



**Unitarian Universalist Congregation
of the Catskills**
Sunday Services at 10:30 am

UU Catskills Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting Minutes

Date: March 16, 2023

Present:

Mark Howenstein, President; Dr. Erin Hilgart, Vice President; Tom Hackett, Secretary

Trustees: Kathy Eberlein; Joyce White

The Rev. Bob Janis, Minister (arriving at 10:31)

Lois Slade, Assistant Treasurer

Excused: Carma Haas, Treasurer

Absent: Don Critchell

The meeting began at 10:17 with Mark lighting the chalice. Board members then took turns reading from the covenant. A brief check-in followed.

Review of minutes

Tom distributed beforehand minutes of the January 19 meeting and a special meeting on February 23. Tom moved that the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Joyce and passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report, having been distributed in advance, was presented by Lois.

The pledge brochure and form were discussed along with the cottage meeting schedule. About 40+ people have signed up for the cottage meetings so far. It was felt that the scenario game should be highlighted in the advertising.

Tom moved that the Treasurer's report be accepted. This was seconded by Kathy and passed with a unanimous vote.

President's Report

Mark reported that Coco Wilde is interested in Fund Raising. She has ideas for some events.

Mark will be gone from 3/31 to 4/18 and will not have email or phone access.

Minister's report

The minister's report was distributed in advance.

Rev. Bob reported that Bobbly Katz's service will be held at the Woodstock Jewish Congregation on May 8. He is working with the Rabbi to plan the service.

Rev. Bob announced that he has accepted a position as contract minister at the Unitarian Congregation of Hartford beginning July 1. He will be away from April 10th through the 17th.

Committee Reports

The music committee report included some concerns from Catherine Cattabiani about possible copyright infringement in YouTube recordings. Tom was asked to get in touch with her to better understand her concerns.

Lois mentioned that B&G has hired someone to install a "new" vanity in one of the bathrooms. She also said that the light switch in new office should not have been relocated. We need to get parking lot re-graded and berms removed after snow plowing damage.

Ministerial Search

Two ministers have expressed interest in our congregation. The search committee has met with both and favors one. A meeting with the Poughkeepsie search committee is scheduled for Monday to compare impressions. One candidate has indicated that they can serve us only if both congregations want them.

BoT, CoSM and GA Nominations

Kathy Atwell will accept nomination as Treasurer, but would like to continue on Worship as well. If Kathy is elected, Carma is willing to serve as Assistant Treasurer. The Board will advise Kathy to be careful not to burn herself out. The position needs a storyteller, someone who can project into the future and open up the conversation about money.

There is one Trustee position. Possible candidates are Christie Belleci, Kristen Shara, Ellen Harrington and Anna White-Hauck. One or more current Trustees may decide not to seek re-election, opening up another position. Kathy suggested that she would be willing to serve on CoSM instead of as a Trustee. If Anna is elected, the one-year membership requirement will have to be waived.

CoSM has two positions open. It was suggested that Tiffanie James is willing to be nominated.

We believe we are entitled to three delegates to GA. Kathy Eberlein or Erin Hilgart might be interested.

Article 2 and Eighth Principle

There will be a preliminary vote at GA to amend Article 2 of the UUA bylaws. The current proposal eliminates the current seven principles and obviates a proposed 8th principle (although incorporating some of its wording). If the change receives more than 50% of the vote, it will be voted upon next year for final adoption.

Mark expressed frustration with the lack of educational and discussion materials from UUA on the proposed change .

The 8th principle will continue to be considered at the congregational level. Tom moved that the adoption of the 8th principle by UU Catskills be on the agenda for the Annual Meeting. The motion was seconded by Erin and passed unanimously.

Rev. Bob has scheduled three discussions on these topics for Thursday evenings. He will also schedule a meeting on a Sunday after the service. Rev. Bob will talk with Donna Schlachman about the content of these meetings.

Chalice Lighters and Lighting

Greg Burton spoke with Rev. Bob, Lois, Tom et. al. a few weeks ago. There is general agreement that the lighting improvements he suggested would meet our goals and enhance the space for rentals. There would be a simple console with presets for services. The ideal time would be in the summer, but it depends on Greg's schedule. We need a more detailed write-up, including what Greg will do and the costs involved. We will also ask Christie if she would take a look at the plans before they're finalized.

Admin Replacement

The Board reviewed a job description. There was some question about how involved the administrator would be in facilities rentals. That section will be removed from the description for now. Managing weekly and monthly online communications will be listed first, followed by updating facilities and events calendars (including on the website) and managing in house and online membership and mailing lists.

There was some discussion about whether the administrator would be an employee or contractor. Sarah has been working as a contractor, and it seemed that was the best arrangement.

In recruiting an administrator, we need to be up front that a new minister will be hired and may want some changes in the job.

The position will be posted on Indeed (www.indeed.com), and the President will manage the process. The description will also be sent to Rev. Evin.

Membership List(s)

There was a brief discussion, which was tabled until a later meeting.

