

TVUUC Board Meeting

December 17, 2017

Board Members Present: Matthew Blondell; Denise Coleman; Debbie Ellis; Jeff Kovac; Ginna Mashburn; Robby McMurry; John McNair; Lynne Mullins; Bill Myers; Wendy Syer; Elnora Williams
Ex Officio: Chris Buice; Claudia Pressley

Treasurer's Report:

Robby McMurry reported that a draft of the 2018-19 budget has been prepared, based on committee requests; a summary will be sent out to the membership with the stewardship campaign package. The total projected (requested) budget is \$620,000, which represents a 23% increase over the final 2017-18 budget. The largest portion of this increase is a collective increase of \$104,525 for staff salaries. Robby will meet with the Stewardship chairs to discuss budget items that were requested for this year but could not be funded due to limited funds. This information can be provided to the membership to encourage increased donations in the 2018 campaign.

It was also mentioned that members may find it beneficial to make more donations before the end of 2017, due to changing tax laws. A message will be sent to the membership to suggest this.

Endowment Committee Report

Ken Stephenson gave a report on behalf of the Endowment Committee. The purpose of the Endowment Fund is to ensure the long-term survival of the [TVUUC] community. A small portion of the income is used for designated church projects each year, while the remainder is reinvested to grow the fund. The fund can also be used in case of an unexpected crisis.

The Fund currently has a balance of approximately \$400,000. The fund has produced a 16.7% return on investment this year; the three-year average return is 5.1%. The Committee is evaluating the best investment plan for this fund. It is currently invested through the UUA Combined Endowment Fund, but they wonder if we might get a better return with other methods.

The Endowment Fund account is being moved to the TVA Employees Credit Union for easier access and use. The main church account will remain with Home Federal Bank for now, but they will consider changing later after the mortgage is paid off.

The Endowment Fund has recently funded technology and audio-visual projects, totaling about \$20,000. **They are now seeking proposals for new funding projects. (Deadline for suggestions is January 28, 2018).**

A goal for this year is to look into, clarify, and "re-invigorate" the Eternal Flame program. Eternal Flame designation is given to persons who have given more than a designated amount to the Endowment fund. Names are listed on a plaque in the Lizzie Crozier French room. However, consistent records have not been kept, and the criteria for membership are not clear.

The committee sends a mailing to the membership three times a year to publicize the Endowment Fund and encourage donations.

We were reminded that "memorial gifts" (given in honor of a deceased member) can be designated for the Endowment Fund. Note that the "Memorial Fund" (used to pay for the cost of memorial services), the Memorial Garden Fund (to pay for name plaques in the Memorial Garden), and the Endowment Fund are three separate funds.

Personnel Committee Report

Linda Randolph gave a report on behalf of the Personnel Committee, focusing on salary recommendations for 2018-19. This was a tentative request; a formal salary recommendation will be presented to the Board at a later time. (See above: They are currently requesting a \$104,525 for salary increases). Recommendations are based on the UUA recommended salary ranges, which, in turn, are based on the size of the church membership, the length of employment, and the geographic region. They note that current salaries need to be increased to meet UUA recommendations for each position and that most staff received no salary increase in 2017-18.

The highest priority is the increase for the Senior Minister's salary to the "mid-level" level recommended by the UUA for our church classification. They also set the goal of contributing an additional 10% of the salary amount to a retirement fund, as recommended by the UUA. (The Senior Minister is currently receiving 7.75% towards retirement, while other staff members receive 7%.) The allocation for professional expenses should also be increased. Salaries of other staff members must also be increased to meet the "mid-level" or even the minimum recommended level. Many staff received no increase last year; the Music Director has had no salary increase in her five years of employment.

Other comments related to salaries and benefits:

- It was difficult to identify the UUA recommendation for Lauren Hulse's position; her duties are split between membership coordinator and communications coordinator. UUA currently has no salary recommendations for a communications coordinator.
- Katherine Loya's position was given an incorrect "credentialing level", resulting in a salary inconsistent with her credentials. This should be corrected.
- Some TVUUC staff members have chosen not to use the church group health insurance. While this saves the church money now, some provision must be made to have funding available in the future if they, or others in their positions, decide to participate in the health insurance. Also, if a staff member opts out of health insurance should he/she be offered alternative benefits instead?
- If the church moves to two weekly services, there will be additional salary needs related to this.

