

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday 13th October 2009
7:30 pm in the Commons
“Pending Approval at the next Board of Trustees Meeting.”

Members Present: Reid Adler (Chairperson), Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, Ian Anderson, Tamara de la Camp (Program Council Convener), Dan Cohen (Secretary), Joan Darrah, Lisa Gillispie, Birgit Robbert

Members Absent: Mike Walker, Jamie Barnett

Others Present: Al Erickson (Church Treasurer, member *ex officio*), Kate Walker (Minister, member *ex officio*), Branka Bijelovich (Church Administrator), Ron Brandt (former Church Administrator and Program Council representative; guest for today’s meeting)

Others Absent:

1. Welcome and Inspirational Words: Rev. Kate Walker opened the meeting with a reading on “forgiveness” by Vivian Pomeroy.
2. “Consent Agenda” (Standard Monthly Agenda; see also attached Minister’s, DRE’s and Administrator’s reports):
 - a. Review/Approval of September BoT Meeting Minutes (Dan): September minutes were approved without further modification and will be posted on the church website and church bulletin board along with August financial statements.
 - b. Finance Committee/Treasurer’s Report (Al Erickson): First quarter intake reached only 15.5% of budget as compared to an output of about 25% of annual expenses; so we are about \$50,000 behind our quarterly target. Payment Reminders will be sent to MVUC members who have made pledges for the current year. (Financial Reports attached)
 - c. Administrator’s Report (Branka): Branka is increasing her contributions to the church community as she becomes more familiar with the church. She is looking for volunteers or a paid employee to assist with setting up for church services and Ian Anderson has offered to assist. An update on the fence project was discussed and the preschool lease will be renewed very soon. (Report attached)
3. Old Business Items (Items pending from previous meetings):
 - a. Consideration of an additional capital campaign (Reid): The Finance Committee, Stewardship Committee and informal group of Building Task Force alumni have been asked to make recommendations to the Board in November. The meeting with Larry Wheeler was attended by about 10%

of church members. His report and recommendations have been received, are undergoing additional review. No decisions have been made regarding next steps at this time. Members of the Building Task Force, as previously constituted, include Bill Clontz, Robin Roberts, Lynn Alsmeyer-Johnson, Jim Potter, Ron Brandt, Karen Tyson, and Steve Dressing. Though some of these members are, or may be, willing to continue to serve in some capacity there was BoT consensus that new members would be desirable as a complement to the efforts of those who have served in the past.

Item OPEN,

Follow Up: November 17th 2009

- c. Joint meeting of Board and Program Council (PC): (Tamara, Reid, Ron Brandt): Ron Brandt attended today's BoT meeting as a representative of the Program Council. Reid and Tamara proposed five topics/questions for discussion:
 1. *Review of BOT Goals for the year. Answer any questions Program Council members may have and discuss Program Council suggestions.* There are currently five goals the BoT established at the retreat in August (See Minute of BoT Retreat; item 8.) and these should be shared with the PC (and broader MVUC community), though turning these into actionable steps presents both challenges and opportunities. Enhancing accountability and establishing committee objectives linked to the BoT goals via metrics that portray accomplishments may be a direction to go; but there was not uniform agreement on this point. Implementing goals down to the committee level remains a challenge and the Board and PC convener should consider strategies for this. Each committee chair has a distinct portfolio of responsibilities and brings that focus to the meeting; and though these are hugely important, they may not be specifically related to the BoT goals.
 2. *How can the Board and Program Council work together on these goals?* There was general discussion regarding PC oversight of committees and there was some consensus that closer collaboration/cross fertilization between committees was desirable. Reports are submitted at the PC meetings but there was a sense that inter-committee collaboration can and should be enhanced. Ron discussed his concerns that the PC has been slow to get rolling this year after the summer break. He has suggested that by starting the BoT year earlier the PC responsibilities may be jump-started.
 3. *What does the Program Council need from the BOT to accomplish BOT goals and Program Council/Committee level goals and priorities? How can the BOT help?* The PC would likely benefit from closer collaborative efforts with the BoT beyond the already well established relationship between the PC convener and the committee chairs, and strategies for

this will be considered.

