

04 February 2023 Board of Trustees Retreat - Minutes

- In attendance: Leslie, Tracy, Ed, Jacquee, Cinda, Kate, Hans, Mike
- Others in attendance: Maggie, Rev. Larry
 - Guest presenters: Marin Van Renssen, Bill Hardham, Phil Krape
 - Absent: Vivian
 - Quorum achieved
- Meeting called to order: 11:30pm; adjourned: 3:24pm

TIME LEADER	ITEM	DOCUMENTS ATTACHED FOR REVIEW
11:30am Larry Leslie Hans	<p>Opening</p> <p>Opening Words Agenda Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One addition to agenda is that Rev. Larry will also present Stewardship information <p>Process Observer - who needs to be informed, included and/or consulted</p>	

11:30 - 12: 15	<p>Retreat Process</p> <p>We will have three visitors:</p> <p><u>Marina will present the budget</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marina was available to answer any questions regarding the proposed budget. • In order to make changes, such as moving the Music Director position to 35 or 40hr, we would need to substantially increase our pledging and have that be sustainable. • A 2% salary increase is proposed for next year's budget; it is within UUA guidelines but does not full offset inflation impact. We need an additional \$50K in pledges to achieve the budget in Column F. • General reserves (= "rainy day fund") are soon going to be depleted if we continue pulling from them. • How can we better connect Stewardship to budget and church activity, especially when the congregation does not see the budget until shortly before the annual meeting? • To answer questions: We are still awaiting feedback and contract signing from the EEC. We have not heard back regarding our rent increase, and the contracting is due 1 March 2023. We are asking for an 8%/5%/4% increase for 	
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the next three years; it acknowledges current inflation issues but also acknowledges that it is not expected to last.

- We are anticipating a counterproposal which we have not received.

We will break for lunch btw 12:15 and 12:45 - please bring your own lunch and snacks. There will be coffee and tea available

After our guests leave we will have discussions about their presentations.

12:45 - 1:30

Phil will present the strategic planning report

- Summit process focused on the past and the future (including external trends), finding common ground, and forming actions groups coming out of it.
 - Eight strategic directions were identified, and five planning groups were created and put into action. Reports are available for further information.
 - "Engaging with the Wider Community" has identified organizations to connect with in new or greater ways than we do now. Volunteer at events to broaden our reach.
 - "Serving more families with Children" detailed specific short, medium, and long-term actions.
 - "Using technology for Outreach" looked at people external to our congregation to determine wants/needs. They have discussed modernizing the website, improve the church management system, and other items.
 - Financial Sustainability has combined with ongoing evaluations and will report out later today.
 - Adult Education & Spiritual Growth" has moved into the LifeStream @ First Unitarian program. They are connecting with others, such as JCC, YWCA, and UUA Clusters, as the opportunity arises. They are exploring the option for a YouTube channel.
- Now that the Action Planning groups have completed their missions, -these items then need to be integrated into the broader strategic planning committee and evaluated against resources and time.
 - Phil is proposing that the summit steering committee be merged into the Strategic Planning Committee.

⚡ MOTION: A motion was made to combine the summit steering committee into the Strategic Planning Committee under the direction of the board. Motion was seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- Everyone on the summit steering committee has committed to meeting once more with the Board's strategic planning committee (Vivian, Jacquee, and Kate are the board touch points).
 - SPC will go over the action planning reports and ask questions. A subgroup will draft a strategic plan for Board review in March.
 - Will this proposed plan dovetail into sustainability efforts? As the financial sustainability team has been merged with the sustainability action planning group, this should serve as the touchpoint.

1:35 - 2:20

Bill will present the sustainability report

- Purpose was to propose actions to ensure our financial sustainability as we face budget deficits in outer year planning which we need to be prepared for.
- The team is proposing 13 action items out of a list of ~60 proposals. Five of these have already started implementation.
 - Efforts have been summarized in the circulated spreadsheet, color-coded by evaluation/status.
 - Implemented proposals: increase payout from endowments (5%), keep practice of holding auction every 2yr, restructure stewardship team, create an ongoing financial communication plan separate from stewardship, hold regular after-church sessions for newcomers and members to meet the minister and/or board members.
- To ensure success, we need to increase our membership long term.
- Items which could be implemented near-term (i.e. this year) could have significant impact as well, focusing on growing our income and reducing expenses.
 - Some examples which were proposed:
 - Sell assets, including paintings, whose proceeds would be used to establish a sustainability fund. This fund could help cover deficits for a 3-5 year period with the remainder going into the Heritage fund.
 - Limit mowing of library lot
 - Share the plate during special collections (i.e. fixed percentage)
 - Ramp up building use (better publicize what we can offer in terms of rentals, weddings, etc)
 - Improving stewardship

- Set a minimum donation for membership
 - Improve ease of donation (i.e. text to donate)
 - Increase membership
 - Improve income generation from online viewers.
- Intermediate and longer term (2+ years) options have potential for high impact
 - Several of them capitalize on use of our valuable land on 202.
 - Utilize more roof space for solar panels (but may also require roof replacement and a fund drive)
 - Special purpose (focused) fund drives, but we need to be careful of not over-asking. This could also sap resource form other areas.
- Next step is for board to review proposals to decide which to implement (and when/how).

2:45 - 4:00 We are looking for four outcomes for our day.

1 - Non-objection for the proposed budget or a request to ET to look at some items we may think are not appropriate based on financial projections.

- Based on questions/comments, we did not see any show-stoppers.

⚡ MOTION: A motion was made to state that the Board has non-objection to the presented budget; this can be communicated back to the ET. Motion was seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2 - A high level look at all the SP and Sustainability items and proposals for items to be moved from one group to the other based on our perception of where they best fit and the skills needed to flesh out the item.

⚡ MOTION: A motion was made to propose that the financial sustainability group should be rolled into the strategic planning group so that these efforts (particularly intermediate and long range) are built into the overall strategic plan. Motion was seconded. Motion passed with one abstention.

- The green (near term) will be discussed and evaluated at our next Board meeting to provide feedback to the financial sustainability/strategic planning group.

☐ ACTION: For the February board meeting, each board member should rank their top five green (near term) initiatives for discussion at the February board meeting.

- The Board would like to thank the financial sustainability group for their efforts.

3 - Decisions on what items should be the top priority for this coming church year.

	<p><u>4 - A path forward to get the above information out to groups and/or a commitment to continue to look at items we think are important but don't know enough about to assign to a team or ourselves.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After our February meeting we will provide feedback to the financial sustainability group. • For the short-term (green) items, where do we stand? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Due to the varied discussion and viewpoints towards mandatory minimum payment for membership, we feel that this should potentially be de-prioritized to an orange priority with further discussion at a later point. ○ We should prioritize divesting some of our assets. Mike will put together a proposal for a path forward to present this at the May annual meeting. ○ If we wish to pursue splitting the plate for our special collections, there is precedence in other congregations for this approach. If we reduce the number of special collections, we should be sensitive to the need to help prioritize. • Should we promote that we are a "come as you are" congregation and not just a welcoming congregation? This is something that could be rolled into the welcoming statement that the worship associates deliver at the top of the service. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Most of us have implicitly thought this already; we could be more intentional with this communication. ○ This could potentially lower a "barrier to entry" to in-person worship for those who are primarily at-home viewers. 	
<p>Larry Leslie</p>	<p>Closing Words Adjourn Meeting</p>	