

**Winchester Unitarian Society
Standing Committee Minutes
August 9, 2017**

Attending: Sioux Brokaw, Betsy Bowles, Steve Butterfield, Rebecca Keller, Heather Janules, Ryan Levering, Alison Baron, Kathy Richardson, Cynthia Randall.

Not Attending: Steve Forcucci, Maury Wood.

Opening Words and chalice lighting – Thank you Betsy for meaningful words from the ladies of Cleveland in 1896.

- 1) Check-in re summer bliss and favorite committee assignments.
- 2) Review SC Covenant - any changes?
 - a) Sioux asked what “starts in the balcony” means? The group agreed that the idea is big picture or not getting caught up in the weeds. Agreed we should substitute something easier to understand. SC agreed to try on: “***Be both a governing and a spiritual group that maintains a broad vision.***” Comments from other committee members are welcome.
- 3) WUS Summer News:
 - a) Sanctuary ideas, re immigration sanctuary, to be discussed.
 - b) Heather says planning for the start of the new church year is ahead of where we have been in previous years. Sioux pointed out that SC meeting in August along with circulating calendars over the summer will hopefully spur on a quicker ramp up in the fall.
 - c) Alison reported that the phone died and the copier lease is up. She has arranged a lower cost, simpler copier that will help offset some cost of getting a new phone system. The fax machine is rarely used and is an additional expense. Alison plans to scan docs rather than fax, leading to savings. Steve B said kudos to Alison for handling all these projects with good common sense.
 - d) Chuck and building and grounds spent \$7,000 on the tower, where there was a surprise repair needed. (My understanding is that a sprinkler system was added to meet insurance requirements)
- 4) General Assembly – Betsy reported that there was a very lively feeling. She worked with Patti Cameron and presented on Long Haul and the service trip concept. Betsy will go again and thinks every UU should go. Heather added that there was a group session for ministers who were trying to deal with the contentious issues around race and white privilege. The first woman leader ever was elected, Susan Frederick Gray, who had interned at WUS. Alison said it was a much more diverse group, racially, than in the past – which was very positive and powerful.
- 5) *Consent Agenda:
 - a) Standing Committee Minutes from June 12, 2017, Kathy moved approval, Cindy seconded. Revised Minutes were unanimously approved.
- 6) Alison says the lift has been broken for a while. Repair quote is \$2800 to get it to where it was, which is easily broken. Now that we have the accessible bathroom, it is no longer as

urgent. Chuck recommends decommissioning the lift via padlock. It is roughly 17-18 years old.

- a) Kathy moved to decommission and padlock the lift and consider a replacement or a recommissioning at some later date. Betsy seconded the motion. Unanimous vote in favor.
- b) Kathy noted that we need to communicate this to the congregation in highlights or some other way.
- c) Susan suggested that we consider other solutions, given that the lift is past its useful life and repair is quite costly. Sioux suggests that we bring this up to building committee -accessibility in the longer term – as a topic for Building and Grounds to address. Heather noted that there are Faith-ify grants or other options for larger projects. Kathy also noted the possibility of a Woburn grant.

7) By-law modification: Kathy noted that there is a two-year trial for by-law committees to change number of members and see if it is an improvement for the committee. Several committees were exempted from this trial. Last year Employee Relations was added to the list of exemptions.

- a) Social Action and Outreach Committee would like to be removed from the exemption list so they can try a smaller, seven-person committee. Why was this committee exempted? Kathy reported that John Russell has said that it was at one time the “voice” of the congregation. But it no longer functions in this role.
- b) Kathy moved that we take to the next congregational meeting the by-law change to Article 5, Section 4.2 Temporary Modifications to Certain By-Law Committees, removing Social Action from the list of exempted committees. Rebecca seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.
- c) Steve double-checked that we would not call a special meeting solely for this purpose.

8) Monetary concerns: Sioux noted that given we had a second ask last year, SC needs to be aware of the following urgent projects that will affect the budget.

