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

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES**

**(Conducted via Zoom)**

**September 9, 2021**

**Members Present:** Dan Neuspiel, President; William Dalsimer, 1st VP; Chris Chase, 2nd VP; Gary Belkin, Treasurer; Joseph Plummer, Secretary; Jurgen Ahlers, Becky Langrall, Bonney McDowell

Rev. Tom Rosiello, Ex-Officio

**Members Absent:** Joan Wolf, Christie McGue

**Guests:** Ellie Goodwin, Margo Johnson, Paula Peace, John Simsarian

**Opening words:** Bill Dalsimer read “Let Astonishment be Possible” by Gretchen Haley

**Quorum present**: President Dan Neuspiel called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

**Agenda**

On Bill’s motion and Gary Belkin’s second, today’s agenda was approved with the addition of discussions of an apparent instance of fraud against the UUFSMA Frost Bank account, volunteers for Management Meetings, and a proposal to create a Program Council.

**Prior Minutes**

On Gary’s motion and Bill’s second, minutes from the August 12, 2021, meeting were approved after replacement of “contingency reserves” with “surplus funds” in John Simsarian’s comments about social action grants.

**President’s Report**

Deferred to later in the agenda

**Committee and Task Force Reports**

**COVID Task Force**

Noting that Mexico is behind its schedule for vaccinations, Bonney McDowell reported the task force’s unanimous view that too little data exists to support a judgment when in-person gatherings will become safe and that the proposed gathering for October 24 be postponed as a group event.

Reporting on her recent inspection of the Hotel Aldea’s auditorium, Paula Peace observed that modifications have increased seating space by about 40 percent. She proposed a “soft open” on Oct. 24 requiring reservations to be made in advance for fully vaccinated and masked participants, with seating limited to 40 chairs spread at least 6-feet apart.

Board discussion elicited other recommendations for a “soft opening,” including fans to increase air circulation, masking reminders during the service, and highlighting of the hotel’s masking policy. Dan invited Paula to the COVID Task Force on September 11 for expedited rehearing of the issue. Subsequently, the Task Force approved the plan discussed. With the proviso of Task Force agreement to and possible modification of the plan outlined by Paula during today’s board meeting, the board preapproved moving ahead with the October 24 in person service.

**Care Team**

Tom Rosiello noted the anxiety of some members who lack personal contact with the UU community. He recommended that those living alone receive priority for attending in-person re-gatherings.

**Membership Committee**

Dan added an introduction to the existing Disruptive Behavior Policy that explains the policy’s relevance to UU Principles. He also stated his intention of inviting member input by a request in next week’s newsletter. After this input, the board will discuss it.

Chris Chase will meet with the Pledge Team to discuss the status of non-pledgers. The team will pitch the 2022 Pledge Drive during Sunday Services in February.

**Welcoming Congregation**

No business presented

**Children’s Education**

No business presented

**Sunday Service Committee**

Paula reported on equipment purchases for in person services and preparations for the September 19 live broadcast of Sunday Services from the Hotel Aldea without an audience. She noted that the Hotel Aldea installed a Wi-Fi dome in the auditorium that allows a 38-megabyte upload of broadcast signals.

**Social Action Committee**

The board approved a Blue Plate Special in December to support ABBA House’s addition of streetlights, patio lighting, and construction of a roof-top bodega. SAC members will nominate Stan Allen for the UU Social Justice Award.

Becky Langrall moved for board approval for Dan to distribute to members the committee’s alternate proposal to the Committee on Ministry’s proposal for the Minister in Residence program, prior to the small group discussions of the COM proposal beginning on September 16. After discussion, the motion received no second.

**Finance Committee**

Addressing a resolution approved during the 2021 annual meeting, Margo Johnson reported on the committee’s recommendation to establish a minimum reserve equal to six (6) months of annual operating budget expenses. The reserve amount includes all budget expenses except grants to NGOs, passthroughs, and

grants received to fund the expenses of programs. Reserve funds will be placed in an interest-bearing account approved by the board. Dan noted that the reserve is a minimum, and the board could desire additional reserves to be held for emergency use. On Joseph Plummer’s motion and Bonney’s second, the board approved the proposal unanimously.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Gary reported that 91 percent of 2021 pledged income has been received, ahead of 2020 at this time. He also reported that a potentially fraudulent withdrawal of about $3,500 was made from the UUFSMA Frost Bank account for payment to American Express. Frost Bank will investigate the withdrawal, and Gary will open a new fellowship account. The bank’s investigation will require about a month to trace the source of the withdrawal.

**Minister’s Report**

Tom expressed his hope for a thoughtful, productive series of small group discussions of the Minister in Residence proposal.

**Old Business**

**Administrative Staff**

Dan reviewed the schedule for bi-monthly Management Meetings and requested additional volunteers.

**New Business**

Discussion of the proposed Program Council was deferred to the October board meeting.

Volunteers are needed for Opening Words for meetings after October 14.

**Schedule of Monthly Board Meetings**

**Second Thursdays at 1 p.m. CTZ**

Oct 14, 2021 (Opening Words, Jurgen Ahlers)

Nov 11, 2021 (possible regathering in-person)

Dec 9, 2021, Jan 13, 2022, Feb 10, 2022, Mar 3, 2022

Annual Membership Budget Hearing: Sunday, Mar 13, 2022, 1:00 PM

Annual Membership Meeting: Sunday, Mar 27, 2022, 1:00 PM

**Check-Out**

Jurgen noted that 17 people have signed up for the environmental reading group. Tom suggested a drive for books on the environment for children.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:57 p.m. CTZ.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Board Secretary Joseph Plummer