

ALL SOULS

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting Sunday, September 8, 2019

A meeting of the Board of Trustees was convened in the Ware Room by Julie Brannan, Chair, at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 8, 2019.

Trustees Present: Julie Brannan, Heidi DuBois, Elizabeth Hutchinson, Carol Kirkman, Cory Labanow, Betty McCollum, David Poppe (by telephone), David Rockefeller, Jr., and Ramsey Shehadeh.

Also Present: Robin Bossert; Jeff Friedlander, Clerk of the Society; Audette Fulbright, Associate Minister; Galen Guengerich, Senior Minister; Neil Osborne; Laura Pederson; Fritz Reuter, Chair, Building Advisory Task Force (by telephone); Shivani Singh; and Deborah Taylor, Building Advisory Task Force.

I. Opening Reading

Elizabeth Hutchinson read from *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Cthulucene* by Donna Haraway.

II. Administrative Matters

Julie Brannan noted that the June minutes were approved by email. Carol Kirkman noted that the trustees' evaluation of the June meeting observed that the board fell short of the goal of 90% of meeting time devoted to the future, although the longer discussion of more immediate matters was a priority. Julie noted that trustees' suggestions for the board retreat agenda should be given to the executive committee.

III. Focus on the Future

Senior Minister Report:

Galen Guengerich reviewed five highlights of his plan for the church year:

1. Bicentennial: All Souls' bicentennial will be celebrated with joy-filled parties and events. Our 200th anniversary is also an opportunity (a) for the congregation to develop our identity in today's cultural, social, and political context from a deeper understanding of our legacy and (b) for publicity about the bicentennial to enhance relationships with partner organizations.
2. Implementation of Recommendations from 2019 Strategic Review: A staff reorganization is underway to bring more emphasis to church growth. There may also be some possible shifts in office locations to enhance teamwork. A communication

- strategy will be developed (a) internally to deepen congregational engagement in our rich programming and (b) externally to find and engage new people whose spiritual ethos fits with All Souls. Plans are evolving for special Sundays, perhaps quarterly, when the congregation can bring friends to church to introduce these newcomers to All Souls.
3. Mission Growth: Greater focus will be placed on our path to spiritual formation and, importantly, social justice/outreach work.
 4. Fundraising: Galen asked for trustees' assistance with introductions to individuals with significant giving capacity as part of his fundraising focus in two areas:
 - (a) Capital Campaign – Galen recently raised \$100,000, which was fully matched for a total raised of \$200,000. Galen will work with donors to continue to take advantage of the recent matching gift. Galen hopes to raise another \$3.5 million in the coming year.
 - (b) Annual Giving – New approaches to annual giving are needed, including as part of the on-ramp to church membership.
Rentals, an additional source of income, will be pursued aggressively once the sanctuary renovation is completed.
 5. Publication of Galen's Book: *The Way of Gratitude* will be published in May 2020 by Random House. A media strategy and network of endorsers is being developed. Galen expects the book to enhance All Souls' growth and reach.

Associate Minister Report:

Audette Fulbright quickly summarized work under her purview.

1. Staff are receiving on-going support on achieving goals consistent with their reviews.
2. Tracy Sprowls has added adult religious education to her portfolio, taking over from David Robb. Pamela Patton has added some additional meditation/Buddhism/mindfulness opportunities proportional to her increased hours.
3. Audette is working on building new and deeper relationships with outside organizations. Audette has joined the board of Interfaith Impact of NYS. Community Church has called a new minister, which opens up more opportunities for collaboration.
4. Climate justice is, thus far, not a major focus of area churches. Audette is leading efforts for All Souls to develop an identity as a leader in this important area.
5. Space constraints due to construction are limiting our ability to partner with other organizations.

Executive Director Report:

Eileen Macholl submitted her written report prior to the meeting.

1. The audit is fully underway.
2. The bicentennial book is nearing completion and will be available for sale by the gala. The Bicentennial Committee has nearly finalized plans and logistics for the bicentennial weekend. Invitations will be sent out shortly.
3. The kitchen will be out of commission until a new exhaust duct is installed. Monday Night Hospitality and Friday Soup Kitchen are limited to preparing meals that require no cooking or dishwashing – which means mostly sandwiches – for about another

two months. The meal programs have been exceedingly gracious throughout this challenging process.

4. Staff turnover in reception poses a challenge, as recently-hired employees have gone to school or found other jobs. A temp-to-permanent agency will be used in the future, replacing an HR volunteer, which will add to expenses.
5. Eileen certified for the board's monitoring process that all 2018-19 personnel evaluations were completed.

Board Covenant:

Audette and the board subcommittee circulated a draft board covenant prior to the meeting. Elizabeth would appreciate receiving comments on the draft prior to the discussion at the board retreat. The retreat discussion will center on (a) concerns about what might be missing or unworkable in the draft and (b) how trustees understand living into the covenant – rather than wordsmithing. Once completed, trustees will update Nominating Committee materials with the covenant so that candidates understand expectations about the board work as a spiritual practice. Audette noted the board covenant is part of a broad project she will lead to develop a congregational covenant.

IV. Executive Session

The public meeting was adjourned. The meeting continued in board-only executive session and adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Kirkman

/s/ Carol Kirkman

First Vice President and Acting Secretary