

UCOT Board Meeting Minutes

September 17, 2022, at 1:00 pm via Zoom

- I. **Attendance** – present were Bob Aubrecht, Chuck Fawns, Emily Gillispie, Joe Mazza, Mimi Owensby, Sara Sautter, Be Scott, and Dennis Scott.
- II. **Opening Words** – Dennis read a quote by Joan Daugherty entitled “Enthusiasm for Life”.
- III. **Minutes of the August Meeting** – Approved as written.
- IV. **Treasurer’s Report** – Approved as written.
- V. **Continuing Items**

a) 2022 Service and Circles Schedule

- Jeanne has agreed to provide the message for the services on 11/20 and 12/24, and to lead the circle on 12/25. She agreed to do the service and Martha agreed to provide the music on 12/24 on a volunteer basis. Emily mentioned that she and Joe won’t be present for the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services, so someone else will need to learn the sound system. Dennis volunteered to do that, after first checking his availability for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Joe will check with the Masons to see if the Lodge is available on 12/24 at 7:00 pm and on 12/25. He also mentioned that a stand-alone hand-held microphone could be used instead of the full-blown sound system as a backup plan, since it may be a small group on Christmas Eve.
- On 11/20 at the Fall Harvest Day service, there will be a new-member in-gathering ceremony. Bob did not feel that he would be able to lead the ceremony because of his upcoming surgery. Be volunteered to take that on.
- Joe volunteered to update and send out the schedule to all Board members. Going forward this will be the responsibility of the Board President to maintain.

b) Return to in-person services – It was decided that the requirement to provide the lay leader with all announcements in advance would be lifted. We will return to people individually giving announcements. Virtual attendees will still need to provide announcements to Rachel or the lay leader, since the livestream is not interactive. It was also decided that we would sing Spirit of Life during the service from our seats (this may require a change to the order of service). The lay leader for the 9/18 service, Mya Coursey, will announce that singing of Spirit of Life is allowed and encouraged. She will also ask the attendees for a show of hands vote on a return to signing hymns and to coffee / tea / snacks after the service. Joe contacted Mya regarding these items. The Board will discuss re-establishing the singing of hymns and coffee hour at the October meeting based on this feedback.

c) Return to in-person circles – Emily reported that she’d enjoyed attending the last circle and that there were 18 participants present. Be reported that two couples from the circle also attended a service for the first time. She said that the circles were currently meeting outside in the courtyard but would begin meeting inside the building when the weather was bad. The Board thanked Be and Dennis for their service in managing and keeping the circles going throughout the pandemic to the present time.

d) 2023 Preliminary Budget – Joe reported that the pledge packets had gone out with the pay increases for the employees figured in. Mimi reported that the Charitable Giving committee had decided to reduce donations to charitable community organizations from \$4,000 to \$3,000 for 2023. Joe recommended, and the Board agreed, that we would decide on whether we wanted opening and closing to be done by member volunteers or to continue to be done by Rachel after we get a better idea of the pledges coming in for next year.

e) Search committee for the next Board president – A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved that the Board would accept the recommendation of Mya and the Search Committee for Emily to be our next President, subject to membership approval at the next annual meeting.

f) Dinners for Six update – Nancy had sent an email in which she suggested that she will ask for additional participants to begin in January. The Board agreed with this.

VI. New Items

- a) 2023 Pledge Drive** – Joe reported that he had mailed all the pledge packets for those that weren't hand-delivered on 9/5. To date he has received eight replies: four who are increasing their pledge, two who are staying the same, and two whose responses are unclear and need follow-up. It was decided that announcements about the pledge drive should be made at each service until 10/15. The Board expressed appreciation to Joe for his efforts as Treasurer.
- b) Fifth Sunday Program for October 16, 2022** – Bob reported that Gael did a great job of recruiting our two speakers. There will be an article in the monthly newsletter. Gael will get more information from each of the speakers before we do a write-up for the Taos News – publicity for our Fifth Sunday events is very important.
- c) Contract with the Masons – location, parking lot, grounds and building upkeep** – Bob has the paper copy of the contract with the Masons, which is in effect from 1/1/2020 to 12/31/2024. He said that there is nothing in the contract about repairs, although there is a mention of “Terms of building use – a copy will be given to the UCOT custodian.” Bob does not have this document, nor do any members of the current Board. Joe and Chuck will talk to Dave regarding snow removal, to begin with. There are additional problems with parking lot mud (lack of drainage), and the fact that the gravel hasn't been replaced for a long time and waist-high weeds are growing up through it. The inner courtyard has completely been taken over by very tall weeds, and the flower beds have not been tended for a long time. Joe reported that Jed Noble had said that the plumbing issues were fixed; however, some of our circle attendees, even while sitting outside, smelled a gas leak coming from the stove. We would like to ask the Masons if the pilot light on the stove could be turned off.
- d) Paperwork transfer** – Bob's surgery will take place during the last week in October, and he will need rehab for 6-8 weeks after that. Mimi as VP will take over, with the help of all the Board members, until a new President is voted in at the annual meeting. Bob will let Emily know when she should come get the church documents (digital and paper).
- e) Annual Meeting – January 22, 2023** – A motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously that the annual meeting will be moved to 1/22/2023. The agenda will be emailed to all members in advance of the meeting. During the meeting, the agenda will be projected on a screen to reduce the amount of paper copies needed. Additional topics for the meeting agenda will be solicited during services and circles, and in the newsletter and weekly emails. A

final agenda will be decided upon by 12/27. Joe will send last year's annual meeting agenda to the Board.

- f) **Meeting to discuss future church direction** – Chuck reported that the meeting was put on hold until a future Board President could be included in the meeting. Chuck will set up this meeting sometime after Marsha's surgery. Joe suggested that Gael be included in the meeting, and Emily agreed with that.
- g) **Munro's proposal to give a sermon on community 10/2 and UU history / principles on 10/30 as a prelude to the new member ingathering service** – It was decided that Munro would do a service on 10/2 regarding community and will give a background on UU principles and history on 10/30 in preparation for the new member in-gathering on 11/20. Joe will be the lay leader on 10/30. The Board agreed that this will be beneficial. Be will let Gary and Munro know.

VII. Committee Reports

- a) **Charitable Giving** – Mimi reported that in addition to the agreed-upon budget reduction for 2023 (see above), that members are still giving reports on the various charities. These reports cover the size of their budgets and their possible usage of UCOT donations. Emily mentioned that when she became the future President of the Board, she would no longer be able to continue being on the CG Committee, nor to be its secretary.
- b) **Music** – Mimi reported that Julie Hawley will be performing on 11/20 with a second harpist.
- c) **Membership** – Sara Sautter will write a list of membership duties that she feels she can do or contribute to. The Membership Coordinator job description will be written once this is received from Sara. Emily had previously come up with: making contact with and welcoming guests at services and circles, maintaining the member / friends directory (currently Be), maintaining the email/birthday list (currently Rachel), creating name tags (currently Rachel), and conducting new member in-gathering events (currently the Board).
- d) **Caring Team** – no updates currently.

VIII. **Closing Words** – Dennis read from Attitudes of Gratitude by M.J. Ryan, "Practice Wonderment."

IX. **Next Meeting** – October 15, 2022, at 1:00 pm via Zoom.