

**Minutes**  
**Social Responsibilities Council**  
**February 22, 2015 (substituting for a March meeting)**

Present: Jean Poppei, Chair, Patty Burch, Jaye Holly, Don Odell, Renee Panetta, Jacqui Williams, Betsy Wright Matt Lesniak, Carol Butts, Anne Kearney, Cindy Dean,

Jean opened the meeting with a centering reading from Kay Montgomery entitled "About February."

Renee made a motion to approve the minutes from the Feb 1, 2015 meeting; Patty seconded. The motion was approved. One member abstained.

Jean showed the new banner and the group was pleased with it. Jean will take it to Moral Monday on Feb 23. At the board meeting, a "Black Lives Matter" banner was discussed for the front of the church and it was suggested that the cost would come out of the SRC budget. The suggested design is the one created by Leah Purcell with the Standing on the Side of Love heart and the words "Black Lives Matter." It was noted that on some of the posters included the line "You are all beautiful" and that would not be included in the banner. Jaye moved that the banner be paid for from SRC funds, Jacqui seconded. The motion was approved.

For the WOW room donation, a table has been secured for the Green Sanctuary Committee. The GSC will need to determine whether or not they will be using it.

Capital Roots has requested a give-away the plate in April. It is becoming an annual tradition. Patty will coordinate with the Religious Services Committee and Rev. Sam. There are two other requests for give-aways. One is for scholarships for sending refugee children to summer camp. The other is for supporting FUUSA youth in attending Unirondack. Since it appears that after the Capital Roots give-away we will only have one more give-away left for this budget year, there was discussion on how to support both requests. Since the refugee camp scholarships seem to be mostly for camp supplies (sunscreen, bug spray, swim suits, etc.) it was determined that a collection drive would be one way to support them. This may be a project that RE could be involved with. Jacqui made a motion for the final give-away to be used to support Unirondack, Patty seconded. The motion was approved. Coordinating the camp supply drive for the refugee kids will be further discussed at the next meeting.

Since there are 5 Sundays in March, the FOCUS envelopes will be distributed on March 29.

There no updates to report on the Sheridan Prep playground project.

Four years ago, before the solar panels were installed, GSC initiated FUUSAs switch to a company that uses more sustainable energy sources (i.e., windpower) so \$1000 was allocated from the GSC budget. For the last 2 years, the FUUSA general budget has covered the cost, but due to budget restrictions, Sue Berzinis has asked that the \$1000 come out of the GCS portion of the SRC budget. The GSC has agreed to pay the \$1000 out of its designated fund, but wants to make sure SRC has no objection. The discussion

included questions about GSC getting a separate account from SRC and moving the expense from a static line. It was also pointed out that the higher cost was assumed as a way to support renewable energy before the solar panels were installed, so it would be appropriate to re-visit whether that additional cost should continue to be budgeted. Carol will talk with Chuck Manning and report at the next SRC meeting. Betsy moved that SRC approve the GSC budget request; Don seconded. The motion was approved.

Tim Burch needs plastic planting pots for a greenhouse project and work with St. Anne Institute. Betsy will be advertising at the SRC table for people to recycle their pots.

Renee reported that progress is being made with the recycling bins. Bob Zima has developed blueprint plans. He will price them out and she will report back to the SRC. Also, a proposal that she researched to renegotiate the trash services has not been acted on by the church, and it could save more than \$2000 per year, and even more if the composting is taken into account.

Although there are many things happening throughout the city, there is not a coordinated effort across Albany for Earth Day. GSC will keep the SRC posted on the planning as it progresses.

Organizers are needed for the May 10 forum. Tim Burch will be presenting on Planting a Vegetable Garden. Patty and Betsy will co-coordinate.

May 4, 2015 will be Interfaith Impacts Advocacy Day. The key issues are passage of the full 10-point Women's Equality Act, Transgender Rights, Support for Minimum Wage Increase and Support for Public Schools. The \$850 from FUUSA in support of Interfaith Impact is greatly appreciated. On April 12, Rob will be doing the forum on Advocacy for Social Justice. Jean will serve as coordinator.