4. *What is the best way for the BOT and Program Council to work together in the future, to share successes and progress against our goals?* Ron and Tamara will canvas the committee chairs before the special BOT meeting on November 7th. The development of reporting metrics seems a reasonable approach though other approaches, aside from the traditional business model may be more appropriate in a setting where volunteerism fuels and drives processes.
5. *How might MVUC showcase committees and recruit new members?* Ron discussed the challenges of recruiting committee members including personal “reaching-out” strategies, committee fairs, etc. Each has variable success and new strategies should be entertained. Having a volunteer coordinator is one strategy that might be developed. There was sentiment expressed that the Conveyor and Committee Chairs and Nominating Committee should own this process and should develop a recruitment plan to address committee membership.

The BoT and PC convener will continue to explore options to address issues raised above.

Item OPEN

Follow Up: November 7th 2009

- d. Policy Governance Seminar, Oct 10 Reid, Joan, Tamara and Bill Clontz (former Board member) attended a day-long training session last weekend provided by the Joseph Priestley District. Policy governance is a group of practices designed to focus Board functions on strategic vision with less attention to day to day functions. Some churches that have adopted the policy governance model also include an executive committee function of the board to deal with more emerging, time-focused pragmatic functions that are not strategic. It seems likely, given the size of our church community that some hybrid model of governance may be more suitable and this will be a focus of the BOT half-day meeting on November 7th.

Item OPEN

Follow-Up: November 11th 2009 (Reid, Tamara, Joan, Bill Clontz)

New Business Items:

- a. Board Minutes/Reviews and Postings on the Church Website (Dan): There was general discussion regarding routing and posting of minutes. It was agreed that Dan will send the minutes out for comments on the draft. The minutes will be modified after receipt of comments, based upon the Secretary’s best judgement and will be posted on the website as **“pending approval at the next board meeting.”** Draft minutes will be completed within one week of each BoT meeting. Minutes will also be posted on the

church bulletin board. Draft minutes will be formally approved at each subsequent BoT meeting and if modified, the draft minutes will be replaced with the approved version.

Item CLOSED

- b. Discussion of candidate members for the Committee on Ministry. The Committee offered several names for consideration as previous efforts to fill the six vacancies were partially successful. There was general discussion regarding the merits of various candidates. The BoT narrowed the field to seven candidates and Reid will approach these individuals to discuss their willingness and availability.

Item OPEN

Follow Up: November 17th 2009

- c. Recruiting for the Building Task Force (BTF) and Stewardship Committees: (Birgit, Reid): The Building Task Force is currently “informally” constituted and is looking for some new members and co-chairs. Some current members will likely continue in a reduced capacity. The BTF is meeting next week and will submit proposals to the board next month as requested by the Board Chair. The BTF is also considering posting of diagrams and building plans in an effort to educate the current membership regarding the plans previously developed. No decision has been made yet regarding next steps for the building program.

Stewardship committee recruitment is also underway. One source may be stewards from the past year.

Item: OPEN

Follow Up: November 17th 2009

- d. Should MVUC reaffirm/revise its mission statement and/or also update the strategic plan before the annual meeting? (Joan, Reid): There was general agreement that revision of both is desirable, though timing and sequencing remain to be determined. There was also consensus that the current mission statement does not capture the present vision and programs of the Church. Kate suggested that the Mission Statement should precede a strategic plan and could be easily developed for adoption by the congregation. Reid suggested that the congregation become involved in developing a mission statement and that the strategic plan should become a document that can be modified over time. The strategic plan should be aligned with the goals developed at the retreat. Reid suggested we each review the current strategic plan and be prepared to discuss further next month.

Item OPEN

Follow Up: November 17th 2009

- e. Update on proposed cell phone tower and decision-making process (Joan,

Reid): Joan will be hosting a meeting this Sunday after the second service to provide an update to the congregation on the proposal and respond to questions. A representative from ACO Property Advisors, the company that ATT contracts with to install towers, will be present. There are concerns among some church neighbors about the hazards posed by such a tower, but we have been told by county authorities that the available scientific evidence does not support that conclusion. Over the weekend, fliers from the community advocating rejection of the cell tower proposal were placed on car windshields of church members by an anonymous person. The process of approval, if we decide to go forward, will require County approval that should include a rigorous examination of available scientific evidence by the permit granting authorities.

