

**First Unitarian Church of Chicago
Minutes of February 16, 2017 Board Meeting**

Trustees Present:

Joan Pederson, President
Jim Proctor, Vice President
Kris Barker
Beverly Bennett

Margot Horn
Dennis Koehn
Kent Richmond
Christine Harrell, Alternate

Also Present:

Rev. David Schwartz, Senior Co-Minister
Rev. Teri Schwartz, Senior Co-Minister
Julie Larson, Secretary

Unable to Attend:

Joanne Michalski, Treasurer

Joan called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Chalice lighting by Joan, opening words read by Kent Richmond. Check-in by those present followed, 7:10–7:20 pm.

1. Overview of Policy Manual

There are serious weaknesses in the church's Policy Manual. Some content is not truly policy, some policies adopted in the past appear to be missing, and others appear redundant. A major review of the manual will be an ongoing group project of the board.

- Joan asked that trustees go to About our Church/Governance/Policies/Bylaws on the church website, read the policies there and become familiar with what they address.
- First goal: Get policies in shape, determining what should stay, what should be removed, and what needs to be clarified. Also, determine which items are currently missing from the manual.

2. Social Justice Council Policy Review

Questions for overview: Are the core ideas sensible? Where are they clearly worded, where verbose? Is there clarity of purpose?

[Note: Each section was to have been reviewed ahead of time and its discussion led by a different member of the board. Sequence of discussion did not follow that of the document, however, with higher-level issues emerging and eventually predominating. For clarity, related points of discussion appear together under the heading of the most pertinent section.]

Basic Structure section serves as a guide of how the SJC is organized.

Q: Is there a motivating factor to join this group?

A: The purpose of the document is not to introduce people to the council or to recruit their involvement, but to tell how to operate the council itself. Description in this section is in sync with the existing bylaws: generally accurate but could be briefer.

Observations:

- There should be a charter at the beginning of the document to state the reasons for SJC, not just the how. (DH, KB)

- There is no inspiration in the document to join; push instead of inspire. (KB)
- Things are changing. Last Saturday's [Feb. 11] action and organizing event, Chaos or Community, is a case in point. (JPr)

Basic Procedures section addressed rules of order for meetings, procedure for allocating funds budgeted for the SJC, voting rights, and procedures for recording and distributing minutes. It elicited no questions or comments, except that it is wordy.

SJC Task Forces and Groups section sets forth procedures and qualifications for a prospective task force or other group to become and remain a member of the SJC.

Observation:

- Attempts of Incarcerated Ministry to affiliate with the SJC were unsuccessful. This section was not provided to the applicants. It could have provided guidance on how to succeed. (MH)

SJC Special Collections section sets forth a means of selecting beneficiaries of the four annual special collections the council has been allowed to schedule for several years. It does not mention approval beyond that of the SJC as a whole, but does call for coordination of timing with the Fundraising Committee [*Note: the church does not always have an entity with that name*] and the minister(s).

Observation and Future Action:

- Church fundraising not directed by the congregation as a whole should be approved by the board. (BB: She will draft a motion directing the SJC to request board approval for such collections.)

Taking of Positions section declares that the SJC and its member task forces and groups may "vote to take positions on policy matters in the public sphere, but may not endorse candidates for public office" and specifies such positions be identified by the name of the specific body that has voted to take that position. It also addresses the degree of autonomy held by member groups, the oversight exercised and facilitation provided by the SJC as a whole, and the requirement of consistency with UU principles and First U bylaws, policies, and procedures.

Observation:

- Centralize authority over committees and groups, which should be required to make presentations to and get approval from the the board prior to using the First Unitarian name. (DK)
- The board needs to get familiar with the SJC prior to discussing the bylaws pertaining to it. We need to be clear on what needs board approval and what doesn't. Not everything needs to be approved; for instance, sometimes there isn't time. (JPr)

Sponsoring or Co-sponsoring of Events section allows these actions and provides guidelines. It is fairly concise, and elicited no comment.

