

UUCGT Board of Trustees Minutes

03/20/17

President Linda Fletcher convened the meeting at 5:30 PM. In addition to Linda, present were Donna Stein-Harris, Gretchen Kronk, Karl Love and Kay Sturgeon. Absent were Rabbi Chava Bahle, Phyllis Jessup and Don Pyne, who were separately vacationing out of state.

Congregational members present: Stan Cain, Emmy Lou Cholak, Jim Horrocks, Karl Keinath, Mike McDonald, Richard Miller, Lynette Rhodes and Mary Van Valin.

President Linda Fletcher convened the meeting at 530 PM and the board received comments. Karl asked to make a general comment. Karl noted that last month we devoted an entire board meeting to public commentary. Karl pointed out that many people spoke regarding difficult and emotional matters. In spite of the emotional challenges we were able to conduct a civil and respectful discourse without anyone being excluded or wronged. Karl felt that compared with past events, this was significant and noteworthy progress. Karl thanked all involved.

The Agenda was approved with an additional motion for consideration included from Gretchen Kronk.

Karl Love moved the consent agenda be approved. The motion was seconded by Donna Stein-Harris and was approved.

The board received a pledge drive update from chair Mike McDonald. Mike indicated the drive was approximately 50% complete with 85 pledges received. 55% of pledges received to date showed an increase with the average increase of \$337 per pledge.

Kay Sturgeon moved on behalf of finance to replace the furnace in the office area. Karl supported the motion, which was approved.

Kay also reviewed a submission from John Hoffman on behalf of the dinner fundraising group. Some members of the group requested to use half the funds raised for specifically to feeding the hungry with distribution through the community needs committee. As funds are part of the total budget, a decision will be determined towards the end of the budget year when a clearer overall picture is available.

The board considered three policy matters. Karl moved and Kay seconded the two policy updates affected by the formation of a stand alone Conflict Management Team and the removal of that language from the Committee on Ministry. The matter was approved. (Attached as addenda).

Karl moved and Donna seconded the addition of a policy governing personnel files for inclusion in the Staff Resources Manual. The addition was approved. (Attached as addenda).

Gretchen moved to update the Rental Policy. The matter was tabled until the Policy Committee could revise the submission to conform to standard policy update format.

The Annual Meeting was discussed. Karl shared concern from SCRT that they have yet to be appraised of candidacies. The team has already had their March meeting and next meet April 17th. The board has a special meeting scheduled for April 10th to review the slate in closed session.

Karl shared that it is typical to create an ad hoc committee to advise and support the president on the annual meeting and the processes of preparation. Kay Sturgeon, Donna Stein-Harris and Karl Love all agreed to participate.

Karl reported on behalf of Staff Resources. The Spiritual Leader evaluation is currently in process and will be available for the president to review within the month.

Staff Resources continues the process of time card implementation. We will use time cards until the end of the fiscal year to refine the process further and go live in July.

Linda spoke regarding the ongoing work on the Organization Chart / Stewardship project. Linda noted the evolving shift toward a more visible and active social witness track. There has been considerable interest and demand for these types of events and that will alter somewhat how we organize ourselves for the future. There is evident and wide support for social justice initiatives, particularly among our newer members. This interest will undoubtedly shape our future evolution as a congregation and is a strong unifying factor.

Donna moved that we allow the existing Organization Chart Task Force to continue their discernment regarding long term congregational organization and to increase membership within as needed or desired. The motion passed.

Linda further commended the efforts of several in the development and implementation of various Social Witness efforts.

Gretchen introduced a detailed motion, seconded by Kay regarding the report tendered in January by the Healthy Reconciliation Committee. (Attached as an amendment). After some discussion, the motion was tabled by assent until Phyllis, Don and Rabbi Chava were available and the entire board could deliberate. (Attached as addenda).

At 6:44 PM the board went into executive session to consider a budgetary matter involving Staff.

Linda adjourned the meeting at 6:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karl D. Love, Secretary

Addenda:

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CONFLICT MANAGEMENT POLICY

(To be included as a permanent Board committee following SRC and precede SCRT on page 11)

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Board of Trustees will appoint three members to the Conflict Management Team (CMT). Each will serve a staggered three-year term upon review by Safe Congregations Task Force. The team will train and maintain a list of facilitators for their work. The team, based on estimated need, will determine the number of facilitators. The team will manage conflict on behalf of the Board of Trustees as outlined in this policy. The team will report to the Board of Trustees as needed or requested by the Board.

