

**NATURE COAST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS, INC.**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

MINUTES  
Aug. 9, 2021

**Attendees:**

**In Person:** Bree Hill

**Zoom:** Shirley Leonard, Connie Hart, Amy Haiken, John Ivens, John Comer, Lowell Smith,  
Don Wright, Margo Wilson

**Visitors Via Zoom:** Jean McCauley, Gordon Hart

**I. NCUU Covenant.** John read the covenant. All agreed to abide by it.

**II. Approval of the Minutes of July 12, 2021**

Shirley moved and Connie seconded that the minutes be approved. The minutes were approved.

**IV. Treasurer's Report.** Jean said the power bill was up a little last month and said it might be because the air conditioning needed repairs. Jean said Rob DeRemer had suggested that repairmen using power tools may have contributed to the spike in the bill. The workers had turned the air conditioning down some.

We've completed our first quarter and had budgeted \$8,000 for pledges. But we actually have \$10,000 in pledges. We also received some donations. Jean said in July, we sent \$125 from Share the Plate to the Lifestory group. In August, Share the Plate will be for Equality Florida.

Jean reported she had visited Shawn Houle at the Beverly Hills branch of Brannen Bank to get some information about CD rates. Brannen Bank will match the Suncoast Credit Union rate for 18- and 24-month CDs. The six- and 12-month rates had matched. The board will need a letter, signed by John and Margo, including the date when the board met, what it approved, and the name of the people who have access to the CDs. The paperwork will have to be shared with the signers. Mr. Houle said everyone could sign at once, but Jean explained that those who need to sign live in different parts of the county. John asked if the CDs will come as pieces of paper. Jean said she didn't ask that question.

Shirley said the Finance Committee had recommended the following and she moved that the board approve transferring from the savings into four CDs: \$25,000 for six months at .3%, \$25,000 for 12 months at .4%, \$25,000 for 18 months at .45%, and \$25,000 for 24 months at .55%. Connie seconded the motion. The motion passed. John directed Margo to write a letter to the bank about the CDs that he and she will sign.

- V. **President's Report.** John said he was going to combine the president's report and the Building Committee report. John said the contractor has ordered the hardware for the door.

As far as the date for opening the church, John said the Delta variant of COVID is causing people to be cautious about upcoming plans. Connie said that with heavy heart, she would recommend the church wait to reopen. Gordon said the day previously, Florida registered more than 23,000 new cases and 5,200 were in Marion County. Amy said Citrus County is in the top 10 counties in Florida with the most cases. Don said the Citrus County Chronicle had a front-page article saying Citrus County is a problem area. He said he agreed with Amy that we should wait. John Ivens said his son has hemophilia and as a result of transfusions, his son contracted HIV. He said it makes for a heavy heart to think of going through that kind of situation. He said if the church reopens, we might have to ask people if they've had a vaccination, and it might be awkward. He recommended waiting.

Lowell suggested possibly waiting until October to open. John suggested the first of the year. John said he's tried to keep up with what UUA is recommending and said they want congregations to tread lightly. John also asked if we might consider reopening Nov. 1. Gordon said Pfizer is not far from receiving full FDA approval and also is likely to release booster shots soon to help fight breakthrough cases. If Pfizer goes ahead, perhaps we might open around Thanksgiving.

Jean said the governor has ordered that groups not be able to issue mask mandates. Amy said there are new variants. Margo suggested telling the congregation something like, "We will re-evaluate at the end of September," because it is too hard now to predict what date would be safe for reopening. She also said that churches that have opened have taken such precautions as requiring tickets for seating, spacing people out, and requiring masks. She said she knows what the governor says about mask mandates, but we are UU, so maybe we could bend the rules a little.

Don said according to a scientific journal he read, the Lambda variant could infect those who are vaccinated. Bree said we should say we are watching the data and we will change positively if we see positive data. She said as far as the door, we were rushing to get everything done before we reopened, and now it appears we could have ordered the other door. She said it's a "sign from wherever." She urged caution in reopening.

Lowell said he felt, public-relations-wise, it would be preferable to pick a reopening date. John proposed wording that says, "It is with heavy hearts that the tentative opening in August has been postponed due to the Delta variant. The board of directors cautiously is watching the data. Unfortunately, at this point in time, we cannot give a definitive date, but we continuously watch the data for signs of improvement. Once we have seen a plateau of cases, or cases even going down, the board will then decide on a tentative opening date." John said the situation is unfortunate, but the variants are preventing us from setting a definite date. Connie said the wording sounded good but maybe we could add something positive, such as, "We are continuing to improve our Zoom services."

She pointed out that at the previous service, music was added. She said the situation is really sad because she was looking forward to reopening. However, as the weather cools, maybe small groups could meet outside.

Margo said if we said something to the effect that we will re-evaluate at the end of September, or every month, or something along these lines, it would give the congregation hope that we are re-evaluating in a timely manner and get around the issue of stating an actual date. Bree said one advantage we have over other churches is that our chairs move around. Thus, the letter to the congregation about reopening might state what we plan to do. For example, it might state that we plan to open at 50% capacity, and/or that we're going to have reservations. Then, people would know we are considering such things. Amy suggested holding an outdoor barbecue at her house.

