

New Orleans Strategic Planning Group Advisory Board

Our charge: The strategic planning group shall envision and design a plan for a vibrant, robust Unitarian Universalist congregational presence in a rebuilt New Orleans. The plan should encompass the vision and needs of particular congregations but be focused holistically and systemically, rather than atomistically, on how Unitarian Universalism might be strongest and most vital in the greater New Orleans area.

Summary of Telephone Conference Call January 11, 2006 7:00 pm -8:10 pm CST

Participants: Burton Carley, Jyaphia Christos-Rodgers, Wayne Clark, Becky Cureau, Mary An Godshall, Dick Harris, Marilyn Malone, Marta Valentin, Jim VanderWeele and Mark Westergard.

Mark Westergard was welcomed to the group. Members introduced themselves to Mark and he provided a brief introduction of himself.

Review of Action Items (from the December 15-16, 2005 meeting)

Action Item #1:(from 12.15-16 mtng.) The Funding Panel has agreed to continue funding religious professionals (all paid staff) at North Shore, Community Church, and First Church for an additional six months.

Action Item #2: (from 12.15-16 mtng.) First Church and Community Church have each developed a list of possible activities to help implement a “healthy presence” of UUism in New Orleans. (See attachments for the two lists.) North Shore did not have additional items from what they presented at the December 15-16, 2005 meeting.

1. New Action Item. Dick and Marilyn, please send a written copy of your possible activities to each member of the group. Thanks.

Action Item #3: (from 12.15-15 mtng.) Representatives from each congregation met on January 10th to begin a conversation about ways to make efficient use of common religious education resources.

2. New Action Item. These representatives will meet again and then share their report at the January 27-28,2006 meeting.

Action Item #4: (from 12.15-16 mtng.) Marta discussed First Church's revised estimate of \$164,200 (down from \$174,825 because no asbestos was found in the building) to clean their building. They have also received a building permit and an agreement (from Church Mutual) to provide flood insurance.

3. New Action Item. Marta will submit the revised request to the Funding Panel

4. New Action Item. Jyaphia will send the flood insurance confirmation to Wayne. (Done. Thanks Jyaphia.)

Action Item #5: (from 12.15-16 mtng.) The Funding Panel has approved the Community Church request for \$40,390 to obtain office space, equipment, and furniture through June 30, 2006.

“State of the Church” Summaries

North Shore

They report current membership of 72 with 72 pledge units.

A budget has been developed for FY '06 (January through December)

5. New Action Item. Wayne will create a resource sheet for each congregation to record relevant information (membership, pledge units, budget, etc.)

6. New Action Item. Dick and Marylyn will bring a copy of their budget proposal to our next meeting.

Community Church

- There is a possibility that their current site may become a park because the area (so close to the 17th Street Levee) may be too difficult to re-populate. No definitive information yet.
- The building will definitely have to be torn down. The hope is that the congregation will receive pre-Katrina full value.
- The flood insurance check has been received and the insurance check (from Church Mutual) should arrive soon.
- A committee has been formed to look at possible locations (perhaps a temporary rental location)
- Jim attended the first city meeting today and reported some positive reactions (see attachment for news article) but much anger as well.
- A series of home meetings has been held with 15 (total) members/friends in attendance.

First Church

- They have held a few home meetings. Instead, the Board has decided to conduct their meetings every 2nd and 4th Sunday.
- A new administrator has begun to repair the communications structure.
- The religious education program starts up again this Sunday (January 15th) at the Jefferson Church.
- The Board vice president has resigned (but remains a member of the congregation) and a new Board member will be recruited.
- A Board leadership session, followed by a congregational meeting, will be held soon, facilitated by an external consultant. The primary issue is whether or not the members want to remain in the current building.
- A successful Fellowship Dinner (70-80 people) was held on December 17th and people were asked to make a financial pledge. The canvass chair will contact those members not at the dinner.

The next meeting date was confirmed: January 27th, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and Saturday January 28th until 2:00 pm.

7. New Action Item. Jim will confirm that the meeting will be again held at Jefferson Church.

The next agenda was set:

- Review our covenant
- Report about efficient use of religious education resources
- Feedback from First Church discussions regarding future location
- An overview of strategic planning (presented by Wayne)
- Create a schedule for future meetings

8. New Action Item. Wayne will send Travel and Expense forms to Mark.

9. New Action Item. Wayne will get the UUA Web site updated (regarding amount of donations received).

10. New Action Item. Wayne will arrange to get meeting summaries onto the UUA Web site.

11. New Action Item. Wayne will create a form for each congregation to record their financial status (regarding money received from outside sources).

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne B. Clark

1.12.06