**Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of San Miguel de Allende**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES**

**(Conducted via Zoom)**

**January 14, 2021**

Members: Dan Neuspiel, President; William Dalsimer, 1st VP; Chris Chase, 2nd VP; Jane Wilkinson, Treasurer; Joseph Plummer, Secretary; Jim Harper; Becky Langrall; Bonney McDowell; Joan Wolf; Rev. Tom Rosiello, Ex-Officio

Guests: Gary Belkin, Paula Peace, Ellie Goodwin, Trish Snyder, Margo Johnson

Member Absent: Jurgen Ahlers

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by President Dan Neuspiel at 1:10 p.m.

Joan read Opening Words quoting “Integrity at the Edge” by Joan Roshi Halifax, founder of the Upaya Institute and Zen Center, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

**Agenda**

On a motion by Bill Dalsimer and second by Bonney, the agenda was approved as submitted after Dan noted his plan to include all discussions of administrative staff in executive session.

In reviewing the December 10, 2020 board minutes, Bill requested that his comments on membership include that active membership require an annual pledge and notation of active and inactive memberships. On the same topic, Chris sought clarification from Tom, who stated that membership should acknowledge other meaningful personal contributions beyond financial. Chris also noted the correct spelling of the names of Ned Wight and Bob Doupe. Chris moved and Bill seconded a motion to accept the minutes with those changes. With these changes, the minutes were adopted unanimously.

**President’s Report**

Dan will circulate a link he received at a UUA Southern Region seminar on leadership training, including a module on board training. He noted “goal setting” and “creation of a board covenant” among topics he will discuss in upcoming meetings.

**Covid-19 Task Force and Welcoming Congregation**

Bonney noted there are new travel details for communication to members. The task force declined to prepare a presentation on its work to the upcoming UUA General Assembly. The Welcoming Congregation Committee has no new activity to report.

**Care Team**

Joan reported no new activity.

**Membership**

Dan asked about the committee’s name, and Chris and Tom adopted Membership Committee as their preference. They are preparing a new members ceremony for February. Donna Shubrooks has resigned from the committee, leaving only Chris. Dan called for new committee members and suggested looking for them among new fellowship members. Chris agreed.

**ACTA**

Dan reviewed proposed modifications to the ACTA, including proposed new language for the Objective of the Association, focused on the UUFSMA mission. He also noted a change in the Basic Requirements of Members, specifically the removal of any financial obligation, to focus instead on members’ support for the mission and delegation of criteria for membership to the Bylaws. Although bylaws now contain no such criteria, the ACTA’s broad statement of membership will allow future criteria to be modified more easily in the bylaws. By consensus, the board approved this method of managing membership qualifications.

Chris agreed to lead a review of the new member definition with Bill and Tom and then propose a possible resolution for voting during the annual meeting. Dan noted that the annual meeting will be conducted under the current ACTA. Gary noted the 501(c)(3) application stipulated that membership requires a financial contribution, but that this should not be an obstacle to change.

**Children’s Education**

Chris said a second cooking show will be Zoom-casted and noted that the UU campaign for Thirty Days of Love is planned with elements for children and multi-generational families. Paula noted the program will be launched on January 17.

**Sunday Services**

Paula deferred discussion of the Sunday Service Manager position to the Executive Session.

**Social Action**

Becky presented 2021 recommendations for total Social Action Grants at $40,000 and $45,000. Dan stated that the fellowship should prioritize long-term commitments to specific students via Jovenes Adalentes, and the Board agreed. Tom recommended staggering the grade-years of individual students receiving scholarships in the future.

Becky noted the SAC’s desire for a fixed budget number. Dan suggested shifting grantmaking decisions in 2022 to a later month, perhaps May or June. Change in the calendar would allow a more realistic forecast of annual revenue and in turn would provide to SAC an accurate estimate of funds for grants.

With this change, members would vote at the annual meeting on the total budget for social action grants and would vote electronically on specific grant allocations when they are determined. Becky will discuss these issues with the committee and propose changes in the process for 2022. Chris moved on a motion to allocate SAC grants at the $45,000 level, which was then modified to $46,223; Becky seconded it, and the Board approved it unanimously.

**Endowment Committee**

Ellie Goodwin noted efforts to reduce the time between receiving donations and thanking donors.

**Widening the Circle**

Dan noted that the task force intends to initiate discussion groups in March and inform the Fellowship of the project in early February. The project foresees three groups of eight people, and two leaders of each group have been tentatively identified. He requested nominations of others who have knowledge of the issues of anti-racism, combatting white supremacy, and diversity and inclusion as well as experience as leaders of small groups.

**Pledge Team**

Trish reported that the 2021 pledge goal will increase by $15,000 over the prior year to $90,000 and that $18,000 has been pledged so far. She noted that a pledge form is located at the [UUFSMA website](https://www.uufsma.org/pledge-form-2021.html) and asked board members to make leadership pledges before the end of January. To close gaps in meeting the goal, the Pledge Team proposed a fundraiser offering members’ homes for additional contributions.

**Finance** **Committee**

Gary summarized the favorable background on Sr. Alan Rodriguez, the candidate recommended for consulting accountant. Dan noted that his fee for work on the ACTA and Donatario filings would represent a considerable savings. On Bill’s motion and another board member’s second, the Board approved his hire.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Jane reported that the fee for PayPal receipts has dropped to 2.2 percent (from 2.9 percent). Diana Amaya is sending thank you letters to donors acknowledging contributions during 2020. The 2020 budget closed with a surplus of $3,474, helped by end-of-year payment of 2020 pledges, spurred by a reminder letter Diana sent, and early payment of some 2021 pledges. Dan noted that several 2021 expenses were paid before the end of 2020 and thus reduced estimated expenses and deficit for 2021 to approximately $3,000.

**Minister’s Report**

Tom intends to convene the Ministry Committee by end of January. It’s primary goal is to begin work on the Ministerial Residency project. He noted that the January 21 Sunday Service (First Parish of Stowe and Acton) and another in April (UU of Lake Chapala) will be joint services with other UU congregations organized around the theme of Building Bridges. Tom plans to reprise a course on the History of Unitarian Universalism early in 2021, perhaps late February. He also wants to organize a weekly “Chat with the Minister.” He noted cases of Covid-19 among the fellowship and consequently a new dynamic in pastoral work.

**Old Business**

Dan noted that completion of the ACTA revision will wait upon resolution of membership definition.

**Envisioning the Future**

Dan referred the Board to a new table reflecting commitments to envisioned projects. Joseph and Becky will contact Christie McCue as a possible champion for identifying grants. Jim will work with Joseph on the project to raise recognition of UUFSMA in the community, Mexico, and the United States.

**New Business**

The UUA General Assembly (UUAGA) will be live online in the last week in June. Joseph provided an update on voting procedures for the March 21 annual meeting. Tasks ahead include the timely announcement of the Annual Meeting, distribution of information to the fellowship, and approval of the agenda and voting system.

Dan informed participants that he will travel to North Carolina, on March 22 and remain there 1 month for needed surgery. He asked Board assistance with Fellowship business during his absence, notably during the April board meeting.

The open meeting was adjourned to executive session at 3 pm CTZ

Minutes recorded and submitted by Board Secretary Joseph Plummer