Jean has requested that SRC meetings be switched to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month instead of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday for next fiscal year. Betsy will confirm with GSC that they are willing to switch.

It was unclear as to whether Charlie Silberman was expecting a financial contribution from the SRC at his meeting with us. He was provided a number of resources that can support his goals. Any individual wishing to make a contribution can go to Go Fund Me: Help Turn Tragedy Into Opportunity.

Those who have been asked to review the various parts of the Statement of Commitment survey should get their revisions to Jean by **March 15**. Karen and Sandy will be formatting the Statement to present at the next SRC meeting. Renee will make sure the final version gets sent to RE.

This year's Stand Against Racism event will be April 23 – 26, which doesn't leave much time to plan. Several suggestions were put on the table. Could we partner with Schenectady UU? With CRUUNY? With the two predominantly African American churches that are closest to FUUSA? With FOCUS churches? With Soul Café at Westminster Presbyterian? Jean will talk to Rev. Sam and Peggy Sherman about the possibility of making a request at the CRUUNY service next week to seek partners for Stand Against Racism.

Because of conflict in the calendar, upcoming SRC meetings may need to be changed. We will meet as scheduled for April 5, even though it is Easter, but the May meeting will need to be changed or perhaps cancelled. The June 7 meeting will be the final one of the year.

The Selma Celebration will Feb 28 at 1:00 at the Swyer Theater.  
Hunger Action Network and FOCUS Lobby Day will be March 11.

Minutes for the next SRC meeting will be recorded by Matt Lesniak. (**Editor's Note: Matt is not yet an official member of SRC but Martha has volunteered to take the April minutes**).  
Snacks will be provided by Jacqui Williams.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05. Minutes taken by Jaye Holly

## **REPORTS attached from the Agenda**

### **Betsy: Green Sanctuary Committee:**

The Green Sanctuary Meeting convened on February 15 to discuss continuing items as follows: (1) The Forum for March 15 seems to be set. Committee members will provide light refreshments. (2) Nichola Dutre continues to work on the potluck, which is scheduled for April 3. The theme of eating locally will be changed to a theme as yet undetermined. (3) Changes have also occurred in the proposed Earth Day service. Lynne Ashley will be giving the sermon and wants to speak about the importance of trees in religious history and in the environment. It is not yet clear whether the committee will still pursue a trash sculpture and a trash collecting event.

The committee reviewed the request from FUUSAn treasurer, Sue Berzinis, for a contribution from the GSC designated fund to the cost of the wind energy component of the FUUSA energy bill. (The GSC had initially advocated and commenced this contribution some years ago.) The committee approved the allocation of \$1000 provided there was no opposition placed to the contribution by the SRC.

Sandy Steubing described recent activities of PAUSE, and Carol Butt discussed further actions by Solarize Albany. Two people volunteered to be at a GSC table for Getting Connected Sunday.

### **Martha: Room Donations 2014-15**

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Interfaith Story Circle	Film and discussion	Sept. 28, 2014	Emerson
League of Women Voters	Candidate Event	Oct. 21, 2014	Emerson
Pause	Controlling Climate Change	Nov. 18, 2014	Emerson
Capital Region Refugee Roundtable	Art exhibition	June 6, 2015	Channing
Capital Roots	Register gardeners	February 7, 2015	Channing
SUNY School of Criminal Justice	Forum on Finding Justice	January 21, 2015	Emerson
New Yorkers for Responsible Lending	Annual Meeting	October, Nov. weekday 2015	Emerson
WOW Company	Solutions Grassroots Tour	March 7, 2015	Emerson

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**Jean—Forums for the rest of the year:**

January 11: (Not) Talking about Suicide (Karen K.)

February 15: When Did You Learn Black Lives Matter? (Jacqui W.)

March 08: GSC Green/Sustainable Investing (Chris B.)

April 12: Advocating for Social Justice (Robb)

May 10: Planting a Vegetable Garden (organizer?)