

First Unitarian Society in Newton
OPERATIONS COUNCIL MINUTES
Tuesday, December 20, 2016
Children's Chapel, 7:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm.

Present: Susan Bartlett (by phone), John Brennan, Judy Curby, Laurel Farnsworth, Andrea Kelley, Rev. John Nichols. **Guest:** Josie Green, Board of Trustees.

~ **Invocation / Chalice Lighting:** Andrea

Covenant

As we, the members of this Council and staff, gather to serve this congregation in leadership, we commit to ourselves and to each other: to be present and prepared for the work of this meeting; to listen well and contribute respectfully; to balance both our short and long-term visions with fiscal responsibility; to support the decisions of the Council; to uphold the democratic process; and to lead with goodwill and faith in the work we can accomplish together.

~ **Approvals:** All

- Planned Parenthood interested in holding a fundraiser at FUSN. A wide-ranging discussion covered a number of topics, including how to decide whom to rent to and whether or not the decision is based on the cause or issue of their event. Consensus was that to decide on each individual case would be too cumbersome. It was agreed, however, that FUSN does not take positions on political issues. Also discussed was whether to rent to any person or group who requests it. It was also pointed out that FUSN doesn't want to track down where the funds actually go, so FUSN cannot monitor the purpose of the event.
- November Minutes - tabled until all have had a chance to review them.

~ **Staff update:** John N.- He will be doing all Christmas Services.

~ **Report on BOT meeting:** Kate

- Erin will be back the 4th Sunday in February (26th).
- The discussion of a potential First Unitarian Society in Newton name change to include Unitarian Universalist was continued into the spring. A vote will be taken by the

congregation on the matter and the wording before January 1, 2018, not at the FUSN annual meeting June 4, 2017.

- The Board discussed whether health care coverage should include families of staff members. In the case of the current hire under consideration for Membership Coordinator, it was decided to offer him higher wages, rather than change the policy to offer family insurance coverage.
- There was an executive session, as well.
- See Board minutes for more complete information.

~ **Financial:** Judy, All

Review of Year to Date spending:

- Laurel provided an update on constructing the outdoor ramp, which has run into several obstacles. Completion is targeted for the spring.
- Laurel also reported that pledges are coming in well.
- Prior year pledges are also coming in well.

~ **Fire Safety Plan:** John B.

John talked about three areas related to the plan:

1. Administrative and maintenance.
2. Classrooms.
3. Drills

John distributed a one-page draft of a FUSN Fire Safety and Evacuation Plan for Classrooms and said he wanted to keep it simple.

1. He said it is Fran's responsibility to see that smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, carbon monoxide detectors, emergency lighting, exit signs and so on are tested and fully functional. One concern is to be sure furniture does not block any exit. Laurel mentioned that someone keeps putting a chair rack by the Parish Hall entrance, an inappropriate place for it.

2. The draft posits that Rowan be responsible for disseminating the plans for classroom evacuation.

- Maps should be posted next to every classroom showing directions to exits. Two exit options need to be included. Laurel pointed out that the paths should lead to outdoor exits, rather than other indoor options, except as a backup.
- Two responsible adults will lead and follow children out of each classroom. The day's roster should be taken, as well, to account for each child present.
- The playground would be the meeting point, *if* there is no snow. An alternative would need to be established if snow is an issue.
- John expressed concern about stairs, and there was a discussion about using reflective tape, especially in the event that the power and lights are off.
- Pine Village will also be consulted. It is a registered pre-school by the Massachusetts Office for Children and has filed a safety plan with that body.
- Rowan will be given the draft for review and comments.

- The nursery behind the stage and the Coming of Age spaces have their own exits to the outside.

3. Drills are recommended but not required. Adult teachers should be shown the routes, rather than ringing the fire alarm for a practice drill. Adults lead and follow the children.

Comments and feedback on John's draft were positive. The desire is to get comments and input back by the next Ops Council meeting.

~ **FUSN rental rates:** Andrea, All. See Appendix.

- Rentals for FUSN social action fundraisers.
- Should discounts be offered to nonprofits? Who qualifies for a discount; what amounts or percent would be discounted?
- Proposed rates are for one-time use. Multiple uses would be negotiated and contracted. Negotiations are often done by Fran collaborating with Laurel.
- Discussion also concerned individual room rates.
- The member rate should be applied only if the member is the host.
- It was suggested that FUSN rates are low, compared to market rates in general.
- Cost for cleaning is required for the larger rooms, as well as a security deposit.
- Quite a few variables were discussed, including a sliding scale.
- Possible rate categories: regular, member, non-profit, social action events. Fran should have a list of what qualifies as social action.
- Andrea moved, and Kate seconded that FUSN have a 50% fees option for FUSN members and 75% for outside nonprofits. It was unanimously approved.
- Social action rates will be tabled for now.
- John N. mentioned that many congregations do not rent out their sanctuary Saturday nights during the regular church year, since it's too difficult to get it cleaned in time. Others pointed out that Erin approves or denies all sanctuary rental requests.
- Andrea will revise the rate sheet and give it to Fran, who can give it to people who inquire.

~ **Updates:** Committee issues/reports -- All

- Holiday fair - Laurel distributed a report on gross income, expenses and net income. They are committed to 2 separate days again next year, but plan to better publicize the first date. Ruth Comstock has agreed to chair next year's fair, and many volunteers have also committed to returning next year. Cleanup is still an issue; more volunteers are needed.
- Newsletter columns - Andrea will write one on new rental rates for the January 17 deadline. John B. will do the February column on the evacuation plan provided we have agreement on the content of the policy in time. Should Ops meet with the Annual Budget Drive team? Saul Lookner (co-chair) will advise if they want a meeting.

- Balcony - Laurel: A parent expressed concern about the height of the sanctuary balcony railing, that it was too low. FUSN is grandfathered, as far as building codes; FUSN is in compliance. The railing has been that way for 100 years. Laurel would be willing to meet with the parent but does not anticipate doing structural changes.
- ~ **Thank yous:** All
- Pat Rohan for the Halloween Party.
- Artitudes for the percentage of sales from a particular date donated to the choir Germany trip.

Josie added that Dwight Golan has put together the Nominating Committee. The members will write up roles and descriptions.

~ Josie raised the question of doing a FUSN financial audit. Dan Brody may be recommending a financial audit, and the Board is discussing it. There was discussion about this topic coming up before, and that it's too complex and expensive. One possibility is to do a "partial audit".

Respectfully submitted,
 Wendy Schwartz,
 Assistant Clerk

FUSN - Rental Rates for Discussion only		12/20/16
Room	Public Rate	Member Rate
Alliance Room	\$250	\$100 for any room, unless otherwise specified.
Parlor	\$100	
Parish Hall	\$400	
Kitchen	\$150	
Chapel	\$200	
Head Start	\$300	
Head Start w/upstairs kitchen	\$400	
Classrooms	\$75	
Sanctuary	\$1,000	
Minimum cleaning fee	\$125	

