

Congregational Conversation

Summary
April 1st, 2007

Meeting began at 12:45

Chair: Tiffany Urness

Topic: Examination of Proposed Guidelines Policy for Building and Equipment Use.

Tiffany asked David McMorris for a brief background and history to present of the development of the proposed guidelines.

David described the policy as being drafted October 23, 2006 at the recommendation of Kate Throop and the Board, to clarify uses of the buildings, rentals and expenses. Thirty percent of present income is derived from rentals, how can we improve the revenue through use. Rentals during weekends create income, member use during weekends creates no income. The Rental Budget falls short if rental use is not available to Renters. David asks that committees act responsibly when considering their room-use needs. (For example the Vigil held in the Auditorium incurred costs of over \$300.)

Discussion included that there were various factors to be considered and that “common law” practices were a process of the policy.

Tiffany asked for some summary points.

Pat N suggests a) Mission statement would lead us as to how to use our buildings before we go forward. What is our goal in the greater community. Our Use Policy should reflect our Mission Statement. b) Do not put Dave on the hot spot, but rather committees need to include David in their program planning. Timeliness is important so that a clearly stated process on how committees can use the buildings. Look at contributions so we don't depend so heavily on rental income.

SR There is confusion about our position in the community. Are we directed toward the greater good, or not.

Nancy Lust: Support the autonomy of all committees to decide what co-sponsoring is to be extended and perhaps what and how.

Terry P: we are looking at what it should the use should be It can be free use if appropriate and the Board, Dave and Doug are involved in the decision. Specific line item in budget for each committee to force them to decide / plan rather than case by case need. Demands on building use are stronger at certain times of year and should be consideration of committee use o Mater Calendar

Candy M: What is policy on building use fee? Consider what has come in vs what is needed/budgeted. Look at the Mission AND revenue that has come in at a pong in year. Perhaps divide into quarters; something measurable to use to make decisions.

Chuck: 1. Our problem is not in attracting members, but in keeping them. We need to enrich programs to keep members involved. 2.: How to avoid expenses yet operate. 3. Criteria need to be clearly defined rather than ambiguous (decided by Doug, David and the President). 4. Suggests considering: If the event is open to the church for benefit of all members, and if not, then rental payment is collected; if it is useful / open to all, then no rental payment is collected. 5. Collections can pay for some expenses. Take contributions to cover our fees, and remaining revenue goes to church building / Rental fund. 6. Committee should provide volunteer labor for their events. 7. There needs to be a stress on communicating the best time to use facilities. 8. We need a clearly defined church policy as to how we are to function in our community.

Doug: PC stay out of gate-keeping function; priority to programs that come from committees rather than their appropriateness; place priority on programs that have moral support statement..

Sharon K: Dividing the calendar / room use into quarters would be difficult if its sets overlapping precedence for next year scheduling.

Denis: There is no such thing as Free Use, but better use vs financial cost. Who pays and how? He supports sponsors paying a discounted cost. Any NP group that doesn't conflict with our ideals is entitled to a discount.

Megan states that building use policy should take into account a group's inability to pay full price, but that inviting such a group to participate will bring people onto the UUSS campus. There is an indirect benefit when we have events here; take into account the long-range outcome.

Esther Franklin: Endorses suggestion that we identify our goals and UUSS Forum's existence; co-sponsoring with Youth groups, involving the Program Council and ability to pay should not be a hindrance for co-sponsoring.

Anna A: Spoke in support of careful scheduling for freeing up weekends. Think in terms of "green" when planning meetings. Volunteers do the set up and take down. Committees need to have actual costs for each room printed out. And we also need suggestions as to how to reduce costs. If we have no committee budge, committees will have to rely on their own devices to provide the needed income. Double our pledges.

Rick: Suggests that the auditorium is used most often by Social Responsibility and Forum. He spoke in support of the Forum, which in the past kept within its budget and collections, put into the General Fund, almost exactly matched the monies budgeted for the Forum, which operated successfully for about 35 years. It did not give "away the store", and operated as an outreach into the community at large in addition to educating and entertaining members. If UUSS thinks that the PF needs to be overseen, it should be by the Program Council. Formed to relieve the Board of having to micro manage, the decisions of this committee should be trusted. The decline of the Forum was due to its poor position of available time and the disfavor of co-sponsoring, which is beneficial for the UUSS, the community and the Forum.

Tiffany concluded the discussion at 1:40, requesting that copies of Minutes be sent to the Board, and other comments should also be sent directly to the Board by email.

Concluded at 1:40

A partial listing of attendees:

Tiffany Urness
Steve Hoverman
Candy McMorris
Megan Brooks
Joan Rubenson
Shirley Hines
Dorothy Mitchell
Muriel Drakeford
Denis Edgren
David McMorris
Joyce Chadd
Carol Byers
Pat Naylor
Joyce Mille
Chuck ONeill
Dick Taylor
Rick Caughey
Esther Franklin

Linda Hoganson