**BOARD MEETING \* Minutes July 18, 2020**

Called to order by Board Chairman Mark Van Etten at 10:15 a.m. on the shores of Deep Lake, Town of Madge, County Washburn. Present: Van Etten, Pat Shifferd, Barisonzi, Valerie Rude, Tollefsrud, Genereaux. Ken Hood was unable to change work schedule to attend.

MISSION & GOALS: Van Etten challenged the group to consider what each of us felt these to be in the coming months, and which of them can we “do better than anyone else”. Questioned if our fellowship should put emphasis on ONE area?

Noting that we have many interest areas and outreach efforts, identified as #1 –our sense of community as a fellowship, with immigration efforts and environmental concerns high. Do we seek a stronger structure? Suggestion was to make this a fellowship-wide discussion / Barisonzi will work this into a service program.

ZOOM SERVICES: Consideration was given to an option suggested to conduct services on “Live Facebook”; this did not receive support. We will maintain use of Zoom to gather as a fellowship; it was noted that Ken Hood has volunteered to continue coordinating us with Zoom, but others are now also able to commandeer the technology enough to continue service when he is unable. BHUU has purchased an annual option to continue on Zoom.

SOCIAL JUSTICE: Banner design was considered. It was suggested to lessen the multiple coloring of lettering for clarity. Message content was discussed in the context of the difficulty in identifying common ground even within our small fellowship. Shifferd and Genereaux urged the environmental issue be included as a prime concern, suggesting “Our Planet is Precious” or “Honor the Earth” which also gives a nod to respect for local tribes, be used.

Focused discussion centered on the choice of coded wording (Black Lives Matter) and the importance of expressing our unity in this area, as well as other pillars of our concerns. Suggested that wording need be clearer: “Love is Love” / “ Kindness Counts” might not be as succinct as other phrases. The Board expressed unity in approval of banner in general and appreciation of the creative effort of The Lindas, however asked that a shorter, clearer message be brought back for consideration.

BUILDING & GROUNDS:

McHenry Tree Service billing $4035.38: Shifferd moved to pay / seconded by Barisonzi; discussion not forthcoming, the motion was passed unanimously to pay the service asap.

Stained Glass window replacement: Roger Sweeny has offered to complete the replacement for the same original amount ($1200), using double hung windows to match others. Our insurance agent reports that this *may* all be considered one event, so multiple deductibles would be avoided. Tollefsrud moved Sweeney be authorized to proceed with the work; seconded by Shifferd. No further discussion / motion passed unanimously.

Gutter / Siding repairs: Tom Gelineau has overseen repairs needed; waiting on bids to return from Crotteau Siding before we can determine “what next.”

Cleaning of Fellowship Hall: Current use of Knight Cleaning duo is to clean building once a month May to October, then twice a month until May. Consensus is that if the fellowship does not return to in-building services in the winter months this year, that we remain at once per month cleaning until need returns. Jude will convey this to Linda Thompson who works closely with directing Knight’s efforts. Noted that Jeff Southern cleaned up the remaining debris from window damage and the Board thanks him for his efforts.

Leaks @ door / stairwell: still appearing. After last week’s big rain, four areas were again identified. Waiting on Crotteau’s assessment of the problem.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH: Activities at Benjamin House, coordinated by Gerri Nedland, are encouraged/ expected to continue. Noted that our once-a-year contribution to the Bethany Soup Kitchen and “Lunch Box” event will also be one of our volunteer efforts.

Ministerial Association: Genereaux updated current status of conversation with Red Cedar minister, their Chairman at the time. Consensus of our Board is that perhaps all that is needed to continue the thread is a simple expression to them of our goals: that while membership in their Association is not our goal, but to work as community allies when opportunities arise and to be listed with “other churches” in the area in their informational material.

WOJB: comments from guest / visitors have noted they’d heard our message on the station.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Treasurer Report: As outgoing Treasurer, Shifferd shared status of our financial well being and various budgeted accounts. Recent storm damage will put a dent in our reserves, but closing out 2019-2020 indicates healthy condition of our finances, as well as the generosity of our membership. The Board heartily thanks Pat Shifferd for her many years of service and dedication as our Treasurer.

Membership: The Rudes have BHUU cell phone in their care & custody; Valerie requested direction as to answering questions that may come when they are unsure of how to advise. Suggestion is that she email Board members at the time for direction.

Program: Barisonzi suggested using Zoom as an option for covering Nora Rasman’s presentation on The UU Vote, or perhaps this a good topic for part of a regular service? Zoom also gives us the opportunity to resume Wednesday night services; one idea suggested is to pull together various readings/ book club options, and perhaps a group read of the recently suggested book on “White Fragility”. Genereaux offered that WOJB’s Schubring has volunteered to lead a group discussion of “The Insurrection of the Common Good”. All were in favor of pursuing these ideas / Barisonzi & Shifferd will noodle options and report back to the Board.

Committees: Noting the demise of formal committee membership / structure, Van Etten suggested this is something we need to review and perhaps limit the number of committees traditionally listed, but activate those more crucial. Shifferd volunteered to make contacts between now and September to determine member willingness to contribute in this regard. Clubs will not be used.

Next Board meeting will be on Zoom, after the service of August 9th. There being no additional business to come forth, the Board adjourned at 12:30 > lunch was served.

The Board thanked our hosts Mark & Bev for a gracious morning, and the loons for their sparkling entertainment as we gnoshed and chatted. < JGx >