



Minutes of Special Meeting of the Board of Directors

Tuesday, March 30, 2015

- ✓ Bill Scown, President
- ✓ Dan Masini, VP Admin Council
- ✓ Debbie Leoni, VP Program Council
- ✓ John Towell, Secretary
- ✓ Cindy Vacek, Director
- ✓ David de Coriolis, Director
- ✓ Dick Yingst, Director
- ✓ Lindsay Bates, Senior Minister, *ex officio*
- ✓ Jim O'Malley, Assistant Treasurer, *ex officio*

Also present: Hal Schulman, Ann Drover, Kevin O'Neill, David Tomell, Kevin Beyer, Lisa Gades, Tom Lichtenheld, Jan Miller, Rhonda Robinson, George and Gail Tattersfield, Vohny Moehling, Pam Tilbrook, Bob and Mary Swanson, Alderman Tom Simonian

Pat Ward has designated David de Coriolis as the proxy of her vote.

At 7:05pm, Bill called the special meeting to order with a review of the agenda of the meeting.

Cindy introduced Alderman Tom Simonian who began his presentation by stating that he had only become aware of our circumstances on this day. He told his he was willing to work with us but could not predict what the City Council would think about moving the Pioneer House to the 3rd Street location. He felt the biggest obstacle would be the cost of bringing the house up to code once it had been moved. He noted that parking was an issue the City of Geneva (City) is concerned with and that a City goal is to add a parking lot but emphasized there could be other options to be explored. One such option would be to move Pioneer House to some site other than the 3rd Street location. Cindy pursued discussion oriented around the use of the 3rd Street property as a revenue source during the many festivals that the City of Geneva has. Tom S. indicated that there would be ordinance issues but that the City would be open to good ideas. Jim asked about the importance to the City that the property be used for parking and Tom S. said the City would be open to talking about options and that to jot down your ideas and he would take them to the City. Kevin Beyer asked about alternative options of moving



the Pioneer House to City property and Tom S. indicated that such actions would involved a trade-off of interests. Mary asked about taxes and Tom S. indicated that wasn't an issue that the City could help with. Bill noted that the current zoning is B2 and that getting a special religious use exemption was highly unlikely. Tom S. noted that a B2 zoning is hard to rezone and that the City has been hard core about this. Bill said that this implies a long-term tax burden even with no development of the property. Dan discussed the fact that a B2 zoning requires 100% of the property and requires retail commercial use for the bottom floor. Tom S. was then thanked and he left.

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION

Dick took the floor and registered his concerns with the procedure the Board was following regarding the short notice to the calling of the meeting. He wanted any final decision reached tonight by the Board regarding the 3rd Street property to be presented to the congregation as preliminary. He then suggested that another special meeting of the Board be held, with proper notification, to listen to congregational concerns regarding the decision, and that after that meeting, the Board would decide if it wanted to amend tonight's decisions or let them stand as is. His primary concern was transparency. Bill indicated there was a timing issue since our decision had budget ramifications. Jim questioned what would be affected as far as the budget goes and Cindy pointed out that the donors had made money available to offset the costs up to \$50,000. Bill agreed that since there would be money available that timing was not critically important. A motion was passed that should the Board reach a final decision on the acceptance of the land donations from Geneva Universal tonight, we agree that we present it to the congregation in writing and then schedule another meeting to which the congregation will be invited and allowed to make their case. This meeting would be at the beginning of May or end of April. Then the Board would decide whether the decision would be passed.

BUILDING TASK FORCE

The results of the task force inquiry were reiterated and listed in the handout. This represented no new information that hadn't been previously discussed by the Board (see March 2015 Board Minutes).

ZONING AND LAND-USE ISSUES

In this discussion it was noted that moving Pioneer House to the 3rd Street location would not comply with the B2 requirements and hence not fit in with the City's plan. It was also noted that the Historical Preservation Society would be against altering the house to meet fire code requirements. This discussion segued into pinning down how much land to the immediate west of our current building UUSG could actually use for expansion. Bill indicated, looking at the drawing in the handout, that it would be 18 feet plus 10 feet of the easement leaving 10 feet for a one-way alley.

