

SJ Council Meeting

February 19, 2022

The meeting was called to order on Zoom at 10:05. Present: Linda Stoller (chair), Barb Czech, Marlene Calderone, Davonne Irion, Natasha Cruz-Knopf, Barb Foley, Harriet Ha-Sidi, Eloise Hardman (board liaison), Anne Burnham (secy.) Welcome back, Barb Czech!

The January minutes were approved with a few revisions: Marlene clarified donors to the Better World Fund (\$2,000 annual gift from the family and \$200 from another family member) and that the total collected for Feeding Tampa Bay was \$1,121.99; Anne said that Compassion & Choices is meeting on the 2nd Thursday of the month.

Treasurer's Report: Marlene reported that \$400 was sent to the Southern Poverty Law Center and \$1,125 to Feeding Tampa Bay from Community Outreach contributions. The Better World Emergency Fund disbursed \$1,000 for tornado relief in Kentucky. Marlene mentioned that there is more in the treasury at this time than usual. Funds will be sent to UUJF and UUSC (\$1 per member), \$100 to the UU@UN (United Nations) and \$100 to the local NAACP soon. Report approved.

Community Outreach recipients: Marlene's research found that the FL Rights and Restoration Coalition is not a 501(c)3, so they could not be scheduled for the month of Feb., so CIW, originally scheduled for March, was moved up to Feb. Harriet expressed disappointment that the change meant the donation period for the CIW would end before the scheduled spokesperson from CIW would have a chance to speak to the congregation; Marlene said that she would see about extending the online donation time. Other months for Community Outreach were approved as follows:

March: Pinellas County African American History Museum

April: UU the Vote

May: Equality Florida

New and Continuing Issues

Postcards: Davonne reported that repeated efforts to communicate with *Mi Vecino* were unsuccessful. She recommended we work with Broward for Progress, which has organized postcard writing. Following discussion, the SJC approved \$225 for 400 cards & postage. On March 19th at 11 AM (after the SJC meeting) there will be an outdoor kickoff with tables set up for members & friends to write postcards. Depending on the response, there will be more opportunities to write at coffee hours after that, as well as take cards home to do. Davonne will follow up with Broward for Progress re: getting addresses for Pinellas County residents, if possible; also the League of Women Voters to see what they are doing. Davonne will select the postcard design and buy the cards & stamps. Linda will put an article in the e-Octagram, talk to Anne Gilbert about setup on the 19th and ask Susan Strauss to make coffee. Barb F. will bring pens. (Note: postcards must not be sent before Sept. 28th, so there's plenty of time to do a lot of writing!)

Phone Banking: Natasha participated in the Feb. 7th phone bank with UU Side with Love and said that the process is easy: go to Side with Love or UU the Vote to get a virtual phone link; set up an action ID account, get script, set up how many calls you want to make, etc. Natasha will follow up to see if there's a March phone bank meeting.

SJ Report for Feb. 20: Linda will encourage members to sign up for the UUJF's Action Alert, which makes it easy to submit a request to legislators to vote "no" on outrageous bills that are currently being fast tracked; misdemeanor film to be shown next 2 Sundays at Open Issues, which aligns with the FAST work on civil citations.

Committee Reports

FAST: Linda reported that network members met on Zoom last Thursday and will gather again at a rally on March 7th. Nehemiah will be in person outside, place to be determined, on March 28th. Linda will contact Anne Gilbert about ordering blue UUC t-shirts to have available for Nehemiah. The 3 issues that FAST has been working on this year are: civil citations for adults charged with misdemeanors; affordable housing; and water quality & flooding. Anne suggested that Jan Booher (Venice UU) might be able to help FAST research flooding issues in Pinellas, as she has worked extensively on the issue in marginalized communities in Florida.

Racial Justice: Linda (for Trude) reminded us that there will be a congregational meeting on April 10th to vote on adoption of the 8th principle. There will be an Open Issues about it on March 13th, and Bill Foley will also lead another discussion in March.

Migrant Justice: Harriet said there will be an Open Issues presentation coming up; stay tuned.

Compassion & Choices: Anne reported there was a Zoom meeting on Feb. 10th with Marcia Bailey discussing ways to possibly prevent dementia. The next meeting will be on March 10th.

Refugee Task Force: Barb F. said that the ESL tutors recently had a picnic at Eagle Lake Park. They have decided to wait until fall to restart ESL classes. She has not heard from any of the agencies that sponsor Afghan refugees.

LULAC: no report at this time

The meeting adjourned about 11:50. The next meeting will be on March 19th at 9:30 AM in person

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Burnham