

**Channing Memorial Church
Governing Board
Minutes of Meeting of July 15, 2003**

The meeting was called to order at 7:08. Tom Bandoni agreed to be the process observer.

Members present: Russ Milham, Charlie Beckers, John Burnham, Tom Bandoni, Mary Alice Smith

Approval of Minutes: Russ Milham made a motion to approve the minutes as amended for the June 17, 2003 meeting, striking reference to a quorum since quorum is not defined nor required according to our by-laws. Charlie Beckers seconded the motion. The minutes from the June meeting were approved.

Strategic Plan: John Burnham asked that we put two goals on the agenda in order to surface a discussion about what we are going to do and how we are going to manage the process and how to keep the plan in front of the board to assure progress and monitor results.

Goal # 4: Improve the church's governance systems and administrative operations

John Burnham presented some thoughts about how to proceed with the recommended actions for this goal after meetings with Rev. Amy and others. He assigned sub-numbers to the recommended actions, which systematizes them. (See attached.)

4.1 Update bylaws, reorganizing officer job descriptions governing board makeup and committees as necessary. This work requires the attention of a dedicated task force or someone to "own" and work on its execution. Much material exists and some preliminary work has been done. Revision is needed to reflect growth and change in the church. The group spent some time discussing the pros and cons of having a smaller board with at-large trustees whose work focuses on policy and administrative matters, freeing committee chairs from board duties and frequent meetings. Charlie and Russ, who worked on the present bylaws, provided some history on the thinking behind the current governance structure.

4.2 & 4.3 address staff and leadership development and improve administrative infrastructure – can be carried out by diverse work groups.

4.4 Improve administrative procedures – we need an annual administrative calendar to assist planning by all committees and groups. We need policies and procedures for most areas. There are boiler-plates out there for policies and procedures which we might be able to adapt.

Strategic Plan Goal # 5: Approve a comprehensive plan for increasing financial resources to support our vision and growth.

Mary Alice Smith presented a synopsis of the work done by the Finance Task Force last year. The group identified 12 possible sources of funding available from private local to state and federal grantors and also sought input from the UUA. Four grant proposals were submitted last year seeking funds to assist us with planning from the RI State Historic Commission, the BCD District Chalice Lighters Program, the van Beuren Foundation and the McBean Charitable Trust. All were rejected, most likely because we asked for planning funds and have not yet raised any substantial funds ourselves from the congregation.

There is new federal money available for historic churches. The Bush administration has lifted restrictions on making preservation grants to places that still house active congregations. The group discussed issues involved in accepting such funds and whether or not we should pursue this.

Conclusions: John Burnham suggested that Mary Alice Smith, as President, listen to all ideas, take in feedback on how to proceed, then make recommendations to the board as to the best approach. We will continue these conversations beyond this meeting.

Approved but Unfunded Items: Committee chairs will be asked to submit their items for the list.

With no other business the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Alice Smith, Acting Clerk