



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2016, 2:30-4:30 PM
First Unitarian Universalist Church
4700 Grover Ave.

Attendees:

Mary Patrick
Joanne Richards (president)
Dan Eckam (secretary)
Teresa Taylor
Diane Owens (treasurer)
Kurt Hildebrand

Note: Kurt arrived after the meeting began; Mary had to leave before the end of the meeting.

Discussion items:

1. Treasurer's report. We moved our money from Frost Bank to UFCU; there are 2 signers on the new acct., Joanne & Diane. We have to pay for checks but we have 8 temporary checks which don't expire; we think they'll last us a long time. Joanne & Diane will each have a debit card. \$5 goes into savings acct., the rest in checking acct. Current total for both accounts is \$1190.83 as reported by Diane in an email of 2/10/16.

2. Approval of 2016 goals & strategies, which we discussed at our January meeting. Joanne proposed "foster" for strategy #1, but we changed it to "cultivate". Dan moved to approve the list. Goals & strategies list approved 5-0 (Kurt absent). Joanne will get the website updated.

3. New process for minutes: Dan will write them, Joanne will offer corrections, then we'll get approval from the full board by email after which Dan will post the approved minutes. This should allow for the minutes to be posted within a week of the meeting, assuming no major controversies.

4. Approval of minutes. Dan moved to approve our January meeting minutes. Approved 5-0 (Kurt absent).

5. Discussion of programming ideas. Joanne has talked with former board member Tanya Tussing and brainstormed with Diane Miller, who runs the Civic Collaborations business.

- a. March meeting: Prof. Jensen was not able to find anyone else to join him as a presenter. Joanne talked to Brandelyn Franks Flunder, the director at the Multicultural Center at UT, Who was kind enough to recommend four potential speakers -- Drs. Richard Reddick and Kyle Clark from UT-Austin, Dr. Elizabeth Medina from Concordia University and Dr. Joi Torres from St. Edward's University.

- b. Other suggestions. Two party system? (Especially its history/origins, and why we have it.) Gun violence & gun control (and mental health)? Democracy Awakening? Legislation for combating climate change? Voter turnout/voting rights/voter engagement?

6. Review and discussion of Democracy Awakening (DA).

We approved co-sponsoring this national effort by email before the meeting. It was proposed in an email from Joanne on 1/28 and approved by Dan, Teresa, Mary and Diane in emails from 1/31 to 2/1.

- a. Mary updated us on the recent DA meeting: ~100 groups nationwide, focused on money in politics and voting rights. Public Citizen, NAACP joining forces with others to address overlapping problems. Agreed to have weekly meetings to gather local reps to discuss plans. Thousands are expected to converge on Washington DC between Saturday, April 16 and Monday April 18. There is a plan to meet in Philadelphia, PA on April 2 and **walk to DC**. Discussion of hiring buses at \$15k each, or caravan of individual drivers. Planning to have a local event in Austin is underway (details expected soon) to mirror the nat'l events on 4/16 and/or 4/17. Big meeting on Feb. 23 planned for group leaders.
- b. We'll reserve library space for April 16 for a possible "teach-in" or other event related to the state event the next day -- Joanne will check w. library. If there is such a meeting, we may co-sponsor it, but don't plan to take the lead on organizing it.
- c. Decision on April 2 meeting: our event will relate to DA; the topic will be: Voter engagement. We'll try to get someone from NAACP, Maldef or Lulac, LWV and Children's Defense Fund. Possible title: "Voter engagement in Texas: What's the deal? Why is Texas dead last in voter participation?"

7. More discussion on programming.

- a. Kurt suggested we host a discussion about the Texas Plan -- Gov. Abbott's call for an Article V convention. (Possible speakers: Gary Breaux? Sanford Levinson?)
- b. Living Room Conversations were mentioned by Diane as a good example of how people can have productive discussions on contentious issues.

8. Resolution on partisan meetings. Dan proposed some wording for a resolution, which was edited by the group and approved in the following form, 5-0 (Mary absent):

It is hereby resolved that when we have election-related events:

1. We do not show favoritism to any parties or candidates by giving some more access to our audience than others.
2. We strive to give our audience a multifaceted perspective.

9. Decision for our May 14 meeting. We plan to consider current efforts to amend the constitution, including Move To Amend, Wolf-PAC, and the Texas Plan proposed by Gov. Abbott. (Possible title: "Moves to amend: Why now?") Potential speakers: Gary Breaux to represent Wolf-PAC, Caroline Homer to represent MTA, [TBD] to represent the Texas Plan, with Sanford Levinson as our "expert".