

**MINUTES of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lake County (UUCLC) Florida  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Meeting date: October 16, 2012**

**Call to order:** A formal meeting of the UUCLC Board of Trustees was held at the Lake Port Square Library in Leesburg, FL on October 16, 2012. The meeting convened at 6:00 pm, President Barbara Coats presiding.

**Members in attendance:** Barbara Coats, Russ Littlefield, Jack Champion, Christina Higgins, Pat Linfield, Gina Rossi, and Carl Skiles

**Congregation Members in Attendance:** Marilyn Steingart, Marion Strahle, Kit Tatum, and Wayne Linfield

**Guests in attendance:** John Feldman and Mary McDaniel

**Officers' reports**

President – Barbara indicated that most of this meeting would be allotted to presentation and discussion of Ruth Gray's bequest with Executor Mary McDaniel and Attorney John Feldman. Therefore, regular reports to the Board and business would be deferred to the next meeting.

**New Business**

Kit Tatum, Current Coordinator for the UU Singers, presented a request for funds “for space which will be accessible to the singers on a weekly basis”, possibly one of three rooms available from the City of Eustis for \$10/per hour. After discussion during which the performances of the UU Singers were praised and the Treasurer advised that she is projecting a current fiscal year budget shortfall, Russ Littlefield made a motion to defer action on the request until the development of next fiscal year's budget. Pat seconded the motion. **Motion carried, 4-3.**

It was suggested that a variety of options still could be pursued during the current fiscal year, including a plea for funds to the membership in The Communicator, Special Collection and/or Fundraiser.

**Guest Presentation**

Mary McDaniel began by describing the history of her 20+ year relationship with Ruth Gray, including her role as attorney and drawing up Ruth's will in 1991 such that it left the residuary of Ruth's estate to the UUA. Mary feels that this shows Ruth's long time intention. Over the years Mary handled multiple revisions to the will. Upon her retirement, Mary recommended John Feldman, Esq to Ruth, and he oversaw the most recent revision of the will on February 15, 2012. One week before her death, Ruth added a Codicil which directed that her estate be “for the benefit of THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF LAKE COUNTY, INC....(to) be used to purchase a building site and build a church, or purchase a building already in existence, or purchase a church that is already in existence to be the home of THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF LAKE COUNTY, INC...” Prior to this Codicil, the will bequeathed the bulk of Ruth's estate to the UUA. The Codicil continued to name THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION in Boston as the initial receiver of the estate, in effect in trust for the UUCLC.

When Ruth reached out to John Feldman around February 15 to revise her will to fund a UUCLC

building, John Feldman advised Ruth to leave her estate directly to the UUCLC, but she rejected that advice. John's office contacted the UUA to determine how they would oversee the bequest and the UUA faxed his office a "Governing Document" which Ruth signed on February 15, 2012. John Feldman indicated that the Governing Document seems to provide greater flexibility for the UUCLC use of the bequest.

Mary indicated that additional funds from the estate had recently been sent to the UUA such that the total bequest is now \$2,436,000. She asked Terry Sweetser whether the UUA had communicated to the UUCLC regarding the amount of the funds, and he indicated that he anticipated that would occur once probate of the estate is settled. (Probate will probably not be settled until February 2013).

More than 7 months have elapsed since Ruth's death, and more specific guidelines or procedures have not been developed to clarify the working relationship between the UUA and UUCLC regarding access to the bequest funds. This will be addressed at the upcoming meeting with Terry Sweetser and Liz McClain of the UUA when they come to visit the Board on October 26.

Marilyn Steingart summed up the discussion by pointing out that there is no doubt that Ruth intended her bequest to go to the UUCLC for a building. She urged the UUCLC Board to be assertive in meeting with UUA representatives. By specifying how we expect the project to move forward, the Board will be instilling confidence with the UUA, that the UUCLC is ready to undertake this major project.

Board members recalled the advice of Laurel Amabile (UUA) to convene committees to begin the project planning process, and Mary mentioned the UUA's expectation that the congregation be solicited to determine whether they want to accept the bequest.

After Mary and John excused themselves with the Board's thanks for their time and presentation, discussion of the bequest and process continued.

The Board has long discussed the need for a formal vote of the congregation to determine whether the UUCLC is willing to accept the bequest and its conditions. A vote has been delayed because many members travel during the summer and attendance is low. It was agreed that the congregational vote (via a Special Meeting of the Congregation) should be convened soon. In order to provide enough time to encourage attendance and publicize the vote, November 11, 2012 (Water Service Sunday) was selected for the vote; Carl will conduct the November 11 Discussion Group on the topic of the bequest and will entertain any questions. It was agreed that a process similar to the one used for the Welcoming Congregation vote will be used. That is, announcement in The Communicator and during services before the vote, formal ballot with email and absentee voting.

==> Chris agreed to draft a process/ballot and circulate for revision/comment.

### **Unfinished business**

Mission and Goals Russ referred the Board to his 'Creating a Vision and Mission for Our UU Congregation' document and discussed the need for UUCLC to clarify its vision and mission, especially now, as we consider a building project. We discussed the possibility of a congregational workshop with exercises to elicit the sentiment and will of congregation members. It was envisioned

that such a workshop might be scheduled on a Saturday in November and be followed by one or more Sunday Discussion Group sessions. It may be desirable to convene the workshop at a 'special' site and we may be able to get a facilitator from the Florida District. ==> Russ will explore availability of a meeting room at Trout Lake.

Board Meeting Schedule – Historically, Board meetings have been convened on the second Sunday after service. However, this makes for a long Sunday and conflicts with after service luncheon, so at the September Board meeting, it was determined that future Board meetings would be in the evening. This has raised concerns and the Board discussed options again. It was agreed that the next Board meeting would be held Tuesday evening on November 13. Gina and Russ will explore the availability of Perkins, Leesburg and Mount Dora, respectively and Chris will check availability of a room at the Lake Square Mall. Subsequent to the meeting, it was determined that the next Board meeting will be a dinner meeting at 5 pm at the Perkins in Leesburg. (The room is free with a food order of \$75.) This will also be publicized to the congregation in The Communicator and announced on Sundays leading up to November 13.

### **Announcements**

Reverend Kenn Hurto will present a workshop at the Summerfield UU on Saturday, November 3, 9 am to 3 pm, re: Diversity and Harmony. He has recommended that we read A Door Set Open by Peter Steinke. In an e-mail, he indicated a desire to talk with those who attend on the 3rd about next steps we want to consider concerning conflict and core values/mission/vision. Board members must confirm intention to attend with Barbara by Sunday 10/21.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

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Christina Higgins, Secretary  
UUCLC Board of Trustees

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Date of approval