pledge is stagnant at \$1,000.

The stewardship is in the midst of creating a database of people who have pledged but not yet paid, and is also working on a mailing to generate more pledges.

Membership in CL has been reduced from 754 to 750, with 713 in good standing, following a "cleanse" of the membership list, however there are a number of potential members in the pipeline.

There was a notable increase in attendance at services in July and August, over the same months last year, and sizeable increases were expected in September.

Regarding expenses, a new, easy-to-use digital sound system is being installed at a budgeted cost of \$64,500, replacing a pieced together and outdated sound system that only a couple of people could operate.

## **Draft of Four-Year Financial Plan**

*Stew Grubman and Paul Strella*

Stew and Paul presented a draft of their four-year financial plan (Appendix L ) aimed at getting Cedar Lane out of running deficits. Their plan envisages Cedar Lane operating with three years of deficits and a return to black ink in 2017, with a net of \$21,000.

They propose accomplishing this with a two-pronged approach: Increasing pledging households combined with investment special funds.

The Board will vote on the proposed plan at its October meeting.

The bottom line, they said, is that Cedar Lane cannot continue to offer its current level of services without increasing the number of pledging households.

Their plan assumes a growth of 25 pledging households in 2014, and a growth of 50 pledging households in each of the three years following. In addition, they assume new households will increase their pledges each year, and that their pledges will reach the Cedar Lane average after four years.

Meanwhile, they suggest that the Board vote to invest \$350,000 over three years to cover the anticipated deficits; \$150,000 from endowment earnings, \$100,000 from the formerly pooled income fund, and \$100,000 from the Frank Blumenthal bequest.

John Wing said the assumptions in their proposed plan were optimistic, but within the range of possibility, especially with a new minister and a new religious education leader.

## **Preview of Start Up Weekend**

*Rev. Abhi Janamanchi*

There will be four components of Rev. Janamanchi's Start Up weekend October 4 and 5.

On Friday evening a group of 30 or 40 invitees, including the Board, meet for dessert and a discussion of Cedar Lane's history and hopes for its future. One topic Rev. Janamanchi hopes to include is how to support a multi-cultural ministry.

On Saturday morning, a group 20 or 25 invited committee and council leaders, along with the Board, will look for interconnections between their groups.

On Saturday afternoon, Rev. Janamanchi will meet with the Board to discuss priorities and to develop a covenant of right relations between he and the Board, followed by a tea with Rev. Peter Morales, UUA President to discuss, in particular, his ministry in Boulder, Colorado, on becoming a more welcoming congregation.

## **Blumenthal Bequest Motion**

*John Wing*

By unanimous vote, the Board adopted a motion presented by John Wing that Frank Blumenthal's bequest of \$700,000 be used as following:

- Futures Fund of \$500,000 Futures Fund for the purpose of improving church buildings and grounds.
- Financial Recovery Fund of \$100,000 to support Cedar Lane's operating budget over the next three years.
- Social Justice Fund of \$50,000 as a dollar-for-dollar match for a social justice project that involves church-wide, intergenerational participation.
- Outreach Fund of \$50,000 to support public communications regarding such things as music concerts, Forum speakers, sermons of particular moment, and other special events.

The Board Chair and Senior Minister will appoint leaders to assemble task forces to develop plans for the Futures, Social Justice and Outreach funds, hopefully by the October Board meeting.

The Treasurer will manage the Financial Recovery Plan.

### **Lifespan RE Leadership Position Description**

*Lyn Peters*

After reviewing a job description for the RE leadership position written by TCC, Rev. Abhi Janamanchi suggested the description emphasize spiritual leadership over administrative duties. It was also suggested that mentoring be included as part of the new hire's duties.

### **Communications Strategy**

*Tim Persons*

Due to the absence of Michael Murray, Tim Persons led the discussion to be continued at the October Board meeting. Tim Persons, Michael Thoryn and Susannah Vesey agreed to participate in a Communications group.

### **Resolution of Appreciation to Thomas Guthrie**

*Ariel Mora*

The Board unanimously approved a resolution of appreciation for organist Thomas Guthrie, who is leaving after five years, to be framed and presented at services on Sunday, September 29, his last day.

**Closing Words:** Ariel Mora read the poem, "To Be of Use" by Marge Pearson.