

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting via ZOOM

April 14, 2020

PRESENT: Board members Louise Anderson, Michael Beech, Nora Carpenter, Clyde Hardin, Judy Harper, Clerk, James “Buck” Schall, Ryan Williams, President, and Mariah Wright; Linda Topp, Director of Administration; and Rev. Mark Ward, ex-officio.

OPENING: The meeting was called to order at 6:22 by Ryan. The opening reading was given by Mariah and the chalice lit by Nora.

WHAT’S HAPPENING: Highlights of reports from the Executive:

PAYROLL PROTECTION PROGRAM: With the approval of the Board Council last week, designating Linda Topp as our “authorized representative” for this purpose, Linda has been authorized to apply for a loan under the Payroll Protection Program, part of the CARES Act adopted by Congress to assist small businesses with payroll during the national COVID emergency. Per Executive Limitation G, the full board formally ratified the Board Council’s action.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PROJECT: Plans for enhanced storm water sewer system improvements have been in the works since last September by the City of Asheville at the intersection of Celia Place and Edwin Place, which should significantly reduce flooding at that intersection. Since the work is so close to our property at 23 Edwin Place, easements were sought by the city. A formal document dealing with both construction and permanent easements is now ready for signature by Board President Ryan Williams. The provisions of this document were approved unanimously by the board.

PROPOSED BY-LAW CHANGE: At the request of the Leadership Development Committee, a proposed by-law change would allow LDC members to serve two terms, as is currently the case with board members. Board approval was sought to put this proposed by-law change on the agenda for the Annual Meeting, and the board voted unanimous approval to do so.

MORTGAGE PAYOFF: As a result of the hard work of our Legacy Circle and our participation in the Wake Now Our Vision UUA Legacy Challenge, we have been able to pay off our mortgage from the Welcome Project.

VIDEO SERVICES: A month of video services has been well received by the congregation. Linda was thanked for her extraordinary efforts in putting these services together. A live component was added – a virtual coffee hour – to allow members to communicate via ZOOM after services.

FAITH DEVELOPMENT: Affiliated Community Minister Jeff Jones and Rev. Claudia are both offering on-line courses. The Wednesday Thing continues via ZOOM. Many RE classes are being done on-line on Sunday mornings.

CONNECTIONS COORDINATION: Connections Coordinator Venny Zachritz has recruited members to contact our whole congregation just to check in and see how folks are doing. The entire congregation has now been contacted. Board members are continuing to call members as they make pledges to the budget drive.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER: Ryan discussed the problems with board visibility and continuing connection with the congregation during this time of no face to face interactions among members. He submitted a questionnaire to the board for our consideration dealing with

maintaining connections among board members, ways in which the board can creatively connect and cultivate a vibrant community, how the board can support RE/Faith Development for youth and how to connect members across generations, and how we can shift the way we support environmental and social justice initiatives.

LIMITATION D: Concerning Financial Planning and Budgeting – The report from the Executive shows it to be in compliance with these limitations. Linda pointed out that under the provisions of Limitation 2b, the executive cannot plan to spend more funds in any fiscal year than the projected operating income in that period without board approval and that funds are not available to provide for any more tech support than we already have for the video services we are now putting together for the congregation while social distancing remains in effect. She would like to enhance this service and perhaps continue it indefinitely, but the funds are simply not available. For the current fiscal year, we are on a good path for ending with a balanced budget, where expenditures and income are close despite wide variations in expenses and income due to the Covid-19 closure.

MARCH MINUTES: The minutes of the March meeting were amended to read “there were NO concerns raised by the trustees” in the section concerned with Limitation E. The minutes as amended were moved, seconded and approved unanimously.

ANNUAL MEETING: By the May board meeting, we should have a better idea of whether the Annual Meeting can go forward in June. If this is not possible, the board will plan for alternatives, including the use of proxies, which would be legal under our by-laws, to conduct the business of the Annual Meeting.

BUDGET DISCUSSION: The proposed 2020-2021 budget was presented to the board by Linda, who has decided, along with the Finance

Advisory Committee, to proceed with a normal budgeting process. 20-21 commitments are coming in at about their normal amounts; 25% of the congregation has not yet responded with their pledges, as is the usual case, and these members are being called. After discussion with Linda, the board unanimously approved the 2020-2021 budget for submission by mid-May to the congregation for its input prior to the Annual Meeting in June. Since we cannot have a Budget Hearing, this submission will be done via a PowerPoint slide deck emailed to members, as well as printed and mailed to our non-online members.

CLOSING: The closing reading was done by Mariah, and our chalice was extinguished.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Ryan reminded board members of his request for input on “Questions to Consider,” via the document he posted on the April 2020 board folder. Michael and Ryan will communicate further about moving forward with the work of the Safety Committee. Also briefly discussed was a possible use of part of our board funds, and this will be taken up at our next meeting.

Minutes submitted by Judy Harper, Clerk

Next Board Council Meeting: Tuesday, April 28, 2020

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, May 5, 2020

May Volunteers: Reading – Ryan Blog – Mariah

Meet Your Board Members for May: Louise/Michael; Clyde/Cecil