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT VALUES



Cindy has contacted a realtor and data regarding the value of the 3rd Street property are listed in the handout. The land is estimated as worth approximately \$100,000. There was discussion regarding how easy it would be to sell the property since it had been on the market for a significant time previously. Dan believed the land didn't sell previously because the asking price was too high and that it would sell quickly if the price was right.

REVENUE FROM TEMPORARY USES OF 3RD STREET PROPERTY

Cindy has pursued the possibility that the 3rd Street property could be a source of revenue for the church. The many festivals that are held in the City provide an opportunity for revenue generation as indicated in the handout. Lindsay asked who would be the administrator of the 3rd Street property and noted it was unlikely that staff would be able to take on the responsibility given all of its other duties and responsibilities. It was also noted because of the additional money the donors were offering to ease the financial burden on the church in accepting the property, we would likely be able to cover all holding costs (taxes, upkeep, and insurance) for the vacant lot on 3rd Street for 3-4 years. David de Coriolis noted that originally the idea was that the church might be able to grow into the 3rd Street property but that was no longer an option. Bill then opened the discussion to issues and alternatives. One option was to go to the donors and ask them again to lift the constraint of selling the 3rd Street property, with the proviso that any money generated from such a sale would go into a fund restricted to the expansion of the church on the present UUSG site. This discussion was eventually brought to two resolutions that were approved by the Board. The first motion was passed unanimously. The second was passed with one 'no' vote cast by proxy by David de Coriolis for Pat Ward.

Resolution 1 was to accept the property immediately to the west, the so-called "easement property."

Resolution 2 was that we accept the 3rd Street property if there are no restrictions and, that if the UUSG should decide to sell the property, any net proceeds from sale of the land would go into a restricted fund constrained to building expansion on the current UUSG location.

***SECRETARY'S NOTE regarding the above-mentioned resolutions:
Subsequent to the Board meeting, Dick realized that the second resolution dealing with the 3rd Street property lacked a time period in which the restricted funding would be held. In an email communication which occurred in the following days, the Board approved the following resolutions which were communicated to the donors and the congregation.***

Resolution 1: "On behalf of UUSG, the UUSG Board of Directors graciously accepts the generous gift of the James Street easement property offered to the



church by Geneva Universal and is free to utilize the land as UUSG deems appropriate.”

Resolution 2: “On behalf of UUSG, the UUSG Board of Directors, while deeply appreciative of GU’s generous offer of the Third Street property, will only accept the property if there are absolutely no restrictions placed upon its ultimate use or disposition. Should the property be received by UUSG under these conditions, and UUSG decide at some future time to sell the property, any net proceeds from that sale will be placed in a restricted fund at UUSG for use only on future physical expansion of the church at the current UUSG location at 102 S. Second Street, Geneva. The restricted fund established for future expansion will remain restricted for at least 20 years. At the end of that time period, future UUSG Boards of Directors would be able to remove the restriction on the funds at any time and move them to the church’s general fund.”

COMMUNICATION ISSUES

Bill then asked how we should communicate the events of the evening. It was decided that the donor should first be informed of the results of tonight's meeting. Then the congregation will be informed in writing through our normal channels, and finally, that there will be a special meeting of the Board on April 21, 2015 to which the congregation will be invited to express their reactions to the resolutions. Depending on the results of that special meeting at which the congregation will be invited to present arguments, the Board will make a final decision on either April 21 or April 28, 2015.

CONCLUDING ISSUES

Bill discussed resolving the earlier question of how many feet, currently thought to be 10 feet, does UUSG have to build onto the 18 feet.

Dick asked that the cost of taxes, insurance, and an estimated cost of upkeep for the vacant 3rd Street property be determined and be presented to the Board before its meeting on the 21st. It was noted that Katie can find that out for us.

Adjournment 9:06 pm

Respectfully submitted,

John Towell

Secretary