

UCOT Board Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2023, at 1:00 pm via Zoom

Meeting id is 979 0569 7987

I. Attendance – Present were Chuck Fawns, Emily Gillispie, Joe Mazza, Mimi Owensby, Annette Rubin, and Be Scott.

II. Opening Words – Chuck read opening words by Thich Nhat Hanh.

III. Minutes of the February Meeting – A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously passed to approve the February minutes.

IV. Treasurer's Report – Joe added a line item for snow removal. We should have a positive net operating number of \$1536. There were no surprise expenses. There are 4 new members who haven't pledged yet. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved to accept the Treasurer's Report.

V. Items for Discussion

a. 2023 Services and Circles Schedule

i. Munro will do a Yom HaShoah sermon on April 16.

ii. The circle topics and facilitators have been entered as sent by Be.

iii. There will be a field trip on August 5 to Aldo Leopold's cabin, Mi Casita, in Tres Piedras as a follow up to the July 30 5th Sunday presentation by Richard Rubin.

b. Services

i. Rachel will be away the first and third weekends of April, plus April 11 – 21. Be and Emily will cover while she's gone and have already had some training. Emily will be away the first weekend in April. There won't be live streaming at either service. David will do a video recording of the sermons only and Rachel will upload them to the website. Emily will email Gary and Munro to email her with the sermon transcripts.

c. Circles

i. Emily will be Be's backup if/when she's needed for letting people in.

d. Events

i. UU 101 was a huge success. Seven new, or relatively new, people attended as well as four longtime members. Kudos to Sara. Over 25 attended Gary's Zoom on March 12. Be will call Thomas French to thank him for offering to host the July 4 picnic. The Rubins had already volunteered to host that event.

- e. Caring Community – Linda Aubrecht and Marianne Furedi both want to step down as leaders. Emily has all their paperwork. Joanne Stringer has agreed to take over as leader, but she might want a co-leader. Linda is organizing dinners for the Fawns. Emily will fill in as leader until Joanne returns in May. Be and Bette will act as eyes and ears for members' Caring Community needs. Emily will reach out to Jim Schultz, who is having surgery on March 31, to see what he needs.
- f. Emily and Joe will be on vacation from August 20-30 inclusive. Be will pick up the mail while they are away.
- g. Website Updates – Emily has been looking at the website, which needs updating. She has started and would like some help. She has asked Be and Chuck to look at the website after reading the UUA guidance on websites and come back with ideas.
- h. Treasurer – A new Treasurer needs to be elected at the 2024 Annual Meeting. It would be good to find someone a few months in advance so Joe can train them. Joe will write a job description so potential volunteers will know what is involved. Emily will make an announcement at services that a new Treasurer is needed.
- i. Lee Stringer Article - Chuck talked about how the Huntsville UU Church bought property and Lee Stringer led the plans to build a building. There was some discussion of how nice it would be to have a building of our own but also the potential risks.
- j. Mimi reported on the Interfaith Community gathering. They decided to ask members to contribute funds to support their programs, like The Longest Night and Earth Day. They are asking for \$100 each. The Board supports our participation. The Charitable Giving Committee can decide if they want to give \$100 or \$200 from their budget. The Interfaith group is very involved in community activities, like the Presbyterian Church opening up during the coldest winter nights to shelter the homeless. Should we have another UCOT person attending those meetings with Mimi? Emily will be her backup or find someone else if Mimi cannot attend.

VI. Committee Reports

- a. Charitable Giving – Mimi will send Joe a schedule so he will know when to send checks to the non-profits we are supporting. Mimi will ask the Men's Shelter Director if it would be helpful for UCOT to prepare sack lunches for the men.
- b. Music – The committee met but nothing new was decided. The hope is that the singing group will resume coming early to services to practice with Martha to lead the congregation in singing.

c. Membership –

Current Members: Jo Gall, Annette Rubin, and Sara Sautter

Stats: Visitors this month: not tracked

New Members: 3 Removed: 1

Total Members: 58

The Membership Team met on March 17 to review and discuss the membership process. Annette and Sara were in attendance. Jo had no internet and could not participate.

1. Definitions were clarified: A **Member** is a person who has signed the Membership Book. A **Friend** is a person who attends or participates at UCOT but has not signed the book. Question: Are these definitions reflected in the by-laws? These definitions are in the by-laws with more detail. Joe has sent the by-laws to Sara.
2. When is a person removed from the membership roll? If they move, are deceased, or have not participated in over a year. A member who has not participated in over a year will be contacted by a Membership Team member before removal.
3. When is a person removed from the directory? Be has been removing members from the directory when they are deceased or have moved away. Be will send Annette and Sara the current list. Sara and Be will resolve discrepancies between their numbers and names.
4. We reviewed the membership process (see it here) for holes and to determine how the Membership Team knows about visitors in order to welcome them.
 1. Continue to encourage visitors to sign in through updated scripts for both worship services and sharing circles.
 - i. Ask Be to follow up with sharing circle script.
 - ii. Is Joe the head of the Worship Leaders? He is. If so, ask him to amend the script if needed. Joe said it is in the script.
 2. Make sure that someone (circle leader? Rachel?) sends a photo of the visitor sign-in to Membership Team leader (Sara) for follow-up. Emily will ask Rachel to send the photo to Sara as all requests for email sign-up should go through her. Be will also send Sara sign-ups from the circles.

5. We reviewed the process of signing the Membership Book. How does the Membership Team know if there is a new person who has signed the book? The Sharing Circle Leader or Be sends the Membership Team leader a notice that a new person has signed. The Board Member who facilitates the new member signing at a worship service sends a notice to the Membership Team leader. Then Sara's welcoming email to the new member should include Joe's email address so they can contact him to make a pledge. Sara and Sally have said at a previous meeting that they are updating the membership brochure. It should include volunteer opportunities and the pledging procedure as well as the vision, mission, and covenant statements, the bylaws, and the definition of a member. A membership envelope should be kept in the back of the membership book so it's available immediately when a new member signs. Be will talk to Sara about this. Chuck would like the Membership Committee to take over the UU World subscriptions.

Old Business for Membership Committee

1. Contact those who have not returned since Covid. Not all board members have reviewed the list. We encourage those who have not to do so. Is there a list?
2. Do we know if the Men's Shelter welcomes a sack lunch donation? Mimi will check with the Men's Shelter Director.

d. Fifth Sundays Report from Gael as read by Emily - The topic on April 30 will be Taos Housing Issues. Mayor Pascual Maestas and County Commissioner Darlene Vigil (District 3) will be the speakers. On July 30 Richard Rubin will speak on Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic and it will be followed by a field trip to the Leopold cabin in August. Bob is working on Taos News publicity for this. The topic for October 29 will be Querencia, and Gael has an idea for speakers.

VII. Closing Words

Be read closing words about covenant and harmony in the congregation by Rev. Gretchen Hayley.

VIII. Next Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm. The next meeting will be on April 15 at 1:00 pm via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted by

Annette Rubin, Secretary