

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF CHATTANOOGA
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

November 15, 2012

Present:

Wendes Jones, President	Pamela Rumancik, Minister
Frank Caperton, President Elect	Elaine Hill, Past President
Nicky Ozbek, VP Congregational Ministry	Alan Larson, Treasurer
Tom Kunesh, VP Religious Growth Ministry	
Elaine Watkins, VP Outreach Ministry	

Guests:

As I mentioned this morning (and as you may well have heard), it wasn't a typical meeting. There are a lot of interpersonal issues within the BOT, just as there are in the congregation (as Rev. Pam said). Her sermon today was a direct result of this. She worked very hard to get it thru our rather cement-like heads that we are more than just a "board." We are *people* who are in an excellent position to model the best possible relationship behavior for the congregation. We are doing ourselves no favor by letting issues and bureaucracy get in the way of this [my paraphrase, not her actual words]. So here's what I took down:

Chalice was lit and Rev. Pam gave the opening words from Margaret Wheatley's book *Turning to One Another*.

Wendes asked tom to re-read our Agreement for Fellowship -- tom did so and noted that our BOT document incorrectly calls it the Agreement *of* Fellowship and the rest of the Board agreed that the "of" should actually be a "for."

Rather than a check-in, Rev. Pam had us do an icebreaker type exercise where each person took a penny from a container, noted the year on the penny and then shared one or more memories that stand out from that year. There was a wide range of stories and anecdotes. We all liked this exercise and agreed that we should do more things like this.

The October minutes were read and approved.

Wendes gave her President's report. Highlights were a request that we observe the clause in our Board agreement about exercising good judgment in communicating between meetings. A main point of complaint, from Wendes, numerous people on the BOT and numerous congregants, was the overuse of email (specifically addressing issues such as the weapons debate). Among other adjectives, "too much," "hard to prioritize, hard to keep up," "redundant" and "excessive" were given. Rev. Pam related that many people called and emailed her, asking that she "make it stop."

There was a lengthy discussion, in part about the weapons issue and in part about the best way to *discuss* this and other hot topics. When the suggestion was put out that we try another open mic session, one board member objected strenuously and Rev. Pam made

the observation that at the one we had 10/28, Paul briefly rendered an opinion, and then everyone started talking about coffee hour. This gave rise to her belief that people do not feel safe speaking out in person; they would rather be at a physical distance from others before saying how they feel about things. This must change.

A few discussion points:

- The Board is ultimately responsible for setting policy
- But process is important - it should start with the Communications committee, and that committee should be able to bring something back to the BOT by next month's meeting
- An important factor in deciding how we should communicate is moderation ... it can't be a free-for-all. It must be a civil discussion.
- We (the Board) can't vote on the weapons issue now. Once we get people calmed down and feeling safe, it might be best to conduct some sort of ballot-by-mail.

In keeping with our "History/Herstory" theme introduced last week, we spoke about some history, such as the Endowment Committee being deliberately set up so as to be completely independent of the BOT -- a clear sign of mistrust.

Frank moved that we table discussion of the weapons issue until all of the above can be sorted out; Nicky seconded. Vote was unanimous in favor.

We discussed the following issues: The DVD Minister's War will be shown at the first of the year with date to be determined following upcoming Wowzers meeting. UTC's history department is interested in showing this on the UTC campus and they are waiting for confirmation of the date. The cost is higher when there are multiple venues, but UTC will share the burden of the additional cost for the second venue. A signed agreement pledging to cover the \$150.00 UUCS cost requires board approval. The main issue with this was the financing. Since Social Justice committee is already actively involved in hosting "movie nights" on SJ and related issues, this fits in well. There had been some discussion after the October meeting, where Nicky had asked about possible dates and we had informally agreed on mid-March. This was brought forward to this meeting. As for the financing, Frank said he could bring it to the Finance Committee.

Elaine Watkins made a motion that the Social Justice Committee take responsibility for hosting this film and that the \$150 be proposed as a budget item for the Social Justice Committee. Frank seconded. Vote was unanimous.

Alan gave the treasurer's report; said cash flow has improved since last month. Frank said there were two large pledge payments recently.

Elaine Hill said there would be another cluster meeting in Knoxville on December 8, but was reminded that this conflicts with the Quarterly Council meeting..

Wendes reminded everyone that Diane Reed is no longer serving as VP of Resources and that finding a replacement for her with the Stewardship campaign coming up should be given top priority. She said it would be perfectly fine to use email for the purpose of sharing ideas about a suitable replacement, as long as it doesn't balloon into lengthy, hair-splitting discussions.

We really did end on a peaceful, positive note. Rev. Pam was responsible for this. She insisted that the opening exercise with the pennies was profound because it addressed us on a personal level, reminding us of our humanity. She strongly suggested that we try to have another board retreat, this time just dedicated to getting to know one another, having fun, and acting like UUs in the "good" sense of the word.

Rev. Pam read closing words from the Tao te Ching, and the meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Next BOT Meeting is December 20, 2012 at 7:00 pm.

Minutes submitted by Elaine Watkins for Jim Welborn, Recording Secretary to the Board of Trustees for 2012-2013