The Task Forces, the Council, and the Congregation section states the SJC view of the relationship between these entities. It justifies edgy or pushy plans and actions as arising "from the interests and passions of its leaders and members" and as sometimes being, in their

pushiness, necessary for change and beneficial to the congregation. This section also notes that non-SJC social justice initiatives have arisen within and/or occurred on the premises of the church, thus the congregation's social justice work is not limited to the work of the SJC.

Observation:

- The justification of pushiness and edginess seems to be in contradiction with our covenant. Past "edgy" and "pushy" statements and actions by some of the SJC's groups and leaders, both within and beyond meetings of the SJC, seemed to have contributed to interpersonal conflict from time to time, and, to some, diminished the reputation and appeal of the SJC. (JPe)
- Conflict management and collaboration need to happen, with a three-year plan. (DK, JPr)

General Comments:

- Invite Anita [Orlikoff, SJC Chair] to come and discuss the purpose of the group, and the bylaws. (JPr)
[Note: for "the bylaws," are "the SJC policies and procedures" intended instead?]
- There is a lack of responsibility in the document that needs to be spelled out. (DK)
- Streamline procedures and approvals.
- Joan will speak with Anita about structural questions.
- The current SJC Chair is stepping down in June after three terms. The Nominating Committee is seeking a replacement.

Further discussion of the SJC Policies and Procedures document and the issues it raises will be scheduled after the trustees are more familiar with it and with the actual workings of the SJC.

Break 8:10-8:19

3. Meeting Schedule

Annual Meeting is scheduled for May 21 at 11:30 am. Beverly moved and Kris seconded. Full board approval. Also:

- Regular Board Meeting: April 20 at 7:00 pm.
- Special Board Meeting to consider the FY18 Budget: April 27 at 7:00 pm.
- Budget Hearing for the congregation: May 7 at 11:30 am. [Later revised to April 30.]
- Hearing for other business planned for the Annual Meeting: May 14 at 11:30 am.

4. Revision of Designated Gifts Policy

Margot moved, Kris seconded that the Designated Gifts policy adopted in November 2016 be revised by replacing its final section, on bequests, with the following reference to the existing Bequests Policy: "**Bequests.** See the separate policy in this manual." MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Nominations for Give Away the Basket

Forms will be available to nominate organizations April 6-9. Teri and Julie will be coordinating the nominations.

6. Capital Campaign

Jim moved and Kent seconded that the Feasibility Study Leadership Team consist of Teri Schwartz, David Schwartz, Joan Pederson, Mike Knowles, Grace Williams, Lisa Christensen, Kris Barker and Jim Proctor. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. Pledge Drive

Jim moved and Kent seconded that Colleen Grogan and Margery Gonwa be appointed as Co-chairs for the 2017 Pledge Drive. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. Auction

Beverly moved, Kent seconded that Cheryl Wegner be appointed to chair the 2017 Auction team. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

This year, there may be three auction categories: Silent Auction stand-alone item (highest bid wins), Silent Auction group event (set price, limited sign-up) and Live auction. Auction will be April 22 or 29, to be decided.

9. Leadership Development

- Dennis distributed and reviewed the survey results addressing Religious Education.
- Jim reported that the posters showing the church's covenant and its keystones have been produced.

10. Consent Agenda

Treasurer's Report Financial situation is steady, no issues this past month, low fuel usage lead to savings. Joanne was unable to attend the board meeting. The report was later posted to the online folder for this meeting.

January Board Minutes Jim moved, Dennis seconded approval of the January minutes with two changes. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

RE Report Jim presented Karen's report and offered this: We need to revisit having an assistant for the DRE. Karen does not have one and is running over her allotted hours each week. Karen will be sending Task Force plans (see RE Excellence Review portion of her report) to board members prior to the next board meeting, which need to be reviewed before her presentation. Kent moved, Dennis seconded acceptance of the report. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Ministers' Report David presented the Ministers' Report. Teri has been working with Margot to have a membership coordinator as a paid staff member. There will need to be a change in the budget to allow \$10,000 salary for this.

Kent offered closing words. Meeting adjourned at 9:11.