

Irvine United Congregational Church
Administration Board Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2015

Attendance:

Board: Martha Selby, Mark Allen, Anne Rosse, Tricia Aynes, Jerrod Anderson, Cindy O'Dell, and Jerry Price

Committee/Task Force Chairs: Wayne Banwell, Lyle Norton, Bill Lawrence, and Dave Schofield

Staff: Pastor Paul Tellström, Matthew Redrich, and Michael Spindle

Visitors: Tommie Kozlov and Brian Percy-Schofield

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Martha Selby.
2. Opening Prayer: The opening prayer was led by the Rev. Paul Tellström.
3. Approval of February 17, 2014 Minutes: It was moved by Anne Rosse, seconded by Mark Allen, to approve the Minutes from the February meeting. Motion carried.
5. Task Force on Bylaws, Policies and Procedures Report: Bylaws Task Force Chair Dave Schofield presented the following recommended changes to our Policies & Procedures:
 - 1.01: Creation and Maintenance of Policies & Procedures - Clarifies and updates terminology.
 - 1.05: Meeting Rules of Order and Minutes – Updates “Vice Moderators” to “Board Chairs” and changes “Administrative Board” to “Administration Board.” Cindy O’Dell expressed concern about IV. Policy, Item B, No. 5, to wit: “Those conducting meetings of other bodies of the Church are encouraged to prepare and store Minutes when, in their judgment, doing so would further the Church’s purpose.” She believes the term “encouraged” is not strong enough. The body concurred, and Dave agreed to strengthen that section.
 - 1.08: Items Requiring Board Approval – Sets forth policies which will help ministries, committees, other church entities and individuals determine what items need to be brought to the Ministries Board and/or the Administration Board for approval prior to action being taken.
 - 1.11: Email Church List – Provide guidelines for miscellaneous information to be sent using the e-mail church list and clarifies that the list is not to be used for marketing purposes. Martha Selby asked if we could mandate shredding the old list. Dave Schofield responded that a mandate was not appropriate in this document, but we could ask the Church Administrator to encourage shredding when he shares the updated list. Per consensus, Michael will add something to the effect “If you print it, shred it” when he distributes the list.
 - 1.12: Document retention – Clarifies procedures for document retention and provides guidance for those charged with same. Deals with personnel, historical, and legal documents.
 - 1.14: Administration Board calendar – Establishes a monthly calendar for essential Administration Board responsibilities. This is the calendar that was created a year and a half ago so this body would know what tasks were important to do each month.
 - 3.03: Fundraising – Provide guidance to ministries and individuals who wish to produce fundraising events on behalf of IUCC. For any unplanned fundraiser, organizers will need to check with the Fund Development Committee to ensure that the event does not conflict or overlap with other fundraising events. They are also to come to this body for approval if they want to direct funds to somewhere other than general fund. If expenses are not budgeted, they must go to the Administration Board for approval. If a fundraiser is ongoing, when funds are

collected they are to be deposited in drop box. This policy ties fundraising into cash management policies and procedures.

- 3.04: Event tickets – Provides guidance to ministries and individuals on the issue of selling tickets for events held on behalf of IUCC. Sets policy that everyone should purchase tickets except for certain staff members who are exempt because they provide services. Outlines procedures for selling event tickets.

MOTION: To approve the eight (8) recommended changes to the Policies and Procedures (Sections 1.01, 1.05, 1.08, 1.11, 1.12, 1.14, 3.03, and 3.04) in totality as amended tonight. Moved by Anne Rosse, seconded by Mark Allen. Motion carried.

Discussion on Membership issue: Moderator Anne Rosse requested a consensus on what to do about the membership issue – do we want the task force to do anything on it, or do we ignore it for now? It is unresolved. Per Dave Schofield, our Bylaws do not address baptism at all, but our practices do, so there is a conflict. Our Bylaws say that to be a member, the only requirement is to publicly accept and state our covenant. Per Pastor Paul, the UCC denomination requires baptism, so we are not in compliance with our denomination.

VOICE VOTE: When Martha asked if there was any appetite to pursue this issue further, a voice vote of voting members was NO.

6. Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Mark Allen discussed the Financial Statements for the month ending February 28, 2015, the highlights of which are as follows: Total IUCC results for February 2015 produced a loss of \$11,100 and net loss adjusted for depreciation of \$8,200; budget for the month of February 2015 was an \$8,000 loss and budget adjustment for depreciation was a loss of \$5,000, so that actual net income results and net income adjustment for depreciation were both slightly unfavorable to budget - \$3,000 and \$3,100, respectively; increased headcount in the ECC produced a \$2,100 profit in February which was offset by a \$13,100 loss in the general fund producing the overall loss of \$11,100; ECC headcount increased from 34 in December 2014 to 39 in January 2015 and 38 in February 2015, a net increase of four children since last year-end; January 2015 and February 2015 saw the first two increases in year over year headcount in the last 12 rolling months; rent for October, November, and December 2014 and also for January and February 2015 for a total of \$17,500 has been forgiven due to ECC's poor performance; a profit of \$2,100 for ECC for the month was \$4,300 better than budget and \$8,200 better than last year; for total IUCC, cash flow from operations was (\$11,100) for the period ending 2/28/15 vs. a budgeted amount of (\$2,400) and a last year amount of \$8,800; pledged and non-pledged contributions at \$28,400 were (\$8,500) poorer and (\$9,400) poorer than last year; and total expenses at \$42,400 were \$1,800 better than budget and virtually flat to last year.

