

Standing Committee Minutes
UU Society of Wellesley Hills
Sept. 16, 2018

Committee Members Present: Elaine Mittell (Chair), Kathy Coolidge (Vice Chair), Betsy Taylor (Treasurer), Nancy Fenstemacher (Clerk), Lelia Elliston, Andy Kemper, Karen Quigley

Committee Members Absent: Karen Mariscal, Lise Olney

Also Attending: Rev. Kelly Mason (Newly Settled Minister)

Opening

Rev. Kelly led us in a Chalice lighting around the theme of "Vocation"

Ratified email votes since June meeting

- Had approved minutes of the June 10, 2018 Standing Committee meeting.
- Hiring of Kim Towlun as Coordinator of Religious Education for 2018-2019 had been unanimously approved.
- Had approved co-sponsorship of a Community Conversation on Transgender Equality on Sunday, Oct. 14, 7:00 PM, at Temple Beth Elohim (Under the Shared Ministry structure, this decision is technically the Minister's call and Rev. Kelly had agreed when contacted over the summer.)

Affirmed

Rev. Kelly raised a question about the fact that we refer to ourselves in communications to the congregation and community as "UU Wellesley." She suggested that it seemed more apt to refer to ourselves as UU Wellesley Hills to differentiate ourselves from the UU Chaplaincy at Wellesley College (with which she hopes to form a connection). Those present voted unanimously to refer to our congregation as UU Wellesley Hills. The new designation is more in line with our legal name: the Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills.

Reaffirmed

The UU Wellesley Hills Standing Committee Covenant for Right Relationship, created in September 2017 and posted on the website.

Minister's Report

Elaine shared that she and Rev. Kelly had discussed the fact that recent ministers had submitted a written report on a monthly basis; Rev. Kelly decided that she would complete one on an intermittent basis, as is her purview. Standing Committee members indicated that Rev. Terry's practice of incorporating monthly written reports from staff into his minister's report had been very informative and requested that Rev. Kelly consider asking staff to do this as well.

Treasurer's Report

Betsy Taylor submitted a written report along with the UU Society of Wellesley Hills Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2018 and the UU Society of Wellesley Hills Profit and Loss Statement as of June 30, 2018 and all are posted on the website.

Betsy confirmed that our financial information has been transitioned to QuickBooks online. Contracts of staff (Rev. Kelly, Kim Towlun, Suzie Cartreine) have all been signed and filed.

While Committee budgets are small and expenditures sometimes overextended, Betsy feels most expenditures have been appropriate. Kathy Coolidge (Vice Chair) will soon convene the Leadership Council (Committee Chairs) and Betsy will participate to go over their 2018-2019 budgets.

Betsy also reported that the \$10,000 has been moved into a Capital account as the result of a surplus from the last church year. With Standing Committee consultation, Jim McLaren (House and Grounds Chair) can begin to prioritize projects to be addressed and spend these funds on overdue repairs.

Meeting Schedule

Rather than scheduling Standing Committee meetings at 1:00 PM on Sunday, it was decided to experiment with holding the meetings on the second Monday evening of the month. **The next meeting will be on Monday, Oct. 15, from 7:00-9:00 PM.**

New Initiative to Keep Congregation Informed of Standing Committee Work

Rather than continue with the practice of Quarterly Conversations, it was decided to experiment with an Update in Q & A format (approximately 15 minutes) once a month immediately following the Sunday Service Postlude before proceeding to the Social Hour. The goal is to inform, solicit input, and to make everyone feel “in the loop.” The first SC Update will occur on Sunday, Sept. 23, 2018.

Standing Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Certain roles are prescribed by our bylaws and policies/normal practices such as those for Finance (Treasurer), Personnel (Past Chair), Nominating and Leadership Council Convener (Vice Chair). Elaine shared her wish to share responsibility with Standing Committee members in additional areas. Other Standing Committee responsibilities needing leadership oversight are Fundraising (Lelia expressed willingness to pursue), House & Grounds/Facilities Use/Interior Decoration (Elaine will be the point person in this area as she is already heavily involved), and Welcoming/Membership (Lise has expressed interest in this assignment and is willing to serve as a liaison to the Welcoming Committee).

Rev. Kelly noted that we may need a Facilities Manager to help exercise good stewardship of our facilities and monetize the campus usage rather than depend on a mostly lay committee and office administrator. She suggested perhaps this position could be shared with another church. Betsy Taylor agreed that we should work toward filling such a position in the future. Rev. Kelly will be meeting with the Facilities Use Committee (Cyra, Betsy, Elaine, John Pattillo) in the coming weeks to discuss our fee structure and rental policies.

Tree/Shrub Removal Request from the Wellesley Historical Society

A request was received from the Historical Society in the last few weeks to remove trees and shrubs between our properties so that they can widen their driveway as part of a larger renovation plan (necessary to meet ADA requirements). The trees and shrubs, mostly invasive species and in decline, are on our church property. A subset of Standing Committee and House & Grounds members met with the Historical Society president and contractor to discuss the details. Just prior to the Standing Committee meeting on Sept. 16, the Historical Society emailed a memorandum of understanding for the aforementioned project. SC members who had met with the architect and landscape personnel for this project agreed that the project should proceed as the Historical Society would be taking out declining trees and invasive species at their expense and replacing them with native plants that would form a natural fence; also, we have never had the resources to be good stewards of trees on our property. Two omissions from the documents were noted: a statement about the pitch of the land, and another about guaranteeing replacement of shrubs for one year. It was agreed that Elaine will contact Jim McLaren and John Pattillo and ask them to vet the contract and share further recommendations. Standing Committee will vote regarding the Tree/Shrub Removal Request via email if necessary to make it possible for the Historical Society to begin work within their narrow construction window. Re-planting would not occur until next spring.

Additional issues to address at the next meeting

- Building Interiors Task Force formation
- Plans for communicating guidelines for gifts to staff
- Facilities Use agreements under consideration
- Idea of changing the start time of worship to 10AM

Unfinished Business discussed last year

- Stove
- Locks
- Safety planning
- Signage
- Sound System
- Committee leadership/succession planning

Joys and Concerns

To conclude the meeting, Standing Committee members shared “joys and concerns” related to our congregation.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Fenstemacher
Clerk