

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Montclair**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**  
**Sept. 8, 2011**

Staff: Charlie Ortman, Judy Tomlinson

Board: Teresa DeSousa, Judy Strachan, Michael Mernin, Connie Thames, Terry Cummings, Ed Billy, Terry Doemling, Thom Kennon, Deborah Corbett, Sue Raufer, Dennis Kurti

Guests: Judie Rinearson

Meeting called to order at 7:43 pm

**Adoption of Minutes:**

*Motion to adopt August minutes with changes noted in email (Terry D./Michael) Motion carried. Note: July minutes were adopted subsequent to the last meeting, by phone roll-call.*

**President's Report:** Committee reports must be in by Wednesday August 14, 2011. Please read *Serving with Grace* by the board retreat, especially pgs 53 – 61.

**Ministers' Report -Charlie:**

- Number of guests that signed the book: 11 in July, and 7 in August.
- Charlie currently serves on three boards - UULMNJ, UUMA Chapter of the Metro New York, and MESH - and will be looking to see if someone in our congregation can replace him on the MESH board.
- Our Safe and Civil Church policy needs to be amended to be prepared for the possibility of a convicted molester joining the congregation. This will be a difficult issue if it comes to pass.
- Pete Williams, coordinator of the after school program is in the hospital after emergency surgery early this week.
- We have a visiting minister from Uganda to visit the congregation next Tuesday night to discuss his work on LGBTI issues in that country.
- Charlie is still recovering from the four different medical conditions that hit over the summer.
- The membership committee is moving ahead with a mentorship program for new members. They will be soliciting members of the congregation to be mentors.
- UUville is on the 18<sup>th</sup>. There is no indoor back-up for UUville, so it will be necessary for it to be sunny!!!

**Judy:** (Distributed written report.)

- Lot of energy going into Start-up Saturday (this Saturday) for RE.
- The Senior Youth planned to help the Newton Street School to decorate a Yoga room. It is unclear whether this has been completed.
- A new Harvest the Power group is getting started and is in recruiting mode.

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- Covenant groups will be meeting next week, and they will be signing people up at UUville.
- Judy appreciates the support and condolences expressed at the loss of her nephew this summer.

**Committee on Ministry** has not yet met this year, so was not in attendance. They are invited to the retreat.

**Music Committee:** (Judie Rinearson) The committee has received encouraging responses from their survey. They will be coming up with a final report. One issue they have decided already is that the choir will be done differently. They will create sections throughout the year (as RE does) so people can join a part of the choir without the full commitment. They also continue to get their ideas from the list-serve that Judie joined. The membership costs for the UU Musicians' Network is \$570, plus \$80 for Artis' membership, plus \$40 each for Mary Wanderpolo and Judith Rew.

Ben Towsley and his partner are coming to do a fund-raiser, Saturday night, October 22<sup>nd</sup>. We have to pay their fee, but any proceeds will go to defray the cost of this membership. During the June meeting we approved a \$570 amount to cover the memberships. As far as Artis' membership is concerned, in the future there should be an equivalent "professional expense" category in the budget from which the amount should come. This year it would have to come out of the music endowment. Next year the annual meeting for the UU Musicians' Network will be in Tulsa Oklahoma. This situation is parallel to the fees or costs incurred by individual members of the congregation who pay their own travel to GA, for example. However, we could cover the cost this first year, since this is a start-up endeavor for the congregation. Artis expressed an interest in both the children's choir, and the different sub-choirs. Since the endowment committee must approve funds expended from the endowment, Teresa will reach out to the endowment committee. *Motion that the fund-raiser be approved. (Judy S./Thom Kennon) Motion carried.*

**Treasurer's Report:** (Judy): In July, we have a \$67,000 surplus over expenses. Total assets have increased from June to July, so again it is an accounting anomaly. The form comparing the final budget to the budget presented to the congregation (comparison) shows actual pledges slightly higher than projected as well as the increased cost of the bookkeeper and the medical/disability costs. This was discussed at the last meeting, but a motion was not entertained at the last meeting because board members wanted to see the comparison on paper. *Motion to adopt new budget as discussed in the sheet. (Michael/Terry D) Motion Carried.*

On sheet "Budget Surplus" we see a \$31,000 surplus. The power point shows the different ways the money could be spent. The purpose of this presentation is to discuss these options and decide. Finance committee suggests:

- 1) Building committee \$15,000;
- 2) Bonuses \$7,000
- 3) Intern \$6,000

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- 4) Harvest the Power \$1,600
- 5) UULMNJ \$1,600
- 6) Technology \$2,500
- 7) Music \$500
- 8) Building \$800

TOTAL 35,000

The problem with this recommendation is that it is \$4000 over what we have to work with unless we take \$4000 back from the reserve fund. If we take that out we would have a balance of \$69,000. The bylaws put a limit of 25% (three months of the budget – or \$150,000.) The purpose of the reserve fund is to cover a year like 2008 when (1) the bottom fell out of the market, (2) we lost “Over the Rainbow” and (3) pledges came in lower than expected. We have to stop talking about this money as “surplus” or “overage” since our budget is so austere as it is. We need to think about how to inspire the congregation to give money. This is all being presented for consideration between now and the board retreat.

**Board retreat:** The discussion that we had last week was to have it here, catered, on Friday evening, then have a session. 6:30 – 9:00 Friday night. Saturday’s session will be from 9:00 to 3:00. We can bring bagels in and/or order pizza. Teresa will put together an agenda and will be sending things out between now and then.

**Board Covenant:** This was put together two years ago, and re-affirmed last year. Any changes? (Change “canvas” to “Pledge drive”). Perhaps there should be more language regarding transparency of communication. Perhaps under Paragraph one – two part responsibility for the executive committee to bring all issues before the board, and for board members to speak when they feel like they are lacking in understanding. The board needs to be fully engaged in the process. Charlie suggested we consider adding another point under the fiduciary part of the covenant. Point D: Assuring that where the role of board member is in conflict with other volunteer responsibilities, the role of the board would take precedence. Charlie and Dennis will work on the wording of this last point.

**Old Business:** (Ed) Jazz Vespers rehearsal was last night. It will consistently be the second Saturday of the month.

**UUville:** Carol McGough and Kim Johnson will be co-mayors of UUville. All board members should be a part of it. A lot more volunteers are needed.

**Congregational Meeting:** To be scheduled on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, between services, to amend the bylaws. No alternative activities should be scheduled between the services on that day (Secretary should communicate this to the administrator.)

**NJT:** We were one of the founding members of NJT, but since then interest has waned and no congregational member has stepped up to take a leadership role. We have been contributing one percent of our operating budget, and we need to decide whether we wish

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to continue our participation. The appropriate way to relinquish our role in NJT would be by a motion by this board. We need to bring Johanna Foster in on this decision before it is made public. *Motion to withdraw from NJT (Ed Billy/ Judy S) Motion carried.*

**Schedule Board Moments:**

9/11 - UUville – Carol or Sue  
9/18 – The Board Retreat -- Teresa  
9/25 –NJT discontinued -- Teresa  
10/2 – Bylaws – Judy Strachan

**Operational Issues for Donna:**

Sue to communicate w/ Donna that no committee meetings should be held on October 23<sup>rd</sup> so that the Congregational meeting will be held.

**Thank yous:** Pamela Barnett (Summer RE – Hogwarts)  
Johanna for her service on NJT.

Process Monitor.

*Motion to adjourn. (Terry D./Deborah )* The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Next meeting is Thursday, October 13, 2011.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Raufer  
Secretary of the Board