

Unitarian Society of Ridgewood
Board of Trustees Meeting
October 13, 2021
Minutes

Attendance: Dawn Walter, Sarah Lenzi, Jack Lohr, Helen Matusow-Ayres, Kristen Plumley

6:35 start

- I. Action items from last month
 - A. Thank you notes not completed. Will be completed soon.
 - B. Helen will notify Jack when the minutes are approved and he will upload them to the website.
 - C. Helen will look for for the answers to Dawn’s question of what we forget to do in the May minutes
 1. Helen will transcribe the minutes from the taped meeting
- II. Update on in-person services
 - A. Summary
 1. The services are percolating along. There are one or two new faces each week. There is still just a small group of attendees.
 2. We are not getting volunteers.
 3. We are ministering to the war weary.
 4. Most important work for board members will be at services, coffee, greeting and welcoming. It is an all hands on deck situation.
 5. Strategy, goals may have to be delayed. .
 6. Is the Board willing/able to do this?
 - B. Discussion
 1. People are tired.
 2. What does it look like to return, but things are not normal. What do people need right now? Focus on that.
 3. Most important thing is to be hospitable- to be there for each other
 4. Feels homey to have 24 people at the service
 5. Could be so much easier to just buy a Dunkin box of coffee
 6. How are we hospitable and where are we hospitable
 7. The Circle groups were also very low energy when Sarah and Dawn met with them.
- III. Check-in: how much do you have left in your tank?
 - A. Board members shared how we are each feeling.
- IV. Optional check-in: 3 photos – “What I do when I should be doing my board work.”
 - A. Jack, Kristin and Helen shared photos
- V. Quick update on Don
 - A. Marilyn said that we got him the perfect gift
 - B. He is due to have surgery soon
 - C. He may or may not return to the Board
- VI. Discussion on Race
 - A. Summary
 1. Sarah showed a video of a Ted Talk, "How I learned to stop worrying and love discussing race". The speaker was cultural critic Jay Smooth.

B. Discussion

1. Challenges in talking about racism were raised.. We are not all in the same place on the issue.
2. Starting next month, Sarah will send something in advance to read. So that we discuss these issues each meeting
3. There was a question about the goal of these discussions.
 - a) Congregation approved the eighth principle -the accountable dismantling of racists structures. The goal of the discussion is to build the board's understanding of how racism is present in the USR. Approach anti-racism in order to build awareness around other forms of oppression.
4. Needs to be the entire Board educating each other.
5. Sarah will do the leg work- We could all pull things together.
6. Request that we take an expansive view and do not limit our discussions to white versus black racism.
7. Each meeting someone on the Board will share an article

C. Action

1. Board members who are willing will share articles for our Anti-racism discussions at the Board Meeting.
 - a) Sarah- November, Kris- December, Jack- January
2. Share articles in between meetings if appropriate
3. Set a time limit- for the discussion- a half an hour was suggested
4. Adopt the circle guidelines for the discussion, each speaks before anyone else comments

VII. Treasurer Report

- A. Skip since Chris is absent

VIII. DRE Report

A. Discussion

1. Jeanne asked if the Board would coordinate and host a meet and greet for families.
 - a) The Board will be happy to participate but not organize or publicize
 - b) Another suggestion would be for Board members to attend the Pizza program. We do need to be careful about placing too many demands on the parents' time.
2. Children attendance numbers are pretty good

B. Action

1. Dawn will speak with Jeannie about how we are willing to participate

IX. Minister Report

A. Summary

1. Question about introduction of Tina. It was sent in an eblast. Some people didn't remember receiving it
2. Olas was asked his role and he did not have a good answer for the question. What is his status?
 - a) Olas is the technology person. He is paid for that role. He was also paid as a guest preacher last week.
 - (1) Craig was not present and Olas did the welcome. We need a better system for notification when a Board Member cannot

attend the service that they are assigned to do announcements at.

b) Discussion about Olan's role as an employee, a student and a guest speaker

3. Sarah mentioned that she will be taking a sabbatical in 2023 and we should start thinking about it soon
4. Sarah updated the Board on the Dais project
 - a) A sub-committee was created.
 - (1) We are ending up with a generic stage but it will be made attractive.
 - (2) The stairs will be repurposed to be more accessible.
 - (3) Still needs more conversation before it even gets to the congregation.
 - (4) The Stage has been purchased. It will need to be stored for a long time before the other issues are resolved.
 - (5) We Need to get some feedback and updates to the congregation and/or the Board

B. Action

1. Sarah will ask Ann to send out another announcement introducing Tina
2. Sarah will speak with Olan about how to explain his role and she will also make sure that he is not taken advantage of. He is also paid as a guest preacher.

X. Pledge Drive

A. Summary

1. No chair- Needs to be on the agenda for the next meeting.

XI. Thank yous

A. Thank yous

1. Kate Ireland for all- she has done for the Society- Dawn ,
2. Anita Young for chat room- Jack.

XII. Other business

XIII. Realm

A. How do we get visitors into Realm?

1. You need to activate yourself in order to be in the directory
2. Take the information from the green sheet- ask for permission on the form to be put in the directory
3. Welcome Circle should set the policy- then staff can be instructed to change the form.

XIV. Next meeting we will discuss goals- follow up on retreat

Adjourned 8:31