

Minutes – Thursday, March 7, 2013

Live Oak Board of Trustees Meeting

David & Lisa Fry's apartment

Board Members Present: Kris Arrington, Kathryn Duke, Kate Hand, Darlene Pagano, Jay Roller

Guests Present: David Fry, Lisa Fry.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. Kate read quotes about building community and David virtually lit the chalice.

1. Approve/Modify Agenda and previous month's minutes: Jay requested an agenda addition of approving a new charity (Guardian Group) to be eligible to receive financial donations from Live Oak offertory collections. Kate requested an agenda addition of her idea to hire youths for post-postluck dishwashing and cleanup. Adding these two items to the agenda was moved, seconded, and approved unanimously. Minutes of February Board meeting were approved by earlier email responses from the board members.

2. Finances: David reported that we are 8 months into the fiscal year. Income from pledges is as expected, and expenses to date are lower than budgeted. New board members had questions about several line items in the budget (what they represented, e.g.). David and Darlene answered their questions and encouraged them to feel free to continue to ask questions

3. Pastoral Support Proposal: Kris Arrington reported that she had communicated with Rev. Ben Meyers regarding Live Oak's Pastoral Care policy. His only suggested change was to add his contact information, which has now been incorporated. There is now a final version of the policy, which will be made available to people in the Live Oak community.

4. PCD Growth Committee Grant Offer & Contingencies: The Growth Committee has offered us the \$5,000 we requested from the New/Emerging/Satellite Congregations Fund, but with two contingencies. Peter Hand, no longer on the Board, was asked by the current Board to contact the Growth Committee to discuss these grant proposal contingencies. He spoke with Rev. Roger Jones (UU Society of Sacramento) who is Live Oak's liaison from the Growth Committee. He suggested Peter speak with PCD's Director of Congregational Services, Rev. Jeanelyse Doran Adams. It is not known when the Board will have sufficient information from PCD to decide how to respond to the two contingencies as currently written in the grant award notice.

In connection with the discussion about timing and other specifics of Live Oak's plans for growth. Lisa Fry reported on a visit she made to the UUs of Petaluma, accompanied by David Fry, Darlene Pagano, and Richard Stromer. This is the second-youngest Northern California fellowship (with Live Oak being the youngest); they spun off from the Marin congregation 11 years ago. Like Live Oak, this congregation started out lay-led, but they held services every Sunday. They had a "Regular Guest Minister" one Sunday a month for several years. Then they moved to a program called "Weekend Ministry" (40 hours per month) that included a minister who preached 1 or 2 Sundays and also worked directly with their board of directors. (Rev. Ben Meyers was their weekend minister.) This program lasted for one year. The congregation then went through a discernment process and determined they wanted to hire a part-time minister. When they reached 50 members, they hired Rev. Mary Foran for a quarter-time position. Later her position was expanded to half-time. They now have 80 members, and use space rented from the Petaluma Women's Club.

5. New Charity: Jay Roller had asked that we add Guardian Group to the list of nonprofit organizations chosen to receive donations through Live Oak. The Board Moved, seconded, and approved unanimously to do this. Guardian Group, based in the San Francisco UU congregation, assists persecuted and endangered LGBT individuals coming from Africa and the Middle East. This group will be the recipient of offertory donations at the March 17 worship service.

6. Planning for the March 31 Congregational Meeting: The focus of this meeting will be the manner and time frame of Live Oak moving to every Sunday afternoon programming, as the congregation decided earlier to be a priority goal for the future. There was discussion about the time and financial costs of moving to three worship services per month. Questions to be worked out concern the increased costs and responsibilities for planning the worship, setting up and taking down items in the sanctuary, rental payments to CEC, choir member involvement, expanding time and costs of choir director and accompanist, expanding planning and staffing of classes or other activities for children, whether to have a post-service potluck after every service, and which Sunday of the month (2nd or 4th) would be one for this additional worship service. On the last question, the board and guests were divided between favoring the 4th Sunday (because we will more often have use of the Parish Hall on that one) and feeling that either one is a good choice, depending on our feelings about the suitability of the Guild Room for potlucks and socializing. David pointed out we should estimate how much more income we will need (presumably from pledges) to expand into more Sundays.