In his verbal remarks, Mark highlighted the hard work of the ECC staff in achieving increased headcount and said that was awesome. We've dug ourselves out of the ditch and are making progress even if we're not quite there yet. Fairly soon, we may be ready to lift rent relief. Expenses are in line. In reviewing Laura Long's ECC report, he noted that two parents had stiffed us on payment. While we will wait for a recommendation from ECC, he believes we should pursue them for payment.

7. Fund Development/Stewardship Report – Committee Co-Chair Bill Lawrence reported that the upcoming All Church Bon Vivant will be a social event with a minimal fundraising aspect. It will include a wine auction and a dessert auction. We have been contacted by the Northwest Boys Choir and have booked them for July 18. They'll need time and space to practice. It should be a fun event.

8. Building and Grounds Report – Committee Co-Chair Wayne Banwell reported that the light on the sign out front has been repaired. New shelving has been installed in the ECC girls' bathroom. This past week, we performed the annual tree trimming. There were some minor bulbs replaced. Last year we spent \$8,000 in termite repair. It lasts for about a year. We are considering paying an annual \$2,000 fee for ongoing termite control. He will research further and bring it back to us for a vote.

Committee Co-Chair Lyle Norton reported on the gardening group, an informal committee to assist Building & Grounds with projects related to planting and landscaping of our campus. They will work independently of Building & Grounds but can ask for help if they need financial assistance or guidance. Committee members have asked about our building plans and what areas might be affected; they would appreciate guidance so their work is not in vain.

Update on lighting issue: Church Administrator Michael Spindle reported there was good news on the lighting issue. Per Maurice Garcia of Emlight Design (a company referred to us by Anne's husband Edward Lau), we have a good system - it's a workhorse. Parts are available for it. There's no reason why our current system should not keep working. The lighting we have is workable for our auditorium and how we use it. We can do a lighting change if we want, but it is not needed at this time. The bottom line is that our system is good and fixable if there's a problem – it should be viable for many years to come. Per Anne Rosse, this news buys us time - we can wait three years for the technology to evolve and change, then we can fold the cost of new lighting system into our capital campaign if the congregation votes to do so.

Big urns – We have coffee pots that take a long time to brew and are difficult to clean. Ministries Board Chair Dawn Price has looked into the possibility of purchasing two platforms of coffee with four thermal urns. Her research is part of our ongoing discussion about the noise of making coffee in Plumer Hall disturbing the Adult Education Sunday School class. The system would cost \$3,200. The ECC will also be asked to weigh in if we move forward with the idea. What is direction from the board - to do further research or abandon it? Do we have any appetite to do this? By consensus, the Administration Board authorized the pursuit of further research.

9. Technology Committee Report – Chair Matthew Redrich had nothing new to report.

10. Ministries Board Chair Report – Ministries Board Chair Dawn Price was not present, but submitted a written report (attached), the highlights of which are as follows: Sarah Fiske-Phillips is completing her first year in seminary and wishes to become a Member in Discernment (MID), and the Ministries Board has approved; Reminder about the Jesus Seminar; Reminder about the All Church Bon Vivant on May 30; Coffee hour noise issues have been addressed; and the Coordinating Council is looking at models for increasing the reliability and training of key volunteers.

11. Moderator's Report – Moderator Anne Rosse submitted a written report (attached), the highlights of which are as follows: She will be convening the Nominating Committee soon to consider open positions with the goal of having the 2015-16 leadership slate nominations for the April Administration Board meeting; the Bylaws and Policies/Procedures Task Force is working on reviewing and updating IUCC's many policies and procedures; we received a final set of comments from the City of Irvine with some minor changes and are close in terms of the Master Plan itself; however, we also received further changes to the revised traffic study scope of work; we received the anticipated \$9,457.50 refund from the City for its overbilling; and she expects to start making progress on the Contingency Task Force, Congregational Growth and Vitality, and Long Range Plan soon.

In discussing the Building Project in her verbal report, Anne said she is frustrated with the City of Irvine, which has been less than expeditious in dealing with us. We sent in a traffic study scope of work, and the City came back with changes. We revised the traffic study to reflect the City's input. We heard back from them on Friday, and they had more changes to the scope of work. They red-lined our proposal, so now we have better idea of what they want. We are trying to get a revised scope of work in this week, then we will wait for a response. June 2015 will be our one-year mark of what we thought would be a six month process.

