

**FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY IN NEWTON  
OPERATIONS COUNCIL AGENDA**

Wednesday August 10, 2016

Alliance Room, 7:00 P.M.

**Present:** Susan Bartlett, Judy Curby, Laurel Farnsworth; Eric Haas (BOT rep)  
There were not enough members for a quorum, so no votes were taken at this meeting.

~ 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.

~ Invocation / Chalice Lighting: Laurel

~ Elect Chair and Vice-Chair: All

No election taken. Discussion around whether to have term limits. None exist currently for Ops Council members, but there is a desire to bring in new people. Susan and Laurel said they were willing to serve again this year as Chair and Co-chair, if elected.

~ Approvals:

Minutes: All

- May minutes were approved at the June meeting, pending Susan's input; she had no corrections, so May minutes are officially approved.
- June minutes were just dispersed and need to be reviewed.

~ Report on BOT meeting: Laurel and Eric

The board discussed the Welcoming Congregation committee and acknowledged that the implementation group itself is limited in its diversity.

The board retreat is the 1st weekend after Labor Day. They will meet at a member's house on one of the small islands in Boston Harbor.

Also discussed, the September 17 meeting: Aligning our Doing with our Being, which includes day-long workshops.

They reviewed governance changes for new board members. It was noted that most of the congregation seem not to understand these changes. One point was that it's difficult to get nominations to serve either on the board (policy issues and strategy) or on operations (day-to-day management).

Eric pointed out that there is much going on at the leadership level that the congregation is unaware of. An example was when the conflict management consultants were here. It is also fair to say the congregants don't need to know every detail. The important point is that FUSN runs smoothly.

~ Realm database and Financial Oversight Committee questions/recommendations : All Judy reviewed the database issue for Eric. It had been determined that the Icon database did not meet staff needs. It worked well for pledging, but not for membership and RE. The Realm database has been used by other congregations. The goal is to have one database that works for all needs.

Dan Brody had sent a summary in 2015 of the 4 databases FUSN is currently using to store and use email addresses of FUSN members, friends and visitors: IconCMO, FUSN.org website (Drupal database); email lists that Jud manages in listserve software; and the FUSN Yellow Pages (was in Quickbase, moved to a module of FUSN.org). It was noted that an "expert" is needed to help maintain any database.

Further discussion on databases can be done at the Ops Council retreat.

~ Updating financial policies: Judy provided documents on this topic.

~ Some parents expressed interest in using the Head Start room for kids during coffee hour, when they can't go outside. Laurel expressed concern about the fragile light fixtures and windows in the room. All but 4 windows had been covered with plexiglass in the past, but people removed the plastic to open windows. Eric asked if the parents could rotate supervising the room. Another idea was for Rowan to put funds in the RE budget for supervision. Laurel also pointed out that there are no appropriate toys or activities in the room. Running around could be dangerous, as well, depending on how many kids are there. Susan will talk with Rowan, expressing these concerns.

~ Ops Council contributions to FUSN newsletter: All

Susan has a list of dates the BOT selected for their contributions to the newsletter. She asked for input on how to allocate Ops Council slots, both in terms of content and dates. August 16 is available. Laurel offered to write about upcoming FUSN building projects, such as the start of construction for the ramp at the Highland Ave. entrance. For the September 20th newsletter, Susan will write a column about parking. For the October 18th slot, perhaps it could be about what the Ops Council does. Judy will do a column for November 15th about her role as treasurer. Additional available dates include December 13, January 17, February 14, March 14, April 11, May 9, June 6.

~ Other committee updates:

Holiday Fair: Laurel

Adjustments to the Holiday Fair schedule: The 1st Saturday in November will be for attic treasures and toys. The other traditional elements of the Holiday Fair will continue to take place the first weekend in December.

Buildings & Grounds - Laurel: She plans to have the Parish Hall floor polyurethaned the last week in August. She is having a hard time finding a painter to do the Youth Room and the upstairs bathrooms, as many contractors are busy.

Dorshei Tzedek plans to renew their lease.

Pine Village will renew, as well. They are concerned about the doors in the classroom corridor, due to their age. Laurel said painting and refinishing are not viable options. Replacement and

labor may cost around \$6,000. She has funds in the major maintenance budget, so can plan to replace the hollow core doors with solid ones.

Laurel said she will install outside lights for the ramp that will go on automatically at night and off in the morning.

Eric mentioned that the clocks in the tower are not accurate. Laurel said someone comes twice a year to adjust them. She will let him know.

Memorial issues: Laurel needs to find a new contractor to make the plaques for the inside urns in the Sanctuary, as well as for the outside plaques. Laurel would like to off load these tasks from her portfolio. Judy suggested that Fran might be able to handle the process, if she knows whom to call.

Susan mentioned the RE request for a fire drill this fall. Jeannie had begun the process last year. Susan had asked John Brenner if he would take on this project. Jacki has floor plans, which John can ask her for.

A congregant had suggested getting a portrait taken of Erin. This could be a question for the Steering Committee or the Board of Trustees, and for Erin, as well. Susan will reply to Catherine Morocco and Kate Mason and talk about it in the Steering Committee.

Funding for the Sabbatical Minister: The Women's Alliance had a fund for Ministerial Interns. These funds could be used toward the Sabbatical Minister, avoiding need to borrow from the endowment.

~ Scheduling for the year: Susan

- Meeting times: 3rd Tuesday of the month
- Retreat: Sunday October 2nd
- Updated spreadsheet with dates & assignments has been sent
- September 17th workshop

~ Thank yous: All.

None at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Schwartz,  
Assistant Clerk