

TVUUC Board Meeting

November 12, 2019

Board Members Present: Matthew Blondell; Eddie Chin; Denise Coleman (President) ; Debbie Ellis; Justina Hyfantis; Ginna Mashburn; Ryan McBee; Robby McMurry; Wendy Syer; Jamie Watts; Erven Williams; Alice Woody

Ex Officio/Visiting: Claudia Pressley; Taylor Thomas

Recruiting and Hiring Policy

In September 2019, the Board had approved a revised Recruiting and Hiring Policy. **The Board has now approved a revision to this policy, permitting a person employed in an acting position to apply for the same position on a long-term or settled basis.**

Request from Christopher Watkins Lamb

Christopher Watkins Lamb has submitted a request to be ordained at TVUUC for Unitarian Universalist Ministry. He has graduated from the Iliff School of Theology and received preliminary approval for fellowship from the UUA Ministerial Fellowship Committee. **The Board approved his request for ordination at TVUUC.**

The ordination will be conducted next year in coordination with Christopher's current church in Colorado. TVUUC will be responsible for the costs associated with ordination. It was suggested that we use an on-line crowdfunding program to help with these costs. Chris Buice can provide details about the cost of hosting this event.

Search for New Music Director

Ginna Mashburn reported that the Search Committee has chosen six individuals to be considered for the position of Music Director. These persons will be interviewed via video conferencing. The Committee will then select some of the candidates for in-person interviews with the Search Committee and the choir.

Two of the six candidates would be able to serve both as Choral Director and Organist/Pianist. This ability will not be a critical factor in selecting the person to be hired. If the candidate selected cannot play keyboard, the job will be split into two positions, as it is now, and someone will be hired to play organ and piano.

Stewardship Committee

Taylor Thomas, the Chair of the Stewardship Committee, reported on plans for the Pledge Campaign.

At Thanksgiving this year, the committee will send cards to those who pledged last spring, thanking them for the pledge and highlighting some of the TVUUC programs which have been enabled by member contributions.

Another goal, before the pledge period in the spring of 2020, is to make sure that the contact information in *Realm* is accurate.

Taylor reported that ten people from TVUUC attended the recent Stewardship Workshop on fundraising. Some of the points made in the workshop include the following:

- It is important to find out what programs or aspects of the church are most important to the congregation. This could be learned through a survey of members and friends.
- It is also important to know the current demographics of the congregation, and to make sure the pledge campaign meets the needs and preferences of various groups. For example, younger members may prefer to pay with newer payment methods such as Venmo.
- There is no magic strategy that will guarantee a more successful pledge campaign. However, it is important to fit our pledge campaign to the culture of this church, to assess the success the annual pledge campaign each year, and to make adjustments in future years.

Taylor also stressed the importance of maintaining a continuous relationship with members; if members are already aware of programs they feel are important, they are more likely to contribute during the pledge campaign.

It was suggested that the results of the pledge campaign should be made public. Most Board Members were opposed to publicizing the amount given by individual members. The total amount raised will be indicated on a sign in the church and periodically updated during the pledge period.

Revision to Senior Minister's Job Description

The Personnel Committee has proposed the following change to the job description of the Senior Minister:

- The Senior Minister will not make the final decision to hire a non-called minister. After a search is conducted, the Search Committee and Senior Minister can submit their recommendation to the Board; Board approval is required before a job offer is made. This is similar to the procedure already followed for the position of Director of Administration.
- The Senior Minister will also not make the final decision to hire a Ministerial Intern. The Senior Minister may recruit an intern, and present his/her recommendation to the Board; Board approval is required before an offer is made.

Before approving a job offer, the Board would have the opportunity to meet, and review the qualifications of, a finalist.

One Board Member felt that parts of the job description are actually a statement of policy and would better fit in a policy manual. This suggestion will be passed on to the Personnel Committee.

A question was also raised about whether the job description should specify a minimum number of Sunday services the Senior Minister should be required to conduct each year. Opinions were mixed on this topic. It was pointed out that the Minister has many responsibilities beyond Sunday services.

The Board voted to approve the revised job description for the Senior Minister.

Financial Report

Robby McMurry (Treasurer) distributed a copy of the church financial statement through October, including the current balance in each of the 43 restricted accounts. So far this year, spending is within the budgeted amount. In the financial report, the amount spent on Payroll this month appears to exceed the budgeted amount, due only to the timing of Payroll this month.