Stewardship Committee Report

Barbara Taylor gave a report on plans for the upcoming Stewardship Campaign. Due to unanticipated health problems, Cindy Moffett has stepped down from her role as Co-Chair of the Stewardship Campaign. Her place has been taken by Kaci Clark.

Barbara stressed that a major goal of the campaign (in addition to raising funds) is to build a sense of community within the church. The "cottage meetings", which will take place in February and early March, are designed to support this goal. All church members will receive invitations to small-group events (with desserts or other refreshments) held in the homes of other members. Invitations will be issued based on the neighborhood (zip codes) of the members, if possible. Cottage meetings will provide an opportunity to socialize with fellow members, as well as to provide feedback on church vision and programs, to hear a presentation about the financial needs of TVUUC, and then to complete pledge cards. There was some discussion about creating incentives for people to attend the cottage meetings. One suggestion was to promise a demonstration of the new *Realm* database. The Committee is seeking volunteers to host a cottage meeting in their homes (providing light refreshments, and writing thank-you notes to those who attend.) The stewardship presentation will be made by Stewardship Committee members.

Plans for an All-Church Dinner are still being discussed. If held on Feb. 3 (as previously planned), members may choose to skip the Sunday service the next day, which is the Pledge Campaign kick-off

day, with Duncan Teague. Instead of having the dinner in January, at the start of the Campaign, it may be held later in the spring, to celebrate a successful pledge campaign.

Board members stressed that the emphasis this year must be on the need to increase staff salaries. (We can call it “The Year of Our People”.)

Board members are urged to send thoughts about the campaign to Barbara at bltphd@comcast.net

Transition to *Realm* Database

Claudia reported that the *Realm* database is now active and available for use by the staff and the “Soft Launch Team”. Staff members have participated in several live training webinars. (Robby declared the program “freakin’ awesome”!) Board members have all been set an invitation to log on and experiment with the database. (Log-on url address is onrealm.org/tvuuc . There is also a *Realm* app available in the app store.) We can update our own profiles and explore other items in the database (but should not change general church information or other people’s profiles.) Remember to keep member information confidential. Claudia requests that feedback on *Realm* be sent to her by January 1.

It may be possible to set up a meeting for the Board for more intense training or to get feedback, before we begin assisting the congregation. Also note that on-line training videos are available. (Click on the question mark in the upper corner of the screen.)

Information in the current profiles has been transferred from the old database. Full pledge history and current pledge payment information will be transferred at a later date. Members will be encouraged to use *Realm* to arrange automatic bank transfer of weekly or monthly pledges. The program can also be used for immediate donations during the service or at any other time.

Continued timeline for *Realm*:

Jan 2	Other key leaders will begin using software.
Jan 6-14	Major publicity campaign to inform congregation about new database
Jan. 14 – 31	Soft Launch Team and other “ <i>Realm</i> Experts” will assist congregation to log-in and update their accounts on a number of scheduled days and evenings
April 1	It is hoped that training and updates will be completed

Building and Grounds Committee Report

Claudia also gave a report from the Building and Grounds Committee. Will Dunklin and Dick Trowbridge now serve as a Co-chairs.

Some of the tasks completed this year are:

- New sinks in the RE bathrooms
- New “green” carpeting in the lobby entranceway
- Improvement to front doors to open and close more easily
- Contracts with new lawn care company and new company for single-stream recycling
- Conversion of all lighting to LED’s
- New thermostats in five classrooms
- Removal of some dead trees.
- Purchase of disposable biodegradable paper plates for some church events

Plans are in place for the following improvements:

- The giving kiosk will be located in the lobby.
- Parking lot lighting (especially on the path from the lower parking lot) is broken and will be replaced very soon.
- New (non-carpet) flooring will be laid in the Lizzie Crozier French Room. That room and some others will be painted while the church is closed after Christmas. (These projects were funded by The Alliance.)

As the building ages, the cost of maintenance grows; the Committee has requested an increased budget for building and grounds needs. The Capital Reserve Fund has been used for some of the projects above. When the mortgage is paid off in about a year, there will be some additional funds available. (Note that Endowment Fund may not be used for regular maintenance.)

It was suggested that we might put up signs after some of these improvements, mentioning the cost of the project.