Item OPEN

Follow Up: November 17th 2009

- f. Should MVUC hold a congregational meeting this Fall/Winter? (Reid): The merits of such a meeting were discussed and there was general agreement on this with an initial focus on development of a mission statement. Other topics that might be discussed would include the cell tower initiative.

Item OPEN

Follow up: November 17th 2009

4. Business Items Pending for Follow-Up in Subsequent Months (from previous months, not discussed today and listed for planning purposes):

- a. Church Governance for the Future, Special Meeting; November 7th 2009 (Reid, Tamara and Joan)
- b. Process and Timeline for Addressing Board Priorities for the Year; November 7th 2009 (Reid)
- c. Executive Committee Composition and Meetings; November 17th 2009 (Reid)
- d. Church-wide Communication; November 17th 2009 (Tamara)

Next Meetings:

- a. Saturday November 7th 0830 – Governance and board priorities though agenda may include items scheduled for November 17th at discretion of the Chair.
- b. Tuesday November 17th, 7:30 pm – Monthly board meeting (date adjustment for November) consider recommendations for Capital Campaign and Building Program, report on communications plan, Joint Meeting with the Membership Committee
- c. Tuesday December 8th, Joint meeting with Worship Committee

DLC

14 October 2009

Minister's Board Report
Mt Vernon Unitarian Church
October 13 , 2009

(Not in order of priority, but close)

1). Worship:

a). Attendance in September is strong for second service, a little down for first service. RE is not offering 4-5 grade during first service, which may be impacting attendance. Too soon to tell for sure.

2). Administration/staff:

a). Branka is still finding her balance in a very busy office. Committee chair's should be sensitive to her regular job duties when asking for help.

b). Re: Music Committee; met with Reid Adler, Joan Darrah, Branka and Mark Zimmerman. Extensive conversation about re-visioning the music committee. Current Charter is out of date due to structural changes in staff supervision and hiring practices, amongst other things. Vince Patton is going to guide a process with the choir with a 1/2 day visioning process ending with a new charter and then new members. Our hope is to complete by January.

3). Goals 09/10

a). Small Group ministry is slowly beginning.

b). Met with Communications Task force: Gregg Early, Ron Brandt, Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson, Branka and myself. The task force is focusing on internal communications, while Gregg and the Communications Committee will develop an external communications plan by January. Next meeting: Oct. 20.

c). Re: Library in Hollin Hall. I spoke with Dorothy Brandt and Keith Keener who agreed to begin working on upgrading our library, so it is cataloged and updated.

4). UUMA:

a). Nov. 10-16, I'll be in Ottawa for the Unitarian Universalist Minister's Ass. CONVO. I'm one of the primary organizers for this conference (a four year project). I feel like a lot is riding on this ... as to my reputation with my colleagues.

Kate R. Walker
Minister

Report to the Board of Trustees
Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church
Meagan Henry, Director of Religious Education
October 2009

Religious Education Program Update:

- Due to a lack of volunteer teachers, one class is cancelled this Fall: the 9:30 am 4th & 5th grade class. This class is offered only during the 11:15 service time. There are a few children in this age group whose parents will still bring them to the early service and they are being integrated in to the 2nd-3rd grade class which is certainly not ideal.
- The total for RE attendance numbers during the first 4 weeks of RE are exactly the same this year as they were last year. The interesting factor in our numbers is the disparity between our 1st and 2nd service attendance: twice as many kids are attending at the 2nd service.
- Music in RE – a new group of roving minstrels, lead by Betsy Lowry is scheduled to visit RE classes for brief amounts of time one Sunday each month in order to bring music into the classrooms.
- The Kids' Choir and Voices of Youth music programs are set to begin. Mark Zimmerman and I are working with volunteers, Joanne Masterson and Angel Collins to coordinate.