Those in need of services may speak confidentially with CMT members directly. The Board of Trustees may refer matters or Safe Congregation Task Force as may be appropriate.

POLICY

The UUCGT Conflict Management Team will assist the congregation in conflict management. The CMT's role is conflict management, not conflict resolution. Parties will assume personal responsibility for resolving conflicts, aided by CMT's support.

Guiding Principles

Conflict is viewed as a natural part of human interaction, and managing conflict is seen as an opportunity to express differences and reach deeper understanding. Confronting conflict and supporting parties as they work to resolve issues is a necessary process for congregational and individual growth and awareness.

Conflict management will be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect. The goal of conflict management is to promote deeper engagement of UUCGT members and friends. CMT will endeavor to promote engagement, encourage right relationships between parties, and support healing. CMT's primary purpose is to support the health and wellbeing of the entire congregation.

To be successful, CMT will avoid the position of "middle man," and avoid becoming entrapped in triangulation (see Definitions below). CMT will encourage parties to communicate directly with

each other and assume personal responsibility for resolving issues.

The function of the CMT is to recommend a process:

- Define and clarify the issues
- Facilitate communication
- Design a process that provides opportunities for reaching resolution or redemption. Once the process is designed, follow the procedure or adapt the procedure to best meet the needs of an individual situation
- Make appropriate recommendations to move the process along
- Maintain open communication throughout the process and respond to those involved in a timely manner
- Seek feedback on the process after an issue is resolved
- Continue in a supportive role, as appropriate, as parties heal

Definitions

Confidentiality is a deliberate attempt to maintain open communication while helping people feel safe about bringing their concerns to the CTM in order to 1) honor people's need for privacy, 2) facilitate the wellbeing of all involved, 3) resolve misunderstandings and conflicts without inflaming the issues, 4) avoid harmful misinformation and gossip, 5) prevent conflict escalation, 6) facilitate resolution and reconciliation in the healthiest manner possible.

Conflict is a serious and protracted disagreement between members of the congregation and/or staff which interferes with the members' ability and/or opportunity to engage with the mission of UUCGT, or which interferes with the ability or opportunity of members not involved with the conflict to do so.

Non-Violent Communication is a method of communicating based on compassion, which allows parties to express their needs and understand others' needs in a non-judgmental manner. Non-Violent Communication removes blame and criticism from exchanges, reduces defensive reactions, and encourages people to assume personal responsibility for their actions *and* their reactions to others.

In Non-Violent Communication, people 1) make a clear, neutral observation of someone's behavior, 2) identify an emotion they feel because of this behavior using non-judgmental language, 3) connect with the other person citing a universal human need and 4) make a specific request to change the behavior.

Secrecy is a deliberate attempt to conceal information in order to 1) advance motivations such as devious control or unwarranted power, 2) allow rumors to proliferate, 3) avoid dealing with information that should be addressed, 4) avoid having people take responsibility for their actions.

Triangulation moves responsibility from the people involved in the conflict onto others. It would

result if those involved in the conflict take no responsibility and expect the CMT to solve everything. It would occur if the CMT becomes the mouthpiece or provides the solutions for others. It would result if the CMT, instead of those involved, were held responsible for the outcomes.

PROCEDURE

I. Process for Initial Contact

The CMT will do the following:

- A. Link the person's name with the issue (assumption of personal responsibility).
 - 1. Assure person of confidentiality but not secrecy.
- B. Gain as full an understanding as possible of the issue.
 - 1. Ask supportive questions.
 - 2. If appropriate, use Non-Violent Communication to deepen the conversation.
 - 3. Continue until issue has been fully expressed.
- C. Confirm that the person has been heard (restate what was said).
 - 1. If appropriate, use Non-Violent Communication so the person feels heard.
 - 2. If the person just needed to be heard and feels the issue is resolved without further action, just jot a few notes to keep a record of the contact.
 - 3. If further action is needed, proceed to next steps.

