

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Chico Board Meeting

October 21, 2023

Attendance: Board: Lucy Sperlin, President; Susan Bachlor, Bob Crowe (Zoom), Dave Keller, Angela Risdon, Pam Sachs, Merrily Stover
Minister: Kathryn Adams (via Zoom)

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 by President Lucy Sperlin. Susan read the Chalice lighting words, followed by brief check-ins from those present. Angela agreed to be process observer. For the Agenda, a report on the Lay Leaders Gathering was added. The Agenda was approved as amended.

Dave moved **that the minutes be approved as read.** The motion was seconded. The motion passed with one spelling correction.

Dave gave the **treasurer's report.** He noted that we had a strong start to our pledge year with 32% of the pledges coming in. We gave two donations to charities this month: \$1250 from the Camp Fire fund to Mana Mentors in Lahaina, Maui, and 25% of our 3rd quarter plate collections, \$518.06, donated to South Chico Community Assistance Center.

Action: The Social Justice Committee will note the donations to be posted on our website.

Dave reported unresolved issues. 1) How can Kathryn gain access to the Minister's Discretionary fund held at Umpqua Bank? 2) The Employer Tax Credit through COVID. \$1000 is due but not yet received. A further issue is that Kathryn is not eligible for a house allowance until she is ordained. Dave is consulting with a UU compensation specialist and with Tracey, our accountant to correct the time sheet.

The fiscal year-end problems for 2022-23 were fixed through work done by Susan. There were more expenses than income this month, primarily through the use of air conditioning and attorney's fees.

Minister's Report.

Kathryn noted that in the congregation's innovative ministry (part time and part virtual), she is also in a new status for the UUA. Until she graduates from Divinity School, she cannot call herself a minister and asked to just be called 'Kathryn' until she has her ministerial credentials.

In getting acquainted with the Chico UU Fellowship, she has noted some anxiety. She looks forward to supporting open communication throughout the congregational system. Also, November 8 will mark the five-year anniversary of the Camp Fire in Paradise. She proposes a vigil after the worship service on November 4, with vespers for trauma and loss.

Action: The Worship Committee will help in organizing this event.

Lay Leadership Supper. Angela reported that at the gathering the participants learned a lot about each other. Discussion followed concerning how to share information about

committee activities and how to improve communication amongst Fellowship leaders, including having quarterly Lay Leadership gatherings.

Action: Angela will write a summary of the Lay Leadership Supper, including ways to improve communication and help coordination of activities.

Preparation for Congregational meeting.

Use Permit: Bob was asked to open the discussion on what path the Fellowship should take regarding the Use Permit. Bob reviewed the current and future costs for the attorney for Use Permit: \$8,004 paid in fees; \$3,500 in the Trust account; \$500 more is expected, as well as fees that would be paid to the city if we continue to apply for Use Permit changes.

Angela moved **that we go ahead with the Use Permit by paying the required fees, estimated at \$2,216, needed to go before the planning commission.** The motion was seconded. Discussion followed concerning possible timelines for action. The motion was passed unanimously.

Lucy pointed out that the non-budgeted legal fees need to be included as line-items in the budget.

At the Congregational meeting on October 29, Bob will explain the Use Permit situation, including the need to raise funds. Money may be received from donors and through Faithify UUA Crowdfunding program. Pam moved **that we pursue Faithify funding.** The motion was seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

Action: Angela will prepare the Faithify materials to be posted after the Congregational meeting.

Childcare: The floor was open for discussion on childcare. One child has been coming regularly. We are overspending on childcare but so far are underspending in other areas. It is possible that the current provider may be hired directly by UUFC rather than through the CARE agency. This would save money for us and give more money to the provider. We would have to pay for our own background check of the childcare provider.

Action: Lucy will confirm that the provider is able and willing to work for UUFC directly.

Administrative Coordinator: Pam reported on the position description. She is ready to begin the next steps in hiring.

Angela moved **that we approve the budget changes.** The motion was seconded. Changes would include legal fees and fees to the city commission for use permit hearing, childcare, and the administrative coordinator position. The motion passed unanimously.

Grounds Plan. At the Congregational meeting, Bob will present the situation regarding Fellowship grounds. A new irrigation system is in place. What is needed now is for someone to take the lead in designing the gardens, including what should be planted and where. Once the plan is determined, workers are available to implement it.

Social Justice Committee. Angela reported the first Table Talk was held after the worship service a week ago. Ideas from the Fellowship included a focus on youth, i.e., what can we do to help re mental health, drugs; perhaps through Sixth Street Youth Center or Chico Unified School district. She also reported that we have been contributing to the Food Network through our Sunday plate collections.

Through the Interfaith Council, there is a possibility of a State Grant of up to \$250,000, to support Church safety. Angela, Bob, and Jeff Sachs are working on a grant application to upgrade safety and security at our Fellowship. The due date is October 27. Plans are in place to have a police officer do a walk-through of the Fellowship to determine a vulnerability plan.

Auction. Dave reported that the auction will be held in January or February. Megan Johnson is assisting. Donations are sought.

By-laws. Merrily reported that because of pressing activities of committee members, the recently formed By-Laws committee had to postpone the meeting. However, In preparation, she has reviewed by-laws of other UU churches concerning the number of members on their Boards, and qualifications for Board membership. The most recent revision of the UUFC by-laws was clarified.

Safe Church Policy. Kathryn reviewed the Rule of Three, where there should be at least two adults when working with children. She encouraged everyone to get the Safe Congregation Training and for the Fellowship to have a Safe Congregation Policy. The Policy is important not only for the safety of the Fellowship but is something that ministers will look for when considering the Fellowship. To write this policy, it was suggested there be a task force of three people to include one member from the Committee on Shared Ministry, and two members from the Board, Dave and Merrily from the Board, will serve on the Safe Congregation Policy task force.

Calendar Review: Board Liaisons are encouraged to connect with committee members and to report back. October 29 : Congregational Meeting: November 5: Vigil for the Camp Fire; November 23: Thanksgiving. Some planning will be needed for the Thanksgiving dinner at the Fellowship.

Process Observer: Angela noted that the meeting moved along amicably. However, she felt we did too much committee work which slowed down the meeting.

Susan read the closing words. The next meeting will be at 6:30, November 16. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 Pacific time.

Respectfully submitted,

Merrily Stover
Secretary, UUFC Board