Connie said she agreed with Bree. We could give people some light at the end of the tunnel. We could say we're planning to have hybrid services, so people can stay at home to feel safe. We're planning to social distance and have the chairs in a safe area. Connie said if a little group was formed to brainstorm how to keep people safe when we reopen, she'd be willing to be a part of it. John said anyone who's interested in participating in this group should get in touch with Connie.

Margo said if the board is choosing to not reopen on Aug. 15, it probably would be a good idea to take a vote. Don moved and Margo seconded that we not reopen on Aug. 15. The motion passed.

John asked what people think about bringing UUA's 8<sup>th</sup> Principle into our church. Would the congregation need to vote on it? Would the board need to vote on it? Would the Bylaws Committee need to get involved?

(The 8<sup>th</sup> Principle is: "We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions." Lowell and Shirley said it seems our 7 Principles already address what the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle states.

Amy said she'd like to receive an announcement for the next newsletter and for the website about when the church will reopen – and the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle. Bree said at UUA discussions, the Black Caucus and Black Lives Matter supporters feel the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle is needed to help UUA accept Black members more fully. Don said if the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle communicates that we support the Black Lives Matter movement, we should approve it, even if there is some repetition with the other principles.

John Ivens said if we adopt the language but don't recruit more people of color, it's hypocrisy. Lowell said history shows that unless we get specific with language, action doesn't necessarily follow. He said there really should be just one principle: Love one

another. But that's not enough. Margo said that in looking at the words of the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle, they appear to be a call to action and to push further the principles that say we support diversity. Jean said if we're adding another principle, it needs to be voted on by the congregation. Margo said she agreed. Bree said we need to have the discussion in the sanctuary when we're open. Bree said there is the possibility that some people don't believe what the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle states. She said it might be good for people to know that if they can't support our principles, then perhaps they don't belong in UU. Bree suggested that one of our services be devoted to discussion of the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle. Jean said it may be that UUA decides to add this as a principle, in which case, the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle becomes a principle. Bree said yes, the UUA might take a vote on this.

John asked Margo to add on future board meeting agendas under "Old Business" the discussion of the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle and leave it there until we can start meeting in person again.

John said that because his report took up the bulk of the meeting time for the board, and if the committees hadn't submitted a report, he would skip over them. He noted that Holly, who chairs the Membership Committee, had mentioned that she filled out a list of NCUU members for UUA so members can continue to receive "UUA World."

Bree said she'd moved a bush that had been in the way of egress from the new door. Connie asked if we had heard from the people who were going to give an estimate about using solar power at the church. John said he hasn't heard back. Connie also asked if anyone knows why the door contractor now seems to be having trouble finding the hardware for the door.

Connie said that as far as the Membership Committee, a couple people have joined the congregation as friends. She said as far as Building Committee concerns, she would recommend that when someone is at the building, that they run the fans to help air out the building. Amy asked if the building still smells bad. Bree said in the office, if the air conditioning is running in that area, the smell is OK. She walked into the sanctuary and reported that the smell is not the worst it's ever been. John asked if the air conditioning might be set down some, so that if it had been set at 78, for example, it might be set at 75. Bree walked into the sanctuary again. She said the temperature in the sanctuary was 81 and the setpoint was 78. She said the further you walk into the sanctuary, the worse the smell becomes. She said she hopes the air conditioner is working. Amy asked if something like Dampex would help the smell. Connie suggested using Damp-Rid and charcoal. Even baking soda might help, she said. Connie agreed to take some charcoal and Damp-Rid to the church and Bree said she'd set the air conditioning to 75.

John said the Welcome Back Party and piano tuning can continue as Unfinished Business on future board meeting agendas. He said the Share the Plate recipient for August previously had been announced (Equality Florida).

The final matter on the agenda was the issue of posting Sunday service announcements

on Facebook. John said that's not a problem, although he's been a little slow in doing it sometimes. Jean said when she or Linda post a comment about an upcoming service, it disappears. She asked if John would make it possible so they could post about future services on the NCUU Facebook page. Connie said she needs to add more editors to the page. Right now, she, John, Amy, and Mike can post on the page.

Connie said the page is attached to her Facebook page, and she'd like a separate account for NCUU. Connie asked Margo how to do this. Margo suggested setting up a new Gmail account with NCUU in the title. Because Gmail and Facebook are linked, whoever posted from the new account would be able to set up a new Facebook page and do whatever the person wanted to do. Connie asked if she could transfer over the NCUU Facebook page to the new page. Margo said she didn't know. She's not a Facebook expert. She suggested maybe Amy would know what to do. John said he has a friend who might be able to help. Amy said she didn't know how to transfer the page, either, but said she thought it couldn't be done. John said he'd check with his friend.

Jean asked if, in the meantime, Connie would make her and Linda editors. Everyone agreed that would be OK. Connie said she'd make Jean an editor. Connie asked if the board should designate a Share the Plate charity for September. Amy moved and Don seconded that the Share the Plate money for September go to the Citrus County African American Club's Scholarship Fund. The motion passed.

Connie asked John if he'd write up the words for the e-blast about the church not re-opening. He said he would. He asked if anyone would like to brainstorm how to word the message. Connie suggested maybe Margo could help. Margo said she would help.

John said Matthew might welcome it if someone would step up to take over as chair of the Building Committee. Matthew is becoming more and more involved in the around-the-clock care of John's parents. John then asked for a motion to adjourn. Margo moved and Lowell seconded to adjourn. The motion passed.

The next board meeting is Sept. 13 at 10:30 a.m. on Zoom.