20th Anniversary

Ginna Mashburn reported on plans to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the current TVUUC Building. (The actual anniversary is Jan. 28) The Sunday service on Jan. 14 will commemorate the anniversary, and a reception will be held after the service that day. The celebration will continue through the month with photos, videos of member interviews, stories etc. (Note: Jeff Kovac also has a goal of writing a history of TVUUC after he retires.)

Ordination of Jon Coffee

The ordination of Jon Coffee will be held at TVUUC in April 2018. It will cost an estimated \$1500. Jon's church in Kansas is co-sponsoring the event, but most of their contribution will be spent on transportation to Knoxville for participants from their church.

A motion was made and passed unanimously to stage a GoFundMe campaign to raise the money needed for this event. Robby McMurry will coordinate this.

Visit by the UUA Board of Trustees

The UUA Board of Trustees will be visiting Tennessee in January 2018, and the following meetings are scheduled for them to interact with the church leadership and congregations:

- **Social Justice Program:** Friday, Jan. 19; 6:00 – 9:00 pm; Dinner and Discussion with UUA Board and Highlander Center staff, at the Highlander Center, New Market, TN; to be led by Elandria Williams. UUA Board is meeting before dinner, and members are invited to sit in on the Board meeting.
- **Meeting with UUA Board for Church Leaders:** Leaders of the area UU churches will meet for a discussion with the UUA Board at TVUUC ; Saturday, Jan. 20 from 3:00 to 5:30 pm
- **Courage to Love Dinner:** Catered dinner, entertainment , and informal conversation with the UUA Board; Saturday, Jan. 20 from 6:00-9:00 pm at TVUUC; cost is \$8 per adult and \$4 per child (aged 5-10). Reserve spot at www.oruuc.org/courage-to-love-dinner-and-coffeehouse by Jan. 12.
- **Worship and Fellowship:** Sunday Church Service for all area congregations, followed by food; Sunday, Jan. 21 at 11:00 am; **Rothchild Event Center, 8807 Kingston Pike;** UUA President Susan

Frederick-Gray preaching; There will be no service at TVUUC that day (but someone will be located at the church to re-direct anyone who comes to the church.)

- **Donor Event (Invitation Only):** An opportunity for major donors to meet with the UUA President; Sunday Jan. 21 at the Rothchild Event Center (after the service; exact time TBA)
- **Choir for Sunday Service:** A choir is being organized by the Westside UU Church to sing at the Sunday service. Contact music@westsideuuc.org to participate. Rehearsals will be held on Saturday, Jan. 6 (10:00 am – Noon at Westside UU Church) and Saturday, Jan. 20 (1:00 – 3:00 pm at Rothchild Event Center)

It was suggested that it would be useful to have a list of topics and talking points for the meetings between the UUA Board and Church Leaders. Chris Buice will prepare send some suggested topics to the Board.

Safety Concerns

It seems appropriate to review current safety measures and concerns at TVUUC. For example: Do we need cameras or better lighting? How effective are the sextons, and what is their training? How safe do people feel?

Board members are asked to send their thoughts, concerns, and suggestions to Jeff, Chris, and Claudia, so they can decide on the next step in this discussion.

Miscellaneous issues

The income from the 2017 TVUUC auction has exceeded \$23,000.

The Sales-in-the Church policy is still in the process of being written. No additional comments were set this last month. Board members are urged again to send feedback to Jeff and Claudia.

Claudia currently coordinates the Volunteer Assisted Transportation Task Force which provides rides to church for members and friends who are unable to drive. They are in desperate need of more volunteer drivers.

The January Board Meeting was moved to January 28, due to the visit of the UUA visit and events on Jan. 21.

Wendy Syer
Secretary to the Board

“Homework” assignments for the Board

- Board members have been asked again to review the most recent draft of the Sales-in-the-Church policy and send their thoughts and suggestions to Jeff and Claudia so they can prepare a final policy for approval by the Board.
- Board Members are asked to send thoughts on church safety to Jeff, Chris, and Claudia.
- Think about possible projects to be funded by the Endowment Fund
- Begin experimenting with the Realm database, and enroll in training webinars as appropriate
- Set up GoFundMe site to raise money for Jon Coffee’s ordination. (Robby McMurry)

