

MINUTES
North United Methodist Church
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Wednesday, February 25, 2015

Members

Todd Daniels-Howell, Chair	John Drake, Treasurer
Shannon Priddy, Vice Chair	Eric Galloway (MC/LL)
James Hamstra (SPRC)	Margaret Mayo (AL)
Nick Tumminello (Finance)	Sara Moore (AL)
Linda McClain (LL to AC)	Kathleen Custer, LL
Mark Grove, Secretary	

Ex Officio

Darren Cushman Wood

Absent

Bill Groth (AL)
Lee Tumminello (Trustees)

Guests

Troy Barker (Finance Committee)
Doshia Stewart (Finance Committee)

1. Pastor Darren opened the meeting with a prayer
2. The minutes of January 28, 2015 meeting were approved (Kathleen/Margaret).
3. Task Force on Strategic Direction (Doshia and Troy)
 - Doshia began the Finance Committee's presentation with an overview of North's current budgetary situation and highlighting findings of research done by the Finance Committee in 2014.
 - We have had several consecutive years of declines in attendance, though the numbers increased in 2014. This has not yet translated to an increase in giving.
 - North has about 1050 members/740 households/273 pledging "units."
 - Our income is dependent on pledges which also have declined, leading to several consecutive years of a budget deficit. 33% of our pledging units are households with members aged 70 and above.
 - The 2015 budget is below the 2014 baseline, even with budget cuts.
 - Looking ahead to 2016 we already have a structural deficit because we tapped the parsonage fund to balance the budget.
 - Other expenses will grow as we fill vacant positions.
 - How do we address this shortfall?
 - Three options: *Shrink, Stretch, or Grow*
 - In summarizing these three options, the Finance Committee chose growth as the most appropriate choice. It has a long-term focus on the importance of securing sustainable income which will require creating the motivating factors necessary to attract and engage a steady base for the next 10-20 years. We recognize there is a correlation between engagement and pledging and need to take steps to better engage current members while also attracting new ones. Once started, we need to develop ways to help **sustain** the engagement.

- The committee presented a model designed to create a solid framework for growth, noting this is a *strategy and vision*, and not itself an *action plan*.
 - The Strategy: requires developing a deep understanding of the opportunity and creating a blueprint which focuses on ministries and marketing.
 - Planning: Create plans and metrics for ministry, operations, marketing (to attract new members), and retention.
 - Action: Implement pilots and programs. Evaluate. Expand or adapt.
- **Proposal:** to accomplish these steps, the Finance Committee recommends convening a *Taskforce on Strategic Direction*. It will be relative short term in its work, but hands-on.
 - In addressing the issues identified above, the Task Force would generate a preliminary report that would assist the Stewardship Committee in the Fall 2015 Stewardship Campaign. At the same time we understand that the process to *complete* the strategy likely will take somewhat longer, though ideally having a final version in place in time for November's Charge Conference.
 - The Board unanimously adopted the recommendation for creation of a *Taskforce on Strategic Direction* as a priority project.
- **Process**
 - The Finance Committee had a number of suggestions as to the general composition of the Task Force:
 - Members of the group should represent North's membership and draw from across a spectrum of ages and backgrounds
 - It should be a diverse group that combines the following expertise:
 - Strategic thinkers
 - Operational skills
 - Financial expertise
 - Creative thinkers
 - Relationship builders
 - ...and some peacemakers and wise sages
- **Next Steps**
 - Board members were encouraged to submit names for potential Task Force members. The Finance Committee also has some names to recommend.
 - Darren and Kathleen will take names of candidates to Lay Leadership in early March where a draft list of members will be compiled. Darren will then confirm individual nominee's willingness to serve and the final membership of the *Task Force on Strategic Direction* will be approved by the Board through an e-mail vote.
 - While there will be Board representation as part of the Task Force, there was consensus that it would be useful that someone from the Board also chair the Task Force and keep the Board informed as to its progress.
 - Additional guidance on helping the Task Force with its work was developed by the Finance Committee and will be shared with the Task Force. It appears in the PowerPoint presentation provided by the committee.

4. Property Development update (Darren and Todd)
 - Darren, Ron Gifford, Ann Mackey, and Todd recently met with the developer and characterized it as a very good discussion.
 - In that meeting, participants decided not to pursue the possible 9% tax credit that has a March application deadline. A number of issues still swirling that didn't allow time to do the preparatory work necessary to meet the application deadline. It was also a matter of timing as it relates to greater involvement of the congregation.
 - The developer noted that not receiving this particular tax credit is not a hindrance with the possible development going forward and that there are other tax credit options that could be sought, as appropriate, later in the process. In the meantime meeting we didn't want to lose momentum.
 - Ron has a former colleague with experience in real estate development law who may provide North some help in issues regarding formalizing the relationship with the developer and in determining the most appropriate organizing/governing structure going forward. Naturally we want to watch out for our interests and minimize our risk.
 - We may also wish to clarify and possibly formalize any ongoing relationship/consultative role Midtown might have, perhaps with the succeeding governing organization that may be put in place.
 - Ron and Darren will provide an update at a *Forum for Understanding* on March 22nd. This continues our efforts to inform and involve the congregation in the process. Additional consultation regarding the programmatic components of the proposal will occur in the Fall.
 - *For details on possible elements and community partners see pp. 5-7 of [December 2014 Board minutes](#).*
5. Committee/Board/Senior Pastor Reports
 - Trustees (Todd for Lee)
 - The trustees are reviewing insurance options, including coverage for the building and coverage regarding rental vehicles, such as those used for ASP. Our current policy does not expire until October.
 - SPRC (James)
 - A staff appreciation Luncheon was held February 11th and had strong volunteer support.
 - The *Minster of Children and Family* search is underway. One seminary visit has been made so far.
 - SPRC is reviewing other staff appreciation program possibilities, such as recognizing birthdays.
 - The group was reminded that Eric is on his military leave until April.
 - Danyelle's last Sunday is scheduled for May 17th. A recognition event will be held after the second service.
 - SPRC recognizes the need to work on inter-committee communications.
 - Performance evaluations have been completed.

- James reported he had a good handover meeting with incoming SPRC chair Jim McDonald.
- The Board expressed its appreciation for James' service leading SPRC.
- Ministries Council (Eric)
 - No report
- Lay Leadership (Kathleen)
 - Lay Leadership recently reviewed Leadership kickoff activities with an eye toward future improvements.
 - Lay Leadership has set dates for some Special Sundays in the Fall.
- Finance (Nick)
 - A copy of the new financial statement was distributed to Board members prior to the meeting. Finance is looking at additional tweaks with a more complete summary.
 - Albie Marco is doing great work in his financial consultancy role to the church.
 - Income is a bit down through February; some of the steps that we had expected haven't been completed yet such as moving funds from the parsonage fund. In general, expenses held right where we expected them to be.
 - Take budgets back to committees, etc.
 - Copies of the regular updates provided to the congregation through *Covenant Conversations* are available by visiting [this site](#).
- Senior Pastor (Darren)
 - Lent is underway with the sermons started and a [study guide](#) available. The cover of the printed study guide is one of Doris Douglas's banners.

Executive Session as required

- See [January 2015 minutes](#), page 6, item 7
- *No session was held.*

Upcoming Meeting Dates

March 25 *cancelled*

April 22

- Communications report on targeted advertising

May 27

June 24

July 22

August 26

September 23

October 28

November 18 (3rd Wednesday)

December 16 (3rd Wednesday)

Future Topics

- Flower shop
- Updated photo membership directory
- Innovation Fund
- Emergency preparedness plan
 - Operational Review *Darren and staff*