7. Board Member Learning/ Retreats. Darlene asked board members to think about individuals they know who could give us some advice on strategies and written resources to help us become even better individual board members, and function even better as a group. Everyone agreed to think about this, and to do so in the context of this particular board being “second generation,” which is to say it is the first since Live Oak’s creation to include none of the founding board members.

8. Reports from Committees of the Board.

a. Every Sunday Programming. Discussed above.

b. Social Justice/Alameda Point Collaborative. Darlene reported a conversation she had with Nanci Armstrong-Temple, who had previously planned to address the Board in person. Nanci wants Live Oak to be more specific about our commitment to APC, both as a whole congregation and as individuals. Questions raised by Nanci and others include “What does it mean for our congregation to have APC as a community partner? What about APC doing a volunteer training for Live Oak? How can Live Oak balance its commitment to APC with earlier commitments to supporting the annual Harvey Milk Day celebration in Alameda, and Live Oak’s presence in Alameda’s July 4 parade?”

c. Welcoming Congregation recognition by UUA. Lisa Fry, Richard Stromer, and Bernadette Alexander co-chair Live Oak’s process of joining with the Berkeley Fellowship of UUs in moving through the UUA’s program for congregations wishing to be officially recognized as a Welcoming Congregation of LGBTQQ people. It is hoped that both BFUU and Live Oak will soon gain this recognition. In addition to Lisa, Richard, and Bernadette, several other Live Oak members are attending Welcoming Congregation classes at BFUU. Lisa reported that Bernadette has agreed to coordinate Live Oak’s participation again in Alameda’s Harvey Milk Day celebration.

9. Improving the Potluck Experience. Kate proposed that we hire two youth to do the post-potluck dishwashing and general clean up of the kitchen, social hall, and Live Oak kitchenware. After general discussion about appropriate compensation for the hired youths and the need for adult supervision of cleanup activities, the Board decided to aim for having one hired youth and one Live Oak adult volunteer engaged in post-potluck cleanup.

Closing: Kate read our closing reading and the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

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Internal Feedback re Meeting: Feeling good, energized; already good interaction among board members.

Financial snapshot: Live Oak currently has a Net Income of \$6,547 and Total Equity of \$39,219.

New Action Items-

- Re Item #5, **New Charity:** Jay will investigate whether Guardian Group has the SFUU church as its fiscal agent or is a separate 501c3.
- Re Item #6, **Planning for Congregational Meeting**
It was agreed that the Board will follow up by email on many of these questions.
 - Darlene will contact Richard Stromer about 2nd vs. 4th Sunday to see if he has a strong preference based on logistics and contacts made with guest ministers or speakers.
 - Everyone who attends the March 17 service will take a look at the Guild Room to better form an opinion on its suitability for Live Oak potlucks.
 - Lisa will send the Board information from an earlier survey of the congregation, showing who volunteered for which specific activities as part of their participation in the fellowship (e.g., greeting, setup, helping with specific adult or intergenerational worship or learning activities, social justice).
- Re Item #7, **Board Member Learning/ Retreats:**
 - An ad hoc sub-committee of Kate, Jay and Kris will look at the voluminous materials posted on the UUA website about board member development. They will report at the next meeting their recommendations about which materials seem most useful to our situation.
 - Lisa and Darlene will contact some people who might talk with us about board member development and effectiveness.
- Re Item #8b, **Social Justice/Alameda Point Collaborative:** As one small step toward raising congregational awareness of APC, Kathryn will get brochures for APC and for its social enterprise unit Ploughshares Nursery, so they can be made available at Live Oak worship and fellowship activities.
- Re Item #9, **Improving the Potluck Experience.** Kate will speak with Michelle and Avery about their interest and availability for this as an expansion of their paid assistance with the children's programming.

Continuing Action Items –

- David & Jay will investigate moving money to Mechanics Bank
- Finance committee will send thank you's for upcoming FY pledges
- Darlene will find some alternative dates for the New UU class; Lisa will confirm if space is available at CEC (or THOT)
- Peter will amend the excel file to include cyclical item calendar. Lisa will create a doc with that info.