



Our mission: To be a compassionate, welcoming community that nurtures spiritual growth and practices justice.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes December 13, 2023 7:00 PM

Present: Paul Trewartha-Weiner, Vice President; Kimberly Edson, Secretary; John Helmers, Treasurer. Aleta Borrud, Jodi Edmonson, & John Tacinelli, Members at Large, Rev. Luke Stevens-Royer, ex officio

Absent: Kim Reid, Brianna Berg, Rod Milbrandt

Guest: Shelly Rohe, Social Justice Coordinator

1. **Call to order** Paul called the meeting to order.
2. **Chalice Lighting & Reflection - Mystery** John T. shared a reflection on mystery.
3. **Check In/On Our Hearts**
4. **Approval of agenda and Nov. 15 and Dec. 5 meeting's minutes**

The agenda and minutes were approved as distributed and amended by consensus.

5. **Immigration Housing Discussion with guest Shelly Rohe**

Luke shared our church's history of immigration justice work of the church and suggests formalizing some of this work to allow the social justice teams to be more responsive to issues as they emerge. The social justice group is encouraged to be pro-active and less re-active.

There was discussion about the creation of an inter-faith LLC to help provide support for immigration justice work of the community. John H. is working on creating this with the MN Secretary of State and to be compliant with IRS rules. This provides some layers of protection for the church and helps to better facilitate the immigration justice work.

The LLC would also be encouraged to develop a scope for how resources for the LLC will be used.

6. **Minister's Report**

This has been an eventful fall at First UU. As we continue a time of reconnection and reemergence from the harder months of the pandemic, we have built new routines and structures to hold our changing church.

These last few months have felt full and exciting, as well as a bit overwhelming and stretched. I've been focused on hiring and welcoming two new staff since summer (Rose and Shelly!), holding three large memorials in the life of the church since summer, and reflecting on what our long time and newer members

are seeking. Our membership is near 422 right now, the highest in many years, and with that comes natural increases in spiritual care, administrative needs, and a wider array of personal and programmatic need. These are good challenges of growth, and they take time.

As I prepare for sabbatical, I'm glad to be working with Rev. Ruth MacKenzie to help hold that time, in addition to our sabbatical leadership team that will convene in the coming months (Paul TW and Beth Atkinson with Rev Ruth.) There are also budget and staffing shifts coming up, so in January and February I'll be sharing recommendations for budgeting and staffing for next year so we have that in place before I leave at the end of March. I want to ensure our operational support stays appropriately in relationship with our capital needs.

I believe we are at an important and exciting threshold in our church, finding our way forward; I believe we can find ways to build community while we prepare for a new church home. I invite you to reflect on how we stay connected - to each other, and to stories of beauty and love in unlikely places in these winter holidays.

And don't miss the new winter program this Sunday - a very fun new tradition. It includes a solstice fairy. What could be better?

In gratitude, Luke

7. **November Church Financials** John H. reviewed with the board Connie's notes and the November financial reports. Our expenses are slightly up but the income is exceeding projections. Funds will be coming in from the insurance company to close out the claim on the roof repair.
8. **Shared Ministry Governance**
 - a. Filling position on Congregational Life team. The Congregational Life team will be looking to expand their team. Send suggestions to Luke if you have someone in mind who would be a good fit for this work. Jodi as the liaison to this team will look into this process.
 - b. Updating web info on Shared ministry article was written for the website. Paul, Jodi and Aleta will submit it to Erica for publication.
 - c. Team updates - none reported
9. **Sabbatical Update**

Luke provide a brief update on the Sabbatical. Paul and Beth will be on the leadership team with Ruth to support the ministry during this time. Ruth will be at our next board meeting.
10. **Building Our Future Beyond Ourselves** (Kim R. and John H.)
 - a. November Building Our Future Financial Reports. John H. reviewed the financial statements for BOFBO. We are tracking pretty closely with the expenses and

income. We have confirmed that the bank does not require 1 million in cash, but rather 1 million in obligations to qualify for a construction loan.

b. Approved Financial Stewardship Team BOFBO financing recommendations.

