

MINUTES

Board of Social Justice and Action (SJA) Sunday, October 16, 2016

In Attendance: Jerry Hartman, Melissa Herman, Caryn McTighe Musil, Dick Staufenberger, and Rebecca Unruh.

Unable to attend: Nancy Lohman, Ann Norman, Cindy Sanders

Opening Prayer or Meditation: Caryn read the Peace Prayer of Saint Francis.

Treasurer's Report: Dick reported that SJA has approximately \$44,000 from the Christmas and Easter offerings to give to grant recipients this year.

Black Lives Matter Banner: Caryn thanked Dick for his help in getting the banner up. SJA agreed that the language Alexis chose for the banner was very effective.

Report on Meeting with Governance Council about Racial Justice Initiatives: Caryn reported that she, Dick, and Cindy met with the Governance Council on September 14 about future racial justice initiatives. Alexis and Mary organized a Privilege Walk for the group, which is an experiential way of measuring who has been granted more privileges across markers and status and voice and recognition. Three of the action items stemming from the meeting were (1) expanding a college scholarship program for Shaw students based in part on SJA's rejected proposal and (2) drafting a racial covenant for the church. Caryn and Dick are working in cooperation with Melissa to implement the first action item; Caryn will be working with Paul Leistra from the Governance Council on an initial draft of the racial covenant. In addition, Mary Grossnick has created a bulletin board in the Social Hall with a list of actions Westmorelanders could take right now to make a difference. Mary was inspired by what her own and other UCC churches have done to deepen their power to make Black Lives Matter move into every day actions.

Volunteer Corps: Caryn reported that she and Melissa met with the Volunteer Corps to discuss the SJA grant application process and to provide them with samples from past years. SJA agreed we should plan to have a dinner with the Corps in the spring.

2017 SJA Nominations: Caryn has confirmed that all current members will be continuing on the SJA Board next year.

2016 SJA Grants: The Board members agreed that SJA grants should make an impact and should focus on empowering the people receiving the grantee's services to create a more equitable society. As to the first point, the Board should consider whether the size of the

organization helps indicate whether our modest SJA grants could make an impact on a group with a large budget. There was also discussion of the need to look at the salary levels of the organization's leadership to ensure that the organization is using its funds appropriately. In some cases where total salary levels appear to be high, an explanation may be the number of employees. Board members can go to the applicant's website to try to determine the number of people on staff. In other cases, such as Shaw, salaries comprise a large proportion of the budget because the staff members are the programs. There was brief initial discussion of the applications from Critical Exposure, RISE, Samaritan Ministry, Shaw, and Marie Reed that will continue at November's meeting.

Preparation for November's Meeting: In preparation for November's meeting to select grantees, each Board member has been assigned three applications to review. To facilitate discussion, each Board member will prepare a short write-up of no more than half a page for each of their assigned applications (1) describing the strengths of the application, (2) identifying any concerns, and (3) recommending a funding level. Board members should keep in mind that the total requests this year are for \$48,797, meaning that the Board will need to cut nearly \$5,000 from the total requests. The Board agreed to try to circulate the write-ups in advance of November's meeting if possible. Dick agreed to circulate an excel spreadsheet about this year's applicants.

Change to November Meeting Time: To ensure there is adequate time for the grantee selection process, attendees agreed to extend the duration of November's meeting to three hours.

Next Meeting: NOVEMBER 13, 2016, 9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. IN THE PARLOUR.