A question was raised about moving the church funds from Home Federal Bank to another bank. **Robby agreed to research possible banks.**

Another question was raised about the car (or proceeds from the sale of the car) that was to be donated to the church. The car has not yet been sold. **Denise will follow up with the donor to get a progress report.**

A suggestion was made to change the line in the budget for "Building Rental" to something else (e.g. "Maintenance Fees") to reflect the fact the church does not make a net profit from fees paid by groups which use church facilities. There was also a short discussion about which groups are charged for the use of space, and how the amounts of the fees are determined. Claudia clarified that groups that are not affiliated with TVUUC do normally pay for meeting space, even if the group includes some church members. Claudia suggested that the Buildings and Grounds Committee might address the question of whether the fees should be increased. **Erven Williams agreed to do some calculations on the additional costs incurred when rooms are used.**

Strategic Planning and Basecamp

The Strategic Planning Committee continues to focus on the goals chosen by the Board at the start of the year. Recently they have been considering the important stakeholders chosen by the Board. These groups are:

- New and prospective members
- Youth leaders
- Long-term members

Focus groups will be organized to solicit input from each of these groups, organized by Jametta Alston (New/Prospective members), Catherine Loya, (Youth Leaders), and Denise Coleman/Ginna Mashburn (Active Long-term Members).

The Committee has also been discussing ways to approach Key Partners in the community to encourage greater involvement with TVUUC. The Key Partners identified are:

- Local businesses and non-profit groups who share TVUUC's social justice agendas
- Local donors and foundations
- Other religious groups in the Knoxville community that share TVUUC's mission and values

Denise mentioned that she wants to begin using the *Basecamp* software for all communications with the Board and for storing documents. Because there is still considerable confusion among Board Members about using *Basecamp*, she will continue using e-mail and *Realm* for now. She hopes to hold a *Basecamp* training program for Board Members next month. (Note: Board Members who are registered in *Basecamp* will receive an e-mail notice when a message has been posted in *Basecamp*.)

Board members were again reminded that we can suggest activities and initiate discussions in *Basecamp*.

Board Contributions to the TVUUC Auction

The annual Church Auction will take place on December 14. The auction committee has asked the Board if we want to organize a Chili and Game Party, as we did last year, and also to donate a gift basket. The Board agreed to co-host (with the Program Council) the Ruth Martin Chili and Game Party in February 2020. As in past years, the fee will be \$5 per person. Board members will be asked to sign up to bring chili and other food items. Matthew Blondell offered to contact the Program Council for agreement. **It was later agreed that the party will be held on February 1 from 5:00 to 8:00 pm.**

The Board also agreed to sponsor a gift basket. Debbie Ellis will organize the basket, and Board members can contribute to the cost.

Report from Church Administration

Claudia Pressley reported on several developments in the church office and administration. When Lauren Hulse left her position, her duties were divided and redistributed. While her Membership duties now lie with Jametta Alston, the church has considered various options for handling the Communication part of Lauren's job. It has been decided that Mark Mohundro will provide many of these services as a private contractor, and Robby McMurry will be responsible for the church website.

The question was raised about the best way to publicize Mark's new role so that church members and groups can get help publicizing their events as widely as possible. **Claudia will discuss this with Mark.** She noted that Mark plans to write a column for the weekly newsletter.

The Board also noted that Lauren's skills in graphic design were very valuable, and are missed now that she has left. The staff will explore the idea of contracting with someone to do occasional designs for the Pledge Campaign and other needs.

Claudia also reported that the security system has now been upgraded. There are three new security cameras, with images viewable in the office workroom. The door locking/unlocking mechanisms have also been upgraded. It is now possible for Claudia and John Montgomery to change the settings from their personal phones, and for different doors to have different locking schedules. They plan to extend this access to some other church staff members at a later date. Claudia offered to give Board Members a tour of the new security features next month.

Miscellaneous

- The dates of the next UUA General Assembly are June 24-25 in Providence, RI. Board Members are encouraged to attend (as are all TVUUC members). Registration is now open.
- Eddie Chin has been working on a slightly revised script for the Sunday Board Member on Duty (BMOD), consolidating several inconsistent scripts. He will add a reference to the "Fireside Chat" with the after the BMOD after the service, and will remove the suggestion to go to the Religious Education table after the service (as they are available before the service.) To avoid confusion, we need to make sure all old scripts are removed from the church and website.

Submitted by Wendy Syer, Secretary to the Board.

11/29/19