

## **Board of Trustees & Finance Committee Meeting - December 22, 2024**

Oakland Center for Spiritual Living

Present: Beth, VanArkl, Larry Wyman, Judith Roberts, Robert Leed, Elke Moritz, Rev. Sunshine Michelle Coleman, Nancy Hester

By phone: Deborah Jackson and Sam Ladion

Evocation: Judith Roberts

Check in by All

Review of Monthly reports given by Elke. Gross profit for the month, \$34,484.23. Total expenses were \$33,484.23 with a net gain of \$983.80. November income points of interest:

Auction net: \$2944.90

ERC claim interest: \$1511.47

Chair dedication total: \$400.00

Expenses outside of regular monthly was \$2152.02, which was for property taxes. Personnel expenses were \$16,963.63, which was within the budget.

Sunday musicians expenses were \$1750.00, which is within the budget.

### **Finance Committee Meeting**

Reverend Sunshine Michelle proposed that for the budget 2025, we need to discuss deficits to balance the budget as we cannot continue to lose money. We started by looking at the expenses to see where we could cut without it "showing". Also we agreed that we cannot make reductions that will alter the quality of our service.

### **Ideas for Generating more Revenue**

Deborah stated at last week's service that we didn't have a soloist and we got by just fine. Perhaps there could be more instrumental Sundays (without a singer soloist), which would save \$200 each time. We can't cut music more than we already have, but instead we could have more congregation participation. Beth suggested we reduce the amount of money we tithe to CSL Home Office to keep expenses down. Reverend Sunshine Michelle asked that we keep the conversation regarding musicians confidential, as this is a sensitive topic and needs to be handled with care.

Beth changed the contract with Javier for janitorial services to \$100/month reduction. Let's look at ways to reduce labor by 10%. Regarding gardening, we can have Rosas clean up every other Friday instead of every Friday. Regarding the copier service and printers, we tried to cut back on monthly fees, but the service company wouldn't agree to it unless we extended our contract with them.

Larry asked if Tao could explain why the total education and workshop expense in the 2025 draft budget was \$4150.00 when we haven't been hosting many classes and workshops.

Sam raised the question, "is there any strategic way to cut PG&E usage". Reverend Sunshine stated that the spike was probably from the recent rental usage, in addition to winter rates. Beth

said we are using the smallest containers possible for waste management and have reduced other utilities as much as possible. Reverend Sunshine stated one of the toilets in the Education Building was replaced recently, which contributed to the higher water costs, as did the leaking automatic water system in the garden. It was suggested that we place a checklist on the door to remind those who lock up the facilities to ensure that everything is turned off, i.e. lights, heaters, humidifiers, fans, etc.

Reverend Sunshine stated that she is recently medicare eligible and is working with social security to verify her monthly benefits fees, which will save her and OCSL on her benefit contributions.

Robert stated even with the proposed cuts we are only saving about \$1000 per month. We need to look at other ways to generate revenue. Perhaps we can brainstorm options at the next Open Forum. We also need to find ways to engage people more actively in our community to support greater cost effectiveness, efficiency, and support. Reverend Sunshine said we have asked for volunteers for help, but no one steps forward, so we need to find other ways to get people involved.

### **Chair Donation**

Reverend Sunshine stated to date she has only received 16 plaques for chairs. We will continue with the chair dedication campaign in 2025 in honor of our 80 year anniversary celebration.

It was suggested that we need to clean up Breeze as the information is outdated. Once it is updated we could reach out to people to try and get them motivated towards our 80 year upcoming anniversary. Nancy offered to assist in getting Breeze updated. Perhaps we could start a campaign with the young people to assist in “freshening data”.

The Finance Team meeting ended. The board continued with the agenda items. Beth suggested we get the two questions raised with input from Tao.

### **Vanguard Account**

After introducing the subject of what to do with the stock donation now that the Vanguard brokerage account is opened, Elke offered a motion to sell the stock in the Vanguard account. This is a stock donation from a congregant who suggests that we sell it. Deborah asked when we sell it where will it be applied, money market or operations? Reverend Sunshine suggested we put it in the Self Help money market account for now. She offered a motion to move the proceeds to the money market account once sold and withdrawn. Sam and Deborah agreed to the move and Board approved selling stock..

### **Review/renewal of housing language**

Reverend Sunshine said she will research the housing allowance statement for ministers that needs to be included in the Board minutes and will bring the information back to the Board to standardize the language for the staff assistant ministers.

Regarding Reverend Sunshine Michelle's Letter of Call, let's all review the last draft issued and come to some kind of closure with at least a "complete by date", since it expires on December 31, 2024.

### **Ideas to support growth**

We need to have a volunteer coordinator. Reverend Sunshine stated we need to encourage our congregants to volunteer for open positions to fill the spaces where people are stepping down.

### **Update for craft fair fundraiser**

Deborah said we had a profit of about \$650.00. This includes application fee, tithes etc. Sales were less than last year. Our systems need to be updated as people weren't able to complete the application process online.

Beth said there are two more items we need to discuss. One is authorizing payments over \$500.00. Reverend Sunshine stated there is a policy stating this. Anything over \$500 must be approved by the Board, whether it is included in the budget or not.

### **Minister's Report**

Reverend Sunshine provided the minister's report. Everything in there is self explanatory. She went on to say Peggy Cotton is rolling off her position as AV Team Lead by January 31, 2025. Peter Gum is rolling off his position as technical support for Midweek Oasis, and Craig Ferguson and Amy Chovnick are rolling off the Coffee/Tea Team - all on January 31, 2025. Peggy is looking for a replacement for her position. There is a tentative plan that maybe Andrea Bodell can fill in for Craig Ferguson. Reverend Sunshine is seeking to get co-leads or multiple people on the team for rotation assignments, which is less time consuming for individuals.

Elke needs to stop doing Payroll as her eyes are an issue moving forward. Reverend Sunshine asked Elke to let her know when she is ready to step down from doing payroll by putting it in writing, with as much advance notice as possible. Reverend Sunshine stated she has received Reverend Aikya's resignation letter with her reason for leaving the Board due to health issues. Deborah offered to complete Reverend Aikya's term on the Board since her position is up in March..

Meeting ended with prayer by Reverend Sunshine.