Ft. Hunt Pre-School Relations Update:

- Annual joint meeting between MVUC and FHP held on Friday, Oct. 2nd.
- Shared space agreement is updated.
- Working to renew the FHP lease and coordinating with Branka.

RE Events & Dates for Board Members Information:

- Oct. 30 – Big Boo (Halloween) party
- Nov. 1 – UNICEF Carnival between services
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Mount Vernon Unitarian Church
Church Administrator's Report

Board Of Trustees Meeting
October 13, 2009

I have been on the job for about three months now and would like to say that my job proved to be much more interesting and diverse than expected. It is still early to say that I understand fully all aspects of my job. For example, I still didn't have time to get more familiar with the property management. Hopefully, in the next three months I will be able to discuss my job in all aspects.

Before I say anything else I would like to thank everybody for a very warm welcome. Many people were coming and introducing themselves in the first few months, telling me how happy they were that I am here and it made me feel very welcome.

I have been learning a lot about the whole business and administrative operation of the Church and there is still a lot to learn, but some office duties are already becoming a routine (mainly bookkeeping tasks, tracking finances and other day-to-day administrative duties, personnel issues, basic internal communication).

The coordination of the workshop with Larry Wheeler provided for some information about the business of the Church before I came which was good to learn so I have more rounded up knowledge, especially if the project continues and the Church gets expanded as planned. On the other hand, it was a lot of work considering I was still new on the job and the decision to have that event so soon was a short notice. I would suggest we take more time to organize similar events in the future (two weeks seemed not enough time for people who work to provide all the information necessary for Larry), and I had to postpone working on my regular daily work until after September 26th (still catching up with some things that were not time sensitive, which is not unusual if some special projects "happen" in any business environment; I am just saying if we can plan ahead of time, we should take more time to prepare events like this).

Also, the workshop showed one important fact: Full transfer of administrative and business duties from the Board to the staff will not be possible with the staffing we have at the present time. It will be necessary for professional volunteers to be involved to a degree. The transfer would have been gradual in any case but, in my opinion, we should monitor carefully what is realistically doable. As time goes on, and I have even better insight about what office staff can "endure" during their part time hours (and me in my position during the full time hours), I will have some more thoughts on this issue.

Most of the business and administrative work in the office is being done on time but the biggest challenge I find from day one will be improving the internal communication channels. It is definitely on top of my present list how to go about improving it. It will require the cooperation of all involved, volunteers and staff, but I am confident that once

we diagnose the biggest cause of the problem, it will be much easier to fix it. I have some ideas but don't feel I "own" enough knowledge about it at this time yet, to discuss it in great detail in this report. I will share some thoughts with Kate and together we will conquer it if not sooner, by the time I am six months on the job (as soon as there are so many parties involved it is not possible to be resolved overnight. That is why I cautiously say I would need three more months on the job).

As far as staffing is concerned, there are some issues that I would like to mention: Hours for property manager Leah Choudhury are not realistically set. 12 hours is not enough time for that position and that will have to be reviewed at some point. Money is the bottom line but work has to be done and property has to be maintained properly. I would like to have the best plan not only with our staff but coordinating volunteers as well, so the work gets done successfully.

There is a room for improvement in defining better "who does what". Another challenge for my position. In a way, general communication will be improved that way as well, when it is clear who does what. I will discuss this in more detail with the personnel committee.

It will be a challenging year ahead of us but if we keep on our minds that we are all striving toward the same goal: to make things run smoothly and to the overall benefit of the Church and the whole Congregation, there is no problem that cannot be solved.

I look forward to working with all of you in achieving set goals and objectives.

