Unity of Central Minnesota Board of Directors

# Meeting Minutes

# June 28, 2022

## Opening

The regular meeting of the Unity of Central Minnesota Board of Directors was called to order at 4:10 pm June 28, 2022 by President Carol Laudenbach. It was a hybrid meeting, both on Zoom and in person. After a prayer by Rev. Jim, the Board Pledge was read.

## Present

Present were Terri Duncan, Susan Holmen, Carol Laudenbach, Beverly Mallgrave, Mary Paulson, Cristina Seaborn, and Rev. Jim Ernstsen. Beverly announced that she was stepping down from the role of Board director, and she exited the meeting.

**Reports**

Secretary’s report

Minutes for 6/9/22 were sent ahead for review and were accepted as written.

Treasurer’s Report

Terri shared financial reports through April and May will be done this week. The reports do not show the current budget, with which to compare our monthly income and expenses, and Rev. Jim will speak to Ellen about adding that, as it will help us monitor and adjust as necessary. A motion was made and seconded to accept, review and discuss some changes and the financial report was accepted.

**Unfinished Business**

Financial Procedures

Rev. Jim notes that because of the different streams of donations (PayPal, Vanco, checks and cash) there are some mistakes in our revenue processing in ICON. This is being corrected and Rev. Jim is working on a system of cross checking and double checking to ensure our balances are accurate. This is the immediate need.

We also discussed the fiduciary responsibility shared by Rev. Jim, the Treasurer and the bookkeeper, and the need to clarify “who does what when?” A sub-committee could look at how it has been done and how to move forward and the question arose of “reconvening” the Finance Committee, which could meet quarterly to regularly review procedures, the budget and investments. Carol will talk to Dan Haskamp to see if he can assist. Others who have been on the Finance committee previously may also help. A charter for this renewed Finance Committee is needed and Susan, Mary and Carol will work in July on a draft charter.

Disruptive Behavior Policy

There are still some edits needed for this document and the new title is, “Maintaining a Safe Environment.” Susan, Mary and Cristina will work on this for the July meeting.

**Community Engagement**

We are pursuing the plan described at the last meeting, starting with reviewing the tabletop feedback from the Unity picnic. Two issues are identified—that people leaving, and our smaller numbers are creating angst for the entire community, and we need more input from the community. There has been feedback that suggests some feel we have become “too religious,” and spiritual needs are not being met. We also want to find out “how to excite members again.” We discussed the additional reasons for smaller attendance and the fact that it is a global issue since Covid. We also know we may get everyone back, and that things will never be just the same as they were before. Also, starting with a phone campaign does not preclude us discussing things in small groups (social groups or class offerings) as well.

A motion is made and seconded to organize a phone call project and follow it up with a Town Hall meeting. There is discussion about the idea to do a phone call campaign, and what its purpose is—a survey to get feedback or a way to connect with absent congregants. Personal outreach can help us better understand the concerns. Most agree that it is a conversation we haven’t had before, which is more important than ever. The phone calls are not the full answer; it is a beginning step in the plan that also includes a Town Hall, more social events, and a congregation-led service.

The discussion moved to what the purpose and focus of the Town Hall would be. There are a number of items that congregants have had questions about, which feel unfinished, and it is expected these will come up. We want people to have a chance to be heard and get some questions answered. We also want to incorporate a social event into the plan. The motion was amended to say, “We will start with phone calls followed by a Town Hall and a social event.” This motion is approved. Cristina and Susan agree to work on organizing the plan.

Rev. Jim is on vacation on July 24, and it is suggested that instead of getting coverage for his absence, we create a congregation-led service. It is suggested we get 3-5 congregants to give a “Why I love Unity” speech, and have Allen create the music. Susan and Cristina will work on setting this up.

**Prayer Chaplains**

Since Rev. Jim made the decision to disband the prayer chaplains until restructuring can take place, there are still unresolved feelings and questions among them. There is discussion about how to resolve this and help healing to occur and the process of restructuring to begin. It is agreed that Carol will ask Jane and Erin if they would be willing to facilitate a healing circle. After that, Rev. Jim will work on the restructuring plan.

**Minister Evaluation**

The survey for Rev. Jim’s evaluation is completed so it is agreed that the Board, without Rev. Jim, will convene on July 12 to review the survey results, share perspectives, and to plan the evaluation. Carol will also announce in the newsletter that congregants can share feedback through the board@unityofcm.org email address.

## Next Meeting

The next meeting is on **July 12,** to discuss the plan going forward, and to review the survey results of the Minister evaluation (without Rev. Jim). The next regular Board Meeting is on Tuesday, **July 26 at 4:30** at the office and on Zoom.

## Adjournment

Carol adjourned the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Susan Holmen

Approved by: Board