

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church of Watertown NY
Minutes Board of Trustees
April 28, 2022

Board Members Participating: Heather Winn, President; Robert South, Vice President; Eleanor Allen, Treasurer; Patricia Sutherland, Secretary; Trustees: Shannon Starkweather-Burke, Rebecca Carr (arrived at 10 am), Joanne Harter (left at 10 am)

Board Members Absent: Catherine Burns

Others Present: Angelo Guarino (Bookkeeper), Harriet McMillan (Newsletter, Transition Team)

Preliminaries

After a brief check-in from members, and in the presence of a quorum, Heather brought the meeting to order at 9:30 am and read the Board Covenant to us. Eleanor volunteered to be our Process Observer. Robert's request that his proposed ByLaw changes be added to the Agenda under New Business was accepted.

Officer's Reports

Minutes - Patricia

Eleanor **moved** and Robert seconded that the **Minutes from the previous meeting be accepted as written. Carried.**

Treasurer - Eleanor

The March report was emailed last evening giving little time to review before the meeting. There were no questions. She shared that this month (April) we have received a bequest of \$1,000 from the will of a member. Heather will write a thank you note from the Board. We have also received 2 payments totaling \$210,937.66 from Church Mutual. Our insurance adjuster was sent a preliminary payment and will be sent the balance of his 8% fee now that we have received the monies from Church Mutual. Since the final contract for repairs has been approved and signed we will be giving our contractor, Diego Aguilar, his requested 50% downpayment so that he can begin the needed repairs. All of these transactions will be included in April's Treasurer's report.

Vice President - Robert

Robert requested reports from Board members for the Annual Meeting Report. Eleanor volunteered that to date we have received only 18 pledges. Last year we received a total of 37 pledges. Due to changes in membership we expect about 32-34 pledges for the coming fiscal year. Heather knows of 2 teens who would like financial assistance to attend Unirondack this coming summer.

President - Heather (emailed)

"Happy spring! I cannot believe that we are already at the end of April. We FINALLY have a contract to begin the reconstruction on the church. It was a long and arduous journey but we made it! The contract has been signed and delivered to Diego. I hope

that we will soon see some movement in that area. We had a wonderful meet up in the parking lot. I know that was March and not actually in April but I hope that there will be more of these type of things in the near future now that the weather is beginning to get better. I am looking forward to meeting with the new transitional minister Kathy Hurt next month. I am excited to see what she can help us become and what is in store for All Souls.”

Committee Reports

Executive Committee Report - Heather

No report.

Finance - Eleanor

No report

Social Action - Catherine

No report

Building and Grounds - Rebecca (arrived online during this discussion)

Heather asked for an official vote for the contractor's final Reconstruction contract of \$107,782.57. Eleanor **moved** and Joanne seconded a motion to **accept this contract bid**. We have all received a copy of the bid. **Carried** unanimously.

The lawnmower repairs, discussed in March's meeting, were about \$300 and we decided not to purchase a new one. Our custodian will be in charge of mowing the lawn.

Outreach - Catherine (absent)

No report.

Worship - Eleanor

The committee has decided to continue meeting on Zoom along with a number of gatherings while the church is being repaired. Pat requested that we send our thanks to the many community churches who responded to Rebecca's requests for an alternate meeting space while our church is being repaired. Rebecca and Heather both plan to do this.

There was discussion regarding our current issues relating to how to proceed as a church: whether or not to continue in our present location, considering the idea of selling the church (which has become very expensive to maintain with an apparently shrinking membership), and planning an in person meeting with church members to discuss this very major issue. Eleanor, speaking for the Ad Hoc Transitional Committee, told us that Dr. Hurt is planning to help us with these issues. However, due to the rise in new covid cases in our area of the country Dr. Hurt is not planning on meeting us here on May 19-22 . Eleanor asked her to meet on line with both the Board and the congregation, and to come in person in July when the repairs are expected to be completed. Dr. Hurt accepted this idea. So far the possibility of selling our church has not been presented to members. Dr. Hurt could be very helpful in this area. She may

bring this up in a zoomed Sunday service, after meeting with the Board in advance. Robert **moved** and Eleanor seconded that **we (Board) plan a special zoom meeting with Dr. Hurt on May 19 at 9:30 am and allow voting on line to give Dr. Hurt the option of changing the date if needed.** During discussion we agreed to talk with Dr. Hurt before broaching the options with the congregation. **Motion carried.** Dr. Hurt may bring up The Future of All Souls with the congregation in a zoomed meeting on Sunday May 22, and we would plan to also follow the service with a Congregational Conversation to begin to discuss options before the Annual Meeting on June 12.

Religious Education - no report

Ad Hoc Committees

1. Policy Review - Heather

The policy committee met once this month. The second meeting in April was cancelled because of other commitments of the committee members. They will meet again in May.

Discussion of the proposed changes to the Child Safety Policy was again postponed to our next meeting.

2. Transition Team - Eleanor

See Worship Committee discussion.

New Business

1. ByLaw changes - Robert

Robert **moved** and Shannon seconded that we **present the following Bylaw Amendments to the congregation at the upcoming annual meeting. (1) In the first sentence of Article IV Section 3 insert the word "active" between the word "all" and the word "members". (2) In Article V Section 3 first sentence: Strike the word "twenty" and insert "a majority of active."** The vote was 5 yays and 1 abstention. **Carried.**

2. **Walker Heap's Memorial** service is being planned by his family for outside at the church on June 19. After discussion Robert **moved** that we **rent only a tent.** There was no second and he **withdrew his motion.** Rebecca **moved** and Shannon seconded that we **rent a tent with 200 chairs.** The Company would do the setup. The motion was **carried** unanimously. The location for the tent will be determined depending on the circumstances at the time of the service.

3. Land Statement - Eleanor

The Board has discussed this several times and has had trouble determining which indigenous people should be given credit as original owners of the land upon which our church stands. She suggested that we acknowledge this and procede from there. She will send a relevant article which she found to Robert, who volunteered to work on forming the statement for our web page. He will present it to the Board for approval.

Process Observer Report- Eleanor

She said that she thought the meeting went very well, and people were very courteous,

while also admitting that she did talk over someone else! We also are having shorter Board meetings recently, a plus for us all.

Our next Board meeting will be May 26 at 9:30 am with a Special Zoom meeting planned with Dr. Hurt for May 19 at 9:30 am.

Heather adjourned the meeting at 11 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia J Sutherland, Secretary