II. Process for Responding to Individuals

This process is for responding to an individual who is experiencing conflict with another person or with a group. The CMT will do the following and strive to resolve the matter in Steps A1-3:

- A. Ask the party for suggestions for possible resolutions (refuse to be triangulated or to be responsible for creating a resolution).
 - 1. Suggest that the party take the first step by approaching the person/group with whom the conflict occurred to propose resolution or redemption.
 - 2. If the party feels too intimidated to do that, offer a member of CMT to accompany the party (not to speak for the party, just be present with).
 - 3. If the party is unwilling, the CMT may try to devise a different process of appropriate approach in which the party helps reach resolution.

4. If the party is still unwilling, the CMT must ask the party to cease pursuing the matter for the sake of the congregation's ministry.

B. If a party is unwilling to cease pursuit, the CMT may request Board action to resolve the issue in order to promote the health and wellbeing of the entire congregation's ministry.

C. If a party complies with steps A1 or 2 but the other party is unwilling to reconcile, the CMT must determine what steps to take to protect the ministry of the congregation.

1. There are no formulas for this.

2. Creativity, insight, and determination focus the CMT's actions.

3. Remember that the board has the authority to take necessary action on behalf of the congregation (the CMT has no designated authority).

D. If there has still been no resolution, the CMT must continue to explore process options until a result is achieved that supports the congregation's ministerial well-being.

III. Process for Responding to Issues

This process is for responding when a person brings the CMT a matter that turns out *not* to be a problem with a person or a group, but is a broader issue of general concern. The person may be speaking for him/herself or may be acting as a spokesperson for others. In either case, other people probably share the concern. The CMT will do the following:

A. Follow the Process for Initial Contact with the spokesperson.

B. Ask the spokesperson for suggestions for what might be done next.

C. Develop a process to provide opportunities to resolve the issue.

1. Identify key stakeholders and possibly an additional spokesperson.

2. Ask the stakeholders and spokespeople to identify main components of the issue.

3. Inform board and ask for board participation if policy issues are involved.

D. Schedule and facilitate meeting(s) with stakeholders and spokespeople.

1. Send participants agendas and necessary information in advance.

2. Ask participants to develop and explore potential solutions.

3. CMT may make appropriate recommendations to move the process to resolution.

E. Remember that the board must handle policy decisions.

Follow-Through Policy

The CMT guarantees that any issue or suggestion brought to it

- will be addressed,
- will be followed through in its processing,
- will result in finding a resolution, enacting an implementation, or reaching the limits of the CMT's responsibility.

Appeals Policy

If a person is still pursuing an unresolved issue, an appeal may be made:

- If the person believes the CMT has failed, address the Board of Trustees.
- If the Board has been unable to resolve the issue, the Board may, at its discretion, develop another plan to pursue or take other appropriate action.

Points to Remember

1. The purpose of conflict management is to facilitate resolution.

- It is designed to be a welcoming opportunity where people feel that their concerns are respectfully heard and issues thoughtfully addressed.
- The goal is to encourage congregants to work together (with CMT facilitation as needed) to reach resolution rather than to withdraw.

2. Conflict management can be very stressful.

- CMT members may have to weigh the value of friendships, inclusion, tolerance, or other values against the value of the wellbeing of the congregation's ministry.
- Members of the CMT will share with each other, support each other, and provide each other with encouragement.
- CMT members are not expected to carry burdens alone.
- CMT will respect confidentiality, but not engage in secrecy and not consent to secrecy when people bring issues to them. People need to understand that if they bring an issue to the CMT, members will rely on each other to support each other and develop a process.

3. The CMT's function is not to process its own conclusions.

- It is to develop processes that lead to resolution and redemption for those who seek help.
- The CMT must be careful not to let its own conclusions affect the design of the process.
- The CMT must maintain objectivity and fairness.

- The CMT *may* present information that leads to an obvious conclusion. In this case, it is the information that leads to the conclusion rather than the CMT.
- The CMT *may* make recommendations based on the CMT's unique knowledge obtained from all sources in order to move the process toward resolution.

4. Secrecy hurts. Confidentiality helps.

Developed by Lucky McKeen, John Hoffmann, Dan Orr, Heather Shumaker, Fleda Brown and Rev. Chip Roush; adapted from *Moving On from Church Folly Lane* by Rev. Robert T. Latham, pp. 259-265.