MOUNT VERNON UNITARIAN CHURCH

Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Revenue & Expenses

As of September 30, 2009 - 25% of the fiscal year

Account	ACTUAL Jul&Aug 09	ACTUAL Sep 09	ACTUAL To Date	ANN Budget	Percent of Budget
REVENUE					
4100 Stewardship Pledges	44,977	20,586	65,563	385,000	17.03%
4200 Contributions	1,840	1,041	2,881	19,000	15.16%
4300 Facilities use and rental (other)	3,225	1,595	4,820	28,472	16.93%
4390 Wedding Income	15,050	2,675	17,725	145,000	12.22%
4400 Fund Raising Income	64	29	93	10,075	0.92%
4500 Administrative & other income	0	0	0	800	0.00%
TOTAL INCOME	65,156	25,926	91,082	588,347	15.48%
EXPENSES					
5000 Worship programs (incl music)	533	318	851	5,500	15.47%
5100 RE programs incl youth ministries	222	983	1,205	4,000	30.13%
5200 Home community programs	0	0	0	300	0.00%
5300 Denomination Responsibilities	5,393	1,615	7,008	28,026	25.01%
5400 Our larger world/social justice	173	0	173	450	38.44%
5490 Virginia Interfaith	0	0	0	300	0.00%
5500 Administrative programs	0	156	156		
5520 Stewardship Campaign	0	0	0	700	0.00%
5540 Other comm. & expenses	0	0	0	600	0.00%
5590 Search committees	200	0	200	0	
5600 Conferences & continuing Edu.	0	0	0	800	0.00%
5700 Reimburse Prof. Expenses	6,368	156	6,524	15,812	41.26%
6100 Operating Expense	797	825	1,622	14,025	11.57%
6155 Rental Events Expenses	7,792	6,408	14,200	40,000	35.50%
6200 Communications	313	313	626	5,000	12.52%
6300 Debt service	0	0	0	0	
6400 Insurance	0	775	775	10,000	7.75%
7000 Supplies	1,437	547	1,984	6,100	32.52%
7200 Property maintenance	7,300	2,246	9,546	56,800	16.81%
7300 Utilities	4,056	2,515	6,571	29,500	22.27%
8100 Employment compensation	0	0	0		
8110 Minister	16,180	12,164	28,344	104,316	27.17%
8129 Temp Staffing	435	1,105	1,540	0	
8130 Staff	28,429	24,280	52,709	211,590	24.91%
8200 Payroll taxes	2,269	1,921	4,190	16,836	24.89%
8300 Employee benefits	0	0	0		
8320 Health insurance	1,345	2,174	3,519	16,719	21.05%
8330 Pensions	3,699	2,878	6,577	22,861	28.77%
9000 Miscellaneous	12	0	12		
TOTAL EXPENSES	86,953	61,379	148,332	590,235	25.13%
NET REVENUE(EXPENSES)	-21,797	-35,453	-57,250	-1,888	

MOUNT VERNON UNITARIAN CHURCH
September 30, 2009

INCOME:from Pledges			
Balance outstanding of unpaid pledges			236,602.00
Balance brought forward		1,055,789.59	
Received in Aug 09			
At MVUC	Pledges	50.00	
Interest fm B & H	Interest	119.01	
Interest in McLughlin	Income	6.69	
Received Pledge		0.00	
Total received for Building Fund (includes interest)		175.70	
			1,055,965.29

EXPENSES:

			50.00
B & H Line of credit		265,000.00	
Campaign		16,845.36	
Consultant		20,890.00	
Architect, Engineers & Contractors		280,160.27	
Permits, fees		14,532.00	
Stained Glass Window		4,758.83	
Miscellaneous		980.90	
Total Expenses to Date			603,167.36

NET Funds on Hand for Building \$452,797.93

Expenses for May \$0.00

WHERE THE FUNDS ARE:

Funds at McLaughlin Inv.(Includes Income @0.05%)	245,378.10
Cash in B&H (earns 1.46%)	107,419.83
Cert. of Deposit at B & H (earns 2.31%)	100,000.00
	\$452,797.93

Service Attendance

MONTH: September 2009

Date	Week #	Service			RE Adults			RE Children			Total
		9:30 AM	10:00 AM	11:15 AM	9:30 AM	10:00 AM	11:15 AM	9:30 AM	10:00 AM	11:15 AM	
6	1	116			2			10			128
13	2	67	128		1		1	3		17	217
20	3	65	87		11		12	17		52	244
27	4	101	104		11		16	28		40	300
Total		233	116	319	23	2	29	48	10	109	889