- a) Sound system, Heather says this is top priority. Buildings and Grounds, please keep on top of this. (At this meeting, Heather revealed that it isn't a monetary concern but needs to be completed)
- b) Team Redo: Sioux reported that the Michelson project wiring is done. Project has hit a bump in the road with discovery that the tiles are asbestos. Given that they can be covered – thinking wall to wall carpet, to give it a cozy warm feeling – this is not an immediate concern – Meeting again on 8/15. Looking at a fundraiser for the project, in addition to a \$10,000 gift that has been contributed to the project.
- c) Organ repairs – Music committee is looking at options. Over \$70,000 to \$100,000 to upgrade and modernize the organ. The console is falling apart. John Kramer says that we need to put it on the three to five-year plan.
- d) Fundraising -YAC service trip, Dine Around, Annual Pledge, Seed fund sabbaticals, Fund Endowment. Ryan added that there will likely be another short fall this year.

9) Membership discussion: Cindy said that based on last year's fundraising, there is a push to get more members.

- a) Membership committee, Vicki, Donna, Phil, Sophia (chair), Margot, Marilyn and Cindy (SC rep) are working hard. Goal is 10 new members this year. Plans include taking it to every committee, bring a friend Sundays, more PR and one on one campaign.

Committee is looking for guidelines on public relations and outreach. There is a current group from last year who was looking into website, marketing plan, guidelines and strategy for communication. Group included: Shawn Crowley, Steve Milt and Barbara Savage.

- b) Membership is requesting from SC lots of support and a marketing plan or task force.
- c) Sioux suggested convening an after-worship meeting or group. Phil could be a leader for this according to Cindy.
- d) Alison said the UUA has done lots of research and beta testing on what makes successful outreach for UU congregations. Program is called "Love Reaches Out". Betsy suggested that the Membership Committee link up with Alison to learn about the UUA resources.
- e) Kathy pointed out that Membership is in charge of "attracting" and reaching out.
- f) SC is very supportive of Memberships efforts. Carol Cashion worked on this in the past; perhaps she would be a good person to speak with the Membership.

10) Meeting of chair people: need to get chairs identified.

11) Religious Education Program: Status, should the program be modified? Ryan reported that RE has been experimenting with different structures that could save money and improve the experience for kids. This model may be tried again this year, with effort to improve it.

- a) Heather recommended checking out an article "The Death of Sunday School" by Kim Sweeney.

12) Other business: Rebecca K is asking for volunteers to join the immigration sanctuary church group. Marilyn is looking for an SC member to participate. Meeting here Friday 8/12 at 1:00. (Steve B. said that he is interested.)

13) Steve B said that we are solvent and there are some pledges outstanding. Expenses are stable. End of fiscal year looks ok. Get to Steve with any questions and he will tailor his reports to the interests of the group.

14) Annual pledge: Rebecca will lead, Cindy and Chris Ericson will help. Looking for more interested people.

15) SC update to Highlights. Alison wants to know if Executive Committee minutes should go on line, as well as SC minutes. Agreed to share the results of Exec Committee decisions at SC, as part of the consent agenda.

16) Transparency: Sioux asked that after each SC meeting, a member write an interesting, brief summary of part of SC to put in the Highlights. Keep the congregation interested and informed. Kathy will take on the first one for next week's Highlights.

17) Heather is talking to a potential intern. Heather is working as her mentor this year. Heather will raise the question if next program year, WUS might have resources for a half time intern?

18) Upcoming dates

- a) Saturday SC Retreat: Ryan will do a doodle poll.
- b) Next SC meeting: Wednesday, September 13th – Betsy’s Birthday!
- c) Second Wednesday’s going forward for SC meetings.

19)13.Gratitude: Mary McIntosh and Deb Walsh led family worship all summer and it’s been a hit! Betsy will reach out with thanks.

- a) Closing words - Heather
- b) Adjourn

* A consent agenda may be presented by the president at the beginning of a meeting. Items may be removed from the consent agenda on the request on any one member. Items not removed may be adopted by general consent without debate. Removed items may be taken up either immediately after the consent agenda or placed later on the agenda at the discretion of the assembly.

Addendum: SC meeting August 9, 2017

List of Liaisons - Standing Committee 2017-18

By-law Committees:

- Employee Relations – Kathy Richardson
- Growth and Learning – Susan McPhee (not expected but thank you!)
- Fellowship – Rebecca Keller
- Music – Maury Wood
- Membership – Cynthia Randall
- Nominating (SC Chair) – Sioux Brokaw
- Religious Education – Ryan Levering
- Social Action and Outreach - Betsy Bowles
- Youth Advisory -??? TBD

Annual Committees - liaison highly desirable:

- Personnel - Kathy Richardson
- Building and Grounds – Steve Forcucci
- Stewardship and Finance - Steve Butterfield