

**Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship**

**Governing Policies**

**January 14, 2010**

## **Mission:**

We the members of the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship (BUF) are a liberal religious community which values the diversity of individuals and affirms Unitarian Universalist principles. As a community we aspire to provide a creative and nurturing environment where social, spiritual and personal development are encouraged and acknowledged. Therefore, we celebrate in ritual, music, art literature and humor; and we endeavor to teach, to learn, and to serve both our community and the world.

## **Covenant:**

Love is the spirit of this fellowship  
And service gives it life  
Celebrating our diversity  
And joined in a quest for truth  
We work for peace and honor all creation  
This is our covenant.

## **I: Ends - Values, Vision, and Right Relations**

## Values

BUF honors the mystery and uncertainty ever present in the ongoing search for personal and spiritual growth. BUF strives to embody the following values in all its work:

- Authenticity
- Generosity of spirit
- Mutual respect
- Freedom of thought

## **Vision** (From 2007 Board)

1. BUF provides inspirational worship services on Sunday and throughout the week that meet a range of needs within the congregation.
2. BUF is a welcoming community:
  - a. We strive to make people feel welcomed, included and valued, and seek ways to involve them.
  - b. We value diversity with our community.
  - c. We treat each other with respect and kindness.
  - d. We accommodate participants with special accessibility needs and handicaps.
3. BUF encourages lifelong learning:
  - a. We provide children with a broad religious education and active learning experiences.
  - b. We explore and promote UU principles and liberal religious traditions.
  - c. We encourage a life-long connection to UUism.
  - d. We provide programs that explore diverse aspects of spirituality, morality, and the search for meaning.
  - e. We provide programs to inspire a purpose-filled life for our seniors.
4. BUF cares for its members through ministerial and pastoral work.
5. BUF uses music and the arts as essential parts of its ministry.
6. BUF actively encourages, invites and assists people of all ages and talents to participate in fellowship activities and actions.
7. BUF acts on its values in the larger community:
  - a. We share our values with others, and sponsor community events to serve this goal.
  - b. We support organizations that share our values
  - c. We live in right relationship with our neighbors and the natural environment.
8. BUF sponsors social activities that provide an atmosphere of celebration and fun.
9. BUF supports a variety of families and actively promotes healthy interpersonal relationships.
10. BUF nurtures a culture of stewardship, responsibility, and generosity:
  - a. We support this community through our gifts of time, money and love.
  - b. We use resources in an environmentally and fiscally responsible way.
  - c. We provide adequate resources and physical facilities to fulfill our mission.

11. BUF supports and builds effective and respectful leadership:
  - a. We provide staff and lay leaders with clear goals and guidelines, and provide adequate resources and training.
  - b. We train leaders to provide respectful and democratic leadership.
  - c. We pledge financial support for fair compensation reflecting UUA guidelines

**Stakeholders** - In accomplishing its vision, BUF will prioritize its planning and resources first towards its primary stakeholders, next towards its secondary stakeholders and then towards its tertiary stakeholders, as such groups are defined below:

Primary Stakeholders

1. Members
2. Staff
3. Friends who have pledged or contributed to the church but are not members
4. Children of members
5. Potential members seeking an open, liberal and inclusive church community. This includes but is not limited to those who do not have a church because of systemic oppression, gender identity, race, economics, or incompatible theology.

Secondary Stakeholders

1. Community outreach partners
2. UUA
3. Pacific NW District
4. Other UU Churches
5. Liberal Theology Seminaries
6. Members emeritus

Tertiary Stakeholders

1. Neighbors
2. Lapsed members
3. Community
4. Funders
5. Vendors
6. People served by community outreach partners
7. Building users & renters

## **Right Relations**

BUF strives to be in right relations during all community interactions (board, staff & congregants) and promote Democratic process by:

- Listening respectfully to others; especially those in dissent
- Model and promote the highest ethical standards
- Speaking thoughtfully and “owning” what you say
- Allowing all stakeholders to be heard
- Being supportive of group decisions
- Speaking with one voice once a formal decision is made
- Ongoing participation in the community [even when you don’t get your way]



## **II: Administrative Team Limitations**

## **Policy A: General Administrative Team Constraint**

The Administrative Team shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is imprudent or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics. Accordingly, the Administrative Team shall not fail to operate with a procedural policy against misconduct and dishonesty that meets accepted business practices of the accounting industry. For purposes of this policy, misconduct and dishonesty must include but not be limited to:

1. Theft or other misappropriation of assets, including assets of the corporation or others with whom Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship (BUF) has a business relationship
2. Misstