

**USR Board of Trustees Meeting
January 13, 2021
Minutes**

Attendance: : Dawn Walter, Sarah Lenzi, Don Campolo, Robert Markowitz, Rose Castillo-Leon, Kristin Bluemel, Chris Dunnigan, Helen Matusow-Ayres

Starting: 6:32 pm

I. New Year Check-In

II. New Thank Yous

- Action Items

Thank Yous to:

- ◇ Jan Botchner for delivering gift bags- Kristin
- ◇ Board Members were asked to write “Thinking You” cards to people throughout the congregation who we are not in contact with- prioritize single people- choose people who we think need connection:
 - ◆ Kris Henrickson (HMA), Brietta (Dawn), Helen Lindsay (Don), Nancy Petrie (Kris), Ruth Schirer (Rose), Bob Maso (Bob), Michael Bein (Kris) , Laurie Bauman (HMA)

III. Want Ads

- Summary

Volunteer want ads are being posted in the newsletter each week. Tell Dawn if you know of openings on committees or jobs that need to be completed.

IV. Realm Roll Out

- Summary

Need to do a Realm roll out. Limited number of congregants are using Realm. The Board needs to communicate exclusively through Realm and use no other channel for communication. All Board business should only be on Realm. We should also be referring others to Realm.

Currently Dawn is the only one providing tech support for Realm. Bob Shoemaker will create PDF documents on how to accomplish certain tasks to assist congregants in using it.

- Discussion

Kris indicated that tasks on Realm are not intuitive.

V. Policy Review- Kris

- Summary

Kristin kindly reviewed all of the USR policies that she could find.

- ◇ Chief among her recommendations is that we need to reduce the number of policies.
- ◇ Some of the policies should be off-line (HR) and not open for viewing by the entire congregation.

- ◇ Some policies were written in an antagonistic tone, clearly in a reaction to something that happened that needed to be regulated. These should be rewritten with more objective language.
- ◇ The alcohol policy should be part of the safe congregation's policies and the procedure should not be separate from the policy.
- ◇ The draft fund collection policy needs a little wordsmithing. Kris agreed to review it with Chris and then present to the Board for approval.
- ◇ Financial policy should be hidden from view and seems good. Incorporate the funds collection policy in the financial policy.
- ◇ There is no investment policy. It needs to be written.
- ◇ The use of society facilities policy, needs to be more generic and less antagonistic.
- ◇ USR gift policy should be folded into financial policies.
- ◇ Social media policy should be a part of the communication policy.
- ◇ We should reduce the existing policies down into 3-4 major policies.
- ◇ Hiring policies should be incorporated into personnel policies
- ◇ The Personnel Manual was not reviewed. An attorney or an HR specialist should review this.
- ◇ The policy about Board members serving on committees is no longer necessary because the committee structure has changed.
- ◇ The USR Virtual Behavior Guidelines should be part of the safe congregations policies.
- Discussion
 - ◇ Use of name policy- Sarah and Dawn need to work with former Social Responsibility leaders who had concerns about it. It is mostly about the use of our name in communications and should be part of that policy.
 - ◇ There should be a comprehensive communication policy that includes social media
 - ◇ We should be considering our values as we review the policies.
 - ◇ Current investments do not reflect ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) investment goals. In terms of investment strategy we are doing well.
 - ◇ Will the congregation need to vote on this? Consider for the future.
- Action Items
 - ◇ Kris, Dawn and Chris will meet to discuss the financial policies and start with Kris' recommendations
 - ◇ Don will coordinate the communications policy review
 - ◇ Dawn will send the alcohol, virtual behavior and use of society facilities policies to the safe congregations committee
 - ◇ Helen will ask Robin Ritter to work with her and Chris to review the Hiring and Personnel policies
 - ◇ Kris will send all of the policies not on the website to the Board

VI. Pledge Drive Update- Don

- Summary

Don asked about then timing for communicating the 5% increase to pledge process to the congregation. He suggested that we announce it after the raffle is drawn and after 2/1. Send suggested pledge to congregants before March 1. There are technology challenges in sending out a pledge notice to each congregant.

- Discussion

- ◇ The budget is based on all pledge units giving 5% more this year.
- ◇ There is \$8-10,000 more in the rental budget than was anticipated.
- ◇ A mid-year financial report was requested by the Pledge team. Instead the Treasurer typically gives a report as to how we are doing financially at a congregational meeting and introduces the pledge drive- Here is what we are asking for and this is what we are going to be able do with the money. We should continue to have the Treasurer share an aspirational budget this year, as in past years and not give the information to the pledge team to communicate.
- ◇ Chris can share his screen showing the aspirational budget for the meeting 2/7 and review it orally with participants.
- ◇ We discussed budgets for the Circles. The Board never allocated budgets. We need to have a separate discussion about this.
- ◇ We need to review how the 5% pledge increase relates to our aspirations. Need to be clear that the money that we are asking for matches our aspirations to motivate people.

- Action Items

- ◇ Hold a Town Hall Zoom meeting on February 7 and discuss the raffle and the pledge drive

VII. New Covenant

- Summary

Next step for the Board is to figure out how we want to roll out the Covenant in time to vote on it at the June Congregational Meeting. We will discuss this at a future meeting.

VIII. Minister's Report including how to thank the Zoom team- Sarah

- Summary

Jack Lohr, Carol Wolf and Kristin Plumley have gone above and beyond the call of duty and have been very generous and gracious about contributing. Sarah would like to find an appropriate way to thank them.

- ◇ Perhaps a thoughtful gift for the board. Each Board member should think about ideas. Sarah suggested a plant for Carol Wolf for her new home or each of us giving Jack Lohr a book that had an impact on us in college

- Discussion

- ◇ Dawn suggested creating Zoom Superstar metal nametags for them.
- ◇ Robert suggested focusing on them during the service- a certain portion of the service over the course of several services.

- ◇ Sarah said that we will highlight them at the volunteer recognition ceremony. Too much focus might make them feel awkward.
- ◇ Board members were asked to explore what might be good gift for each of them.
- ◇ It was suggested that we Include Jan Botchner in these gifts and recognition.

- Action Items.

Sarah and Dawn will keep us updated on this. All think about ideas.

IX. DRE Report

- Discussion

- ◇ Attendance numbers not included.
- ◇ The report repeats everything that is on-going.
- ◇ The report should only include new things and what the Board needs to know.
- ◇ Jeannie did a great job on the after Christmas Service.
- ◇ Chris reported a challenge with a cooperative class with a Manhattan congregation

- Action Items

- ◇ Dawn will ask Jeannie to change the report.
- ◇ Sarah will speak with Jeannie about a problem that was reported in a Zoom RE class.

X. Treasurer Update- Chris

- Summary

- ◇ Chris is working on the paper work to have the first PPE loan forgiven. He is also working on the new loan application.
- ◇ Stock market has been good for our reserves. Rentals income is above projections
- ◇ USR received a \$20,000 donation from Marion Jones' estate for the endowment fund.
- ◇ Chris is also streamlining and consolidating bank accounts.

- Discussion

Sarah asked question about the raffle income. Bottom line doesn't reflect that 50% will be going back. Is there a way to reflect that so it is accurate. It will be updated once the raffle happens.

- Action Items

- ◇ A motion was made to authorize a \$10,000 allocation from the endowment fund to grants.
Helen moved and Kris seconded the motion. Motion carried
- ◇ A motion was made approve the application for the second wave of federal PPE funding
Kris moved, Helen seconded the motion and the the motion carried

XI. Improvement Fund Budget

- Summary

Thoughtfully look through improvement fund budget and make sure that everything that needs to be there is there

- Discussion

- ◇ There was a question about solar panels. Dawn thinks that the money to fund them should not come from the Improvement Budget Fund. It should come from other money- reserves or endowment. We will discuss this in more detail at the next meeting and make a decision.
- ◇ Once we are back in the building we will need AV hardware in order to live broadcast to people who may not be able to come back to the building. We will need to use money from the improvement fund for this. It would be good to find out what other congregations are doing.
- ◇ We need to build into budget going forward. We will also likely need a technology position going forward.

Adjourned at 8:46 pm