Adopted 03/01/2010

Revised 03/20/2017

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

The purpose of the Committee on Ministry is to support the spiritual health and wellbeing of the entire Congregation, as seen in member participation and accomplishment relative to the mission of the Congregation. Its primary responsibilities are to assess both the professional ministers' ministries and the Congregation's collective ministries in order to strengthen the quality of these ministries.

The Board in consultation with the Spiritual Leader shall appoint a Committee on Ministry. The committee shall be of at least three (3) members serving staggered terms of three years. New members of the Committee shall begin their terms on July 1, and terms shall rotate in a 2-2-1 pattern.

Members of the Committee on Ministry shall be members of the Congregation. The Committee on Ministry shall meet in Executive Session. The professional minister shall serve as an *ex officio* member of the Committee. Any member wishing to discuss a concern at a Committee on Ministry meeting shall contact the Committee to schedule that item on the agenda.

New members for the Committee on Ministry will be selected the Board with consideration of such factors as length of UUCGT membership, gender, participation, experience, interest, listening ability, impartiality, fair mindedness and good heart with a goal of providing balance to the composition of the existing Committee.

Committee on Ministry members may simultaneously serve on other Congregational committees but not simultaneously serve on the Board of Trustees. Member may not serve more than two consecutive terms on the Committee on Ministry and must maintain a minimum of two years before returning to the Committee.

Adopted 03/01/2010

Revised 03/20/2017

P. Personnel Files

Each member of staff will have a personnel file. The file will include but is not strictly limited to the following:

- * Evaluations both current and previous year only.
- * Actionable items discussed in Employee Retrospective.
- * Current Compensation Review.
- * Contract, letter of agreement or similar appropriate documents
- * Letters of recognition or discipline (typically retained for no more than one year).
- * Accident or Injury reports.
- * Current contact data.

Other materials are not likely appropriate for personnel files. The immediate supervisor for compliance will audit personnel Files at least biannually. Legal papers, for example an EEOC matter, may be retained longer.

Contents of personnel files are available to the employee (copies provided) and the person they report to. The Board of Trustees ultimately has access at such time as they see a specific business reason for examination of particular items, by majority vote. The President of the Board of Trustees and the Chair of Staff Resources committee have joint access to the Spiritual Leaders file when necessary.

Approved 03/20/2017

Motion to Rescind (tabled):

I move that the Board rescind its acceptance of the Healthy Reconciliation Task Force Report that was submitted to the Board at its January 16, 2017 meeting for the following reasons:

1. The report was improperly prepared because all five task force members were not involved in evaluating the listening session information or in crafting the task force report to the Board.
2. The report lacks depth and breadth, in terms of important evaluative information, such as,
 - a. what were the issues and concerns identified as causes of discomfort?
 - b. how many of the 56 respondents identified the same issue or concern? What were those issues/concerns?
 - c. what was the spectrum of emotions provoked, how many respondents identified the same emotion(s)?
 - d. how many respondents offered suggestions for resolution? what were those suggestions? how many offered the same suggestion?
3. On page 9 of the Policy Manual, the section on Board Committees Principles, reads in part, *“Board committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority by Board action or controlling documents of the congregation for specific and time-limited purposes.”*

The Board did not authorize the Healthy Reconciliation Task Force to make any decision, let alone take any action, regarding the information collected in the listening sessions. When the Board founded the Task Force at its April 19, 2016 meeting, the Task Force was authorized to ‘report its recommendations.’

When the Board approved the Task Force Action Plan submitted at the June 20, 2016, meeting, it authorized the TF to ‘present to the Board the collected results of the listening sessions along with recommendations regarding action.’

4. There exist two divergent versions of the HRTF report: the one identified “HEALTHY RECONCILIATIONS [sic] SUB COMMITTEE REPORT January 5, 2017” which was submitted to the Board at its January 16th meeting and another, identified “HEALTHY RECONSILIATIONS [sic] SUB COMMITTEE REPORT [Submitted to and approved by the UUCGT Board of Trustees, January 2017 Board Meeting].” This second report is mis-identified as it is (a) not the report submitted to the Board on January 16th, and (b) it was not approved at the January 2017 Board meeting.