

The Unitarian Church in Westport is a diverse and welcoming religious community, free of creed and dogma, and open to people of all backgrounds and beliefs.

**WE INSPIRE** and support individual spiritual growth.

**WE CONNECT** through worship, music, learning, and caring ministries.

**WE ACT** in the service of peace and justice.

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES**

**November 11, 2013**

Trustees present: Steve Axthelm, Randy Burnham, Chuck Colletti, Denny Davidoff, Roberta Finklestein (ex officio), Michelle Garvey, Sal Mollica, Laura Steinbrecher, Ken Vogel, Ted Yang

Trustees absent: Lyn Hamilton, Bobbie Herman

Burnham called the meeting to order at 7:35PM.

Following a centering reading by Davidoff and a check-in, Finkelstein led the Trustees in a discussion of Chapter 6 of "Governance and Ministry". Open questions offered:

*Our congregation has grown in size, leadership, diversity and programs over the last 10 years. With that in mind, what would engender a culture of spirituality and generosity and volunteerism?*

*If our budget remains flat, how do we staff?*

*Tell me a time this congregation made a major decision without conflict?*

*Why does TUCW matter?*

*Which activities have consistently involved 5 to 10 congregants?*

*Why are we afraid to grow this church? Go out in public and proselytize?*

*As an institution, what business are we in – what's our purpose for people?*

*What should be included in our covenant of behavior?*

*What do you value most about this community?*

*What would a justice project that captured the larger community look like?*

**NOTE: We are asked to read Chapter 7 for the December meeting.**

Consent agenda items were passed on a motion made by Yang and seconded by Steinbrecher.

After clarification and brio discussion, the charter for a Human Resources Committee was passed on a motion made by Colletti and seconded by Yang. Following spirited conversation, the trustees appointed Marti Bishop, Jeff Lundberg and Neil Coleman to the committee on a motion made by Axthelm, seconded by Colletti.

There is a need for a policy regarding filling committees of the board.

The draft Conflict of Interest Policy proposed by Yang engendered widespread feeling that it is too long and too complex. Vogel will work with Yang to create a simplified version for discussion and proposed passage at the December meeting.

Vogel led a discussion regarding a process for resolving the loan made by the Endowment Committee. Mollica and Colletti will represent the board as conversation continues with members of the Finance Committee and Endowment Committee. Update in December.

In Bobbie Herman's absence, the agenda item regarding the proposed outside lift was put off until December.

As new business, Vogel introduced the subject: **Creating a five year fiscal plan**. Vogel warned that we are at a low point with regard to reserves. The Finance Committee is concerned and plans, as it should, through a scarcity lens. The BOT, he suggested, must cast a vision to counteract or balance fiscal retrenchment. More to come.

Jan Park's bequest gift of \$150,000 to be used for social justice work was accepted on a motion moved by Davidoff, seconded by Garvey. Davidoff and Garvey will work with Finkelstein and others to determine best practices and timeline for spending the funds.

On a motion by Garvey, seconded by Colletti, the BOT moved into executive session to discuss staff issues.

Reporting out of the executive session, on a motion made by Garvey and seconded by Axthelm, the board directed Finkelstein to hire an administrative assistant for the DRE at \$20 an hour for ten hours per week for the remainder of the church year.

Garvey offered process observations.

Mollica offered closing words.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Taft Davidoff, Clerk