12. Child Care Committee Report – Child Care Committee Chair Laura Long submitted a written report (attached). Administration Board Chair Martha Selby provided a verbal report, the highlights of which are as follows: Eric Burley has been very helpful; our preschool parents are very loyal; the recent potluck dinner was wildly successful, and parents were very appreciative; we hired Robert Armstrong as a part-time assistant teacher three weeks ago, and the children adore him; Karina Marquez will be a full-time assistant teacher - she has teaching experience and is working on her AA degree; the ECC teachers have worked very hard to get current with program materials - they are using what they've learned; and Laura Long has done a really good job.

MOTION: To hire Robert Armstrong at \$11.50 an hour for 24 hours a week and Karina Marquez at \$12.50 an hour for 40 hours a week. Moved by Cindy O'Dell, seconded Mark Allen. Motion approved.

13. Pastor's Report - Pastor Paul submitted a written report (attached), the highlights of which are as follows: Due to Conference cuts, we are working with Conference staff and youth officers to strategize about the future; communion will be on Palm Sunday rather than Easter; staff are doing extra planning to accommodate an upcoming memorial service and Holy Week services; he will be gone for ten days right after Easter; he met with Conference Minister the Rev. Felix Villanueva to discuss the deed issue; plans are underway for the next Annual Gathering to present a motion that churches must give OCWM (Our Churches' Wider Mission) and per capital dues or lose their standing in the Conference; there are more cuts to the Conference budget coming; and he is serving as the Chair of the Nominating Committee for the Conference and would love to nominate a member of IUCC to serve on the Board.

In his verbal remarks, Pastor Paul said that Sarah Fiske-Phillips needs to become a Member in Discernment. It's possible she will need to become a member of IUCC first. If so, she will join on Easter Sunday. There are some minor costs involved, our fair share of which would be approximately \$200.

MOTION: To approve Sarah Fiske-Phillips as a Member in Discernment. Moved by Cindy O'Dell, seconded by Jerrod Anderson. Motion passed.

14. Old Business – Update on Deed Discussions

Recap of discussion:

Martha: She and Paul met with Conference Minister, the Rev. Felix Villanueva. Per Felix, the Conference's financial strategy is to do the ministry of the Conference differently. His plan is to present a balanced budget in four years, and he has already started to put the plan into effect. He and the board acknowledge that they have fiduciary responsibility for the Conference, and they are working together to reorganize and achieve fiduciary independence. Felix told them that seven years ago (two years before his time) the Conference was "bankrupt" with only five months of operating funds in their coffer, and Cornerstone came to the rescue with a loan that they later paid back. Felix said that his biggest challenge is changing the culture from pastoral to consultative and administrative. He wants to deliver ministry in less costly ways. He believes the Conference protects congregations by holding titles

and deeds – it plans to continue doing so. When asked what assurances would persuade the Conference to give us the deed, he cited “steeple-jacking” as a reason for them to keep it (this is a term describing what occurs when a congregation that has its own deed is infiltrated by people who take the church for their own). When “steeple-jacking” happens, the Conference ends up losing the property. He was pretty clear that the Conference would not give us the deed. We explained our concern about “claw-back” which can occur if the Conference goes into bankruptcy and creditors seize assets of churches. As we begin a capital campaign to build on our property, there is a risk that this could occur.

Pastor Paul: A third of our churches pay absolutely nothing in fees, including his former church. He seconded a resolution at a recent Annual Gathering that called for all pastors to lose their standing if their churches did not give OCWM (Our Churches’ Wider Mission) or per-capita dues. The resolution is being reworked for the next meeting on June 5-6 and will move that if any church fails to pay its OCWM and per-capita dues, both church and pastor will lose their standing.

Mark: Felix gave us a financial summary, but it doesn’t match what is published on the Conference website for 2013. What Felix gave us showed a \$322,000 loss, but what appears on the Conference website shows a quarter of a million loss. It’s not transparent or easy to understand, and he is worried. Paul says he should write to Keith Clark and copy it to Felix.

Martha: Rob Thornton asked what the legal relationship is between UCC National and the Conference. Rob would like us to use the data Mark has on claw-back of bankruptcy and revisit the conversation.

Paul: He doesn’t believe Felix will budge on the deed issue. Carl [his partner, who is a realtor for the Conference] is selling two churches per year. Our churches aren’t doing all that well. Other mainline churches are just hanging on. Smaller churches are failing and it’s very sad.

Anne: Her sense was that Felix was offering up that Cornerstone would keep the Conference from going under. We need to tell the congregation about the situation and let them decide.

Mark: If Conference bankruptcy were to happen, it’s a wipeout scenario – we couldn’t afford to fix.

Jerry: Our best bet is to sustain the health of the Conference.

CONSENSUS: Pastor Paul will talk to Gordon Gillies at Cornerstone and ask what he can tell us about our loan and the situation with the Conference. Martha and Mark will continue to get data about claw-backs and revisit the conversation with Felix, being diligent but respectful.

15. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Pastor Paul led the closing prayer.

Our next Administrative Board meeting will be April 20, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia Aynes, Clerk