

Vestry Minutes
The Unitarian Church in Charleston
November 16, 2017

Present: Sue Weller, Chair, Erica Hattings, John Hyatt, Jonathan Lamb, Diane Narkunas, Carol Oates, Danny Reed, Gail Schiffer.

Absent: Zack Conover, Tommy Hughston, Mark Madden, Sandra Selvitelli.

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM. Sue Weller led us in an opening reading for our chalice lighting.

Check in

➤ **Minutes:**

- **Erica moved that the minutes of October 17, 2017 be approved. Jonathan seconded and the motion passed.**

➤ **Reports:**

- **Gail moved that the monthly reports be approved, Erica seconded and the motion passed.**

Discussion:

- Nancy Pelligrini has requested an over the ear microphone or a buttonaire. Judy Manning is getting a quote for a replacement wireless (2 amplifying; 2 patch- in).
- Rental income YTD, down, \$17,500, includes Church Sanctuary, Gage Hall and Parking.
 - Sandra working on website
 - Should we raise rentals?
 - Jonathan recommended getting rentals up to snuff, and then raise rentals.
 - Talk with Churchyard Committee about keeping up the yard, if we want to raise rents.
 - Should we invest in a PR person for rentals, who could be paid on commission?
 - Names mentioned were Barbara Kelly, Amy Hutto
 - Volunteers could work with Sandra on developing a brochure, i.e., Gail, Barbara Kelly, John H. & Amy Hutto.

- **Ministerial Agreements, refer to handout: No Action Taken; 3 members absent.**

- **Budget Request Form, refer to handout: Action deferred because Zach was not present and has not approved budget format.**

- **Constitutional Change to reflect 3 year treasurer term, not 4 years. No action taken.**

- Recommendation came from former treasurer, Terry Walsh.

- Rationale: Treasurer acts as Asst. Treasurer for one year before becoming Treasurer.
- Challenge at this time, finding an Asst. Treasurer. If you have a recommendation, contact Nina Fair, Nominating Committee Chair.

➤ **Proposal for Vestry/personnel Resolution**

Action: Gail made a motion that Motion 1 & 2 be approved, Diane seconded and the motion passed.

▪ **Motion 1,**

That the Vestry Chair appoint an *ad hoc* committee of the Vestry with the charge of:

- a) reviewing all documents that pertain to the management and assessment of the minister and staff, including but not limited to the Constitution, Vestry Policies, the Personnel Manual, the Minister's Agreement, the Organizational Chart, and the missions of the Personnel Committee and the Committee on Shared Ministry;
- b) proposing to the Vestry any changes or additions needed to bring the documents into compliance with one another and to clarify management and assessment issues;
- c) creating channels through which staff members can communicate concerns that they have about management issues and procedures for resolving those issues.

Motion 2,

The Vestry Chair appoint an *ad hoc* committee consisting of a member of the Vestry, a member of COSM, and a member of the Personnel Committee to continue the process already in place of meeting monthly with the minister to provide guidance and feedback on administrative improvements. This will include occasional assessment of that improvement. The process will continue until the end of the church year unless the committee believes its work is complete.

Discussion:

- It was suggested that Motion 1, c, consider a third party to facilitate channels through which staff members can communicate concerns regarding management issues. This may be outlined in personnel manual.

➤ **Memorial Courtyard in NW corner of church building for legacy gifts.**

Action: John made a motion to approve this request, Erica seconded and the motion passed.

Discussion:

- Request made by Planned Giving Committee to recognize legacy gifts.
 - The plan is to move the Sundial instead of creating a new walkway.
 - Bob Jontos did the design. It is modeled after St. Michael's Church.
 - Waiting on estimates. Generous donation with no budget restrictions is supporting this project.

- **Letter of Intent for Memorial Walkway and Charleston Garden Club**
Action: Jonathan made a motion to accept the letter of intent between the Unitarian Church in Charleston and the Garden Club of Charleston, Gail seconded and the motion passed.

- **Discussion around two services. Guest, Carol Oates, Membership Coordinator.**
 - **No action was taken because we had three Vestry members absent.**
 - **The consensus was that there is no longer a need for 2 services.**
 - **However, there is a commitment to plan ahead for a time when numbers go up. Tracking will remain key.**
 - **Congregation needs to be informed in January.**

Carol presented compelling evidence that there no longer seems to be a need for two services due to lower attendance, flat new members numbers, and reduced enrollment of children in religious education classes. (UUC-CHS membership as of Nov. 12: 421). Carol said the staff cited competing priorities, such as maintenance of our facilities and the capital campaign needed to make this happen, and limited resources (people and monies) for 2 services.

Discussion:

- Attendance stats show the following for comparable Sundays over the past three church years: 15/16 – 198.0, 16/17 – 185.0, 17/18 – 171.5. Also, results when Danny preaches for comparable dates: Attendance 7.0% lower in 17/18 than in 16/17; Attendance 6.4% lower in 16/17 than in 15/16.
- Number of new members enrolled in Pathways classes is reduced, i.e., August class, cancelled, Oct. class, 12.
- Staff concerns: RE numbers down, also, space is an issue. With 2 services, need more staff and volunteers. Sandra and Joe need assistance.

Closing words – Sue Weller

Vestry meeting ended at 7:35.

Follow up:

- ✓ **Review and approval of ministerial agreements.**
- ✓ **Review and approval of budget request form.**
- ✓ **Approval of continuing with one service at UCC-CHS.**

Respectfully submitted by Diane Narkunas, Vestry Member