Mask Revisions

The Board discussed another survey of the congregation but decided that the policy is the Board's responsibility. By unanimous consent, it was decided that masks will be optional beginning April 1.

Drag Queen Story Hour

Joyce said that she would like to hold one or a series of four to six Drag Queen Story Hours. There was a discussion of concerns that they may attract protesters. So far, such events have not attracted protests

in Kingston. Also, the location on private property would serve as a deterrent to protesters. Joyce will work with Social Action to find room in the budget. The cost is expected to be around \$200 for 1.5 hours. Another possibility is a Drag queen brunch for all ages as a fund raiser. The first event will be scheduled in July and advertised at Pride in June.

Year-End Calendar

The dates for the remainder of the year were reviewed for information.

Executive Session

The Board discussed four concerns in Executive Session.

Old Business/New Business

The Board reminded the Technology Committee that it needs to work on hearing assistance.

Lois distributed copies of a section of the November minutes and four emails, written by Joyce, Tom, Mary Evans and herself, showing that she had been unfairly criticized and disrespected in conjunction with the work she did in obtaining and preparing new name tags. These documents are included on the following pages.

Both Joyce and Tom apologized to Lois for the tone and substance of their emails.

Next meeting(s): April 24 (Monday) 10:00 – 1:00

Centering: Rev. Bob

Adjournment

On a motion by Kathy, seconded by Tom, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 13:35.

UU Catskills Board of Trustees / Monthly Meeting Minutes / Date: 11/17/22

Present: Mark Howenstein, President; Dr. Erin Hilgart, Vice President; Carma Haas, Treasurer; Tom Hackett, Secretary; The Rev. Bob Janis-Dillon, Minister; Lois Slade, Assistant Treasurer (non-voting)
Trustees: Donn Critchell; Kathy Eberlein; Joyce White

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Old Business/New Business

Lois demonstrated new name tags which are more elegant and flexible than the old ones. Carma modeled how one could be worn on a persons face mask.

Subject: Name tags

Joyce White

Fri, Feb 17, 2023 at 10:28 AM

To: board-and-minister@uucatskills.org, Lois Slade

Good morning,

Some of our members are distressed about having pronouns on the new name tags. Most are offended that they weren't asked what their preferred pronouns are and were instead assigned them. At least one person is upset as they would rather not have that info on their name tag at all. I had a conversation with a different person before the new version was issued, they were opposed to having any pronouns used and I told them it was not a requirement. Was I wrong?

It is inappropriate to tell someone what their pronouns are. A person can only determine that for themselves and it may change over time.

Additionally, this is an example of not being affirming of our LGBTQ members, especially those who identify as non-binary.

One solution, and I'm sure there are others, would be to survey our members about their preferred pronouns, and replace them. We could also ask if they even want the new name tag as I'm getting feedback from several people who don't find them "user friendly".

Joyce

On Friday, February 17, 2023, 11:03 AM, Tom Hackett wrote:

Hi Mary,

I was just wondering if the Membership Committee had been involved or consulted about the new magnetic name tags that seem to have mysteriously appeared recently.

Tom

Subject: Name tags

Lois Slade lois.aurelia@gmail.com

Fri, Feb 17, 2023 at 1:05 PM

To: Joyce White , Board and Minister , Mary Evans

Joyce, et al.,

I spoke with Mary Evans about the name tags (and the BOT) when I first planned to make new name tags. I had been talking about it since before the pandemic. The name tags originally didn't have any pronouns. ...

...I thought this was the direction the congregation was heading. ... I left them in the new Sanctuary admin office until there was more discussion about them, but someone put them out without discussing it with me and people immediately started using them - even when I put them away again...

No one is forced to use the new name tags. They can use the old ones... *The idea was that everyone had pronouns or no one did.* Those that have difficulty with the magnet or have pacemakers have the option of having a cord instead of the magnet....

Users can also attach the magnets to the original safety pin name tag....

I sincerely apologize I'll put a blurb in the Weekly Update. If you tell me whom I've hurt with my actions, I'll personally contact them and offer my sincere apology for the error.

Lois

Subject: Re: New UU Catskills magnetic name tags

Mary Evans <merganser6@aol.com>

Fri, Feb 17, 2023 at 2:52 PM

To: Tom Hackett, Joyce White , Lois Slade

I see from other comments that this is already being discussed. Yes, Lois did speak to the Membership Committee about the magnetic name tags. At first we didn't see the point or expense of making new ones, but then we heard comments about people not liking to pierce their clothing with the pin-on type and people who loved using the magnetic type at work. In speaking with Erin Hilgart and in some UUA regional training, I have gathered that you either put pronouns on all of them or none of them; we should not single out those people who have "different" pronouns. I have heard that including pronouns is now the "industry standard".

Lois has done a lovely and difficult job to get us this far. If people find that they were given the wrong pronouns, they should ask Lois to re-do them. Lois could put a note in a Weekly Update telling people just that.

This is an effort to be inclusive. Change in this instance is difficult, but I think we should stay the course. The process may need a little tweaking to get it right.

Mary
