

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church of Watertown, NY
Board of Trustees Minutes
Thursday, January 27, 2022

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

Board Members Absent: Catherine Burns

Others Participating: Harriet McMillan (Newsletter, Transition Team), Till Fritzching (member B & G Committee)

Preliminaries

The meeting began at 9:42 am. Heather read the Covenant, Harriet agreed to be our Process Observer, and the Agenda was accepted as written. Heather, who is in Florida on vacation, turned the chair over to the vice-president and left the zoomed meeting.

Officer's Reports

Minutes - Patricia

Accepted as written by consensus.

Treasurer's Report - Eleanor

Eleanor explained the absence of our bookkeeper, Angelo Guarino, who had gone to our now flooded church to prepare his monthly report and found he was unable to do so. He has been making arrangements to work from another site and was able to send only the report for December's Profit and Loss Performance. The usual Balance Sheet report will be available for our next meeting. Eleanor reviewed December's report with us. She highlighted the Building Use income, which was from only one user, and advised us not to expect this to continue while the church is being repaired. She also discussed the option of having the church mail forwarded to her home, as had been done until recently due to the pandemic. Eleanor **moved** and Rebecca seconded **having the mail forwarded to her home for six (6) months**. Following discussion the **motion carried**. Eleanor will contact the Post Office.

Later in the meeting, while discussing the damage to the church (report is under Building and Grounds) from our recent flooding, Eleanor noted that our January heat bill was \$750, much more than usual. She does not know why this month's was so high.

Vice President's Report - Robert

The Juneteenth Committee has requested the use of our building and grounds with no fee on June 18. Robert **moved** and Joanne seconded that we **waive the fees for this Juneteenth event since it is a Social Justice event in which we are participating**. After a brief discussion the **motion carried**.

Eleanor has been asked to arrange the use of the church for a Memorial Garden service for Dr. Walker Heap on June 3.

It will be added to the church calendar.

President's Report - Heather (via email)

I am thinking about you all while I'm sitting here in FL. The universe wanted to make sure that my All Souls family stayed in my thoughts while I was away. We almost made it through the first month of 2022 without major incident. Almost.. Here we go with the all Souls winter flood take two! I want to thank everyone who took care of calling all of the appropriate people and getting the repairs underway. Robert, Rebecca, Till, Eleanor, and Warren all acted quickly in order to get the ball rolling. Thankfully we are already pros at zoom since we will be remaining virtual while our building once more undergoes a facelift. Diego is already on the job so we're in great hands.

Committee Reports

Finance - Eleanor

No report

Social Action - No report

Buildings and Grounds - Rebecca (Till joined the meeting)

On January 23 the church had another frozen and burst pipe, which left water in almost all areas of the church. Rebecca contacted our prior contractors from the previous flood in 2019. In the face of the emergency situation she authorized Diego Aguilar to begin assessing what was needed and to remove the water, and also authorized and signed a contract with the previous adjustor, Sal Bonanza, to work

with our insurance company. The Board questioned her actions as not using protocol, while agreeing her prompt actions are appreciated. Rebecca asked for Board input to this project. Rebecca **moved** and Joanne seconded that **the Board hire Diego Aguilar as General Contractor and Sal Bonanza as our Public Adjustor**. Robert called for discussion. There was none. **Motion carried**. However, since we already have a signed contract with our adjustor for a fee of 8% of the insurance payment which needs Board approval, Robert **moved** and Eleanor seconded that **the Board authorize a contract with Sal Bonanza as our Public Adjustor to be paid at the rate of 8% of the insurance payment. Motion carried**. Robert **moved** that we **authorize Rebecca to be a Representative of the Owner (the church) in dealing with Sal Bonanza and Diego Aguilar regarding building repairs and consult with the Board before signing any further contracts**. The motion had no second.

The flood water has now been removed and plans are underway to proceed with cleanup and repair. We are considering removing the salvageable furniture to storage of some kind to facilitate the work. We need an estimate of the cost of repairs before signing a contract with the contractor. During discussion we learned the reason for the burst pipe may have been exposure to outside air through the soffits. Another pipe in the formal lounge closet may also have a similar problem. Both of these areas need to be corrected during this repair. Originally these pipes appear to have been covered with heat tape. Eleanor noted that our January heat bill was \$750, much more than usual. She does not know why this month's was so high.

Mr. Aguilar has already begun removing debris from the damaged areas. (Shannon left the meeting) The idea of requesting an architect to look at the situation and make suggestions was proposed and Harriet volunteered to follow up on this. She will let us know if and when he can come. Rebecca said she has heard from Mr. Bonanza who plans to bring an estimator to the church so he can proceed. Rebecca will ask for a proposal from Mr. Aguilar. Church Mutual, our insurance company, is also planning to send an inspector to see the situation and come up with an estimate. Then the negotiations will begin. When a figure is arrived at, the church will need to make decisions for what we can afford to have done. The Board decided to meet with zoom again on February 10 at 9:30 am for an update on the situation. If there is nothing to discuss the meeting could be cancelled.

It was suggested that our custodian, John Crupi, do the snow blowing. He could drop his time slips at Eleanor's home. A question was raised about who is actually supervising Mr. Crupi. No one in particular seems to be doing this.

The church office is not open now and Robert plans to work from home when needed. Telephone callers to the church hear a message to call Robert's telephone. At this point we do not see a need for arranging for another church office site. If it becomes necessary we could look at this idea again. It could be covered by our insurance.

Worship - Eleanor

Getting the equipment for hybrid services is progressing. Of course, we cannot use it for hybrid services until the church is repaired. We do foresee a need for hybrid services after the pandemic, however. Till gave us a zoomed demonstration to show us how the new camera would work in a hybrid service. It has been tried in the sanctuary and appears to work very well. He has ordered a stand for it. (Till left the meeting)

Ad Hoc

Policy Review - Heather (via email)

The Policy Review Committee worked on policies surrounding the evaluations of employees of the church, the use of leadership training funds, adult religious education, the supervision of children, reporting abuse of children, and childcare provided by All Souls and we created an accident prevention policy. Since I will be in Florida until February 19, we have decided to postpone policy review meetings until March 1. Our remaining policy review meetings will focus on creating a safe church policy to include how to deal with various disruptive behaviors and conflict resolution. Our next meetings are scheduled for March 1 and 15 via zoom. Everyone is invited to participate.

By consensus the Board decided to postpone review of the Policy Review committee work until the next Board meeting.

Transition Team - Eleanor

The Team consists of Eleanor Allen, Frances Mercer, Harriet McMillan, and Sarah O'Connell. The Team, on the advice of our District Representative Evin Zeimer, has been trying to find an interim minister to work online with our members and the Board in order to delineate who we are as a congregation and what we want in a minister. So far, the interim minister search has yielded one

response, with a proposal. if we ask this person to work with our congregation, the role would be different from what we currently think of as an interim minister but would instead be more of a consultant position, holding workshops with various groups in the congregation, and not necessarily leading services on a regular basis the way Rev. Marty did. We're still working with this applicant to clarify what the role would be. Of course, the Board will provide input at our next regular meeting.

Considering that this is the church's year to celebrate our 200th anniversary, the Transition Team might also like to hear from many people who have been connected to All Souls in some way over the past years, as to how they see us and what they would like to see, which the Team plans to discuss at their next meeting.

New Business - none

Process Observer: Harriet saw no problems and all went well. (She left the meeting at 11:30 am.)

Robert adjourned the meeting at 11:40 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia J Sutherland, Secretary