The following is the suggestion from the finance team for using funds to support BOFBO as needed:

- Memorial Fund (currently at \$17,543.48)
- Instrument Fund (\$8,470, leaving \$2,470 in the fund)
- Operating Reserves (\$25,525 of the amount, leaving \$25,000 in the fund)
- Sale of Stocks (currently valued at around \$48,000)
- Endowment Fund Interest (\$70,000), borrowed at 4% interest
- We decided not to tap the Roof Replacement (\$30,000) or Storm Damage Fund (\$44,172.51) in case we need to replace the RE roof.
- We also talked about a stock donation manager, other than Wells Fargo. Fidelity and Charles Schwab were suggested as possible options. We don't pay fees now at Wells Fargo and I wonder about just leaving it as is, for now. Beth did check into Fidelity and they would also have no fees.

c. BOFBO Updates

Preliminary design and estimates:

A preliminary design was shared with the board at the November meeting and that design was shared with Locus as our preferred design. However, Locus felt that there were aspects of the design that should be adjusted (primarily roof pitch, and the stairway to the commons bisecting the commons space). They returned with a revised version (Rev 4.2) to address their concerns. The Rev 4.2 design is larger than the one we had decided was our preferred design, (and still has some minor changes we would like to consider) but the BOFBO team decided to submit the Rev 4.2 design to several construction companies to get preliminary estimates. It is likely that the Rev 4.2 design is too expensive at this point, but knowing preliminary estimates will allow us to move forward in the design process towards a final design. A copy of the Rev 4.2 design is in the Board Dec. meeting folder.

Putting current building on the market:

The BOFBO team recognizes the Board's desire to put the building on the market as soon as is feasible. The BOFBO team had a lengthy discussion about when this should be and concluded that listing the property in early January (Jan 2?) would be best. We will be receiving preliminary cost estimates from construction companies in early January. We can have a forum in early January when we share a preliminary building design with the congregation, preliminary cost estimates and announce the listing of the building.

Capital Campaign update and dates:

- a) Capital campaign - **quiet phase kick off on January 11th 6:30 - 8:00** - Board members will be invited to participate in the quiet phase kick off. Please attend if you can!
- b) Rachel Maxwell **capital campaign stewards training - Feb 3 & 4th** - times to be announced. It is hoped that board members will serve as stewards, so mark your calendars for these dates.

- c) **Capital Campaign kick off is February 14th** and a brochure with information about designs, finances, etc. will be going out to all members then.

Widseth sequence of events prior to breaking ground:

There are a number of things that need to be completed (outside of a building design with Locus) before we can break ground. A meeting was held with Widseth Civil Engineers to outline the sequence of events and possible timing:

- **Annexation of land into the city:** This must be done first, as we can't get city approval for anything until we are actually part of the city. It is recommended that we get this step done as quickly as possible (early January). Annexation final decisions can take about 6 months. This step does require a public hearing

- **Lot line adjustments** - When we purchased the land we ended up getting two parcels (the large parcel and a much smaller one in the south east section of the property). We can request that the lot line between our two parcels be moved to a different place on the property, creating two larger parcels. It is recommended that we do so to create a northern lot with the church property and a southern lot that is undeveloped land. (John can explain more at the meeting - it's hard to do on paper!) This step would be done along with annexation in early Jan.

- **Decision on entrance to the property** - Our Centurion neighbors would like to see us have our own dedicated entrance rather than always using the private road into their neighborhood. They have suggested creating an entrance to the property off of Viola Road. Another option might be an entrance off of East Circle Drive. John Helmers and Dave Pesch will be meeting with county officials in December to discuss these options.

- **Variance for the parking lot** - Current city development code doesn't allow a parking lot between a street and the front of a building. Widseth feels we have a good case for a variance on this and meet all the criteria required for a variance, so we will be meeting with the city to request a variance after the annexation work has been initiated.

- **Approval of Site Development Plan (SDP):** This step can't take place until after the annexation is approved. The goal is to work with the city officials ahead of time to work out the details of the (SDP) so that as soon as the annexation is approved, we can submit the SDP. This step would also require a neighborhood meeting. If all goes well a SDP could be submitted in June/July 2024. The SDP usually takes about 4-6 weeks to get approved.

- **Apply for building permits:** Once the Site Development Plan is approved, we can apply for building permits.

Fundraising updates:

- As of 12/8, we are very close to having raised \$20,000 and receiving the \$10,000 match from the Langton-Yanowitz families for the BOFBO holiday giving. By the time of the 12/13 board meeting the fundraising goal will have most likely been met.
- Laurie Helmers will be performing a One-Woman Play the weekend of May 10-12 here at church with proceeds to go to the Building Our future fund. Mark your calendars to attend!

11. New Business

- a. Insurance cancellation (John H./Luke) We received notification from the insurance company that they will not be renewing our policy. By February we will need another policy. Connie, John and Luke are investigating other options.
- b. Grace Notes article for December (John H.) John is scheduled to write the Grace Notes article for Dec. John will be writing about the BOBFO project and will be working with the core team.

12. Other Topics/Announcements?

The board will need to have a discussion about how to approach this year's GA and in particular the Article 2 conversation.

13. Adjourn

Next meeting: January 17th 7:00 PM
Reflection Topic: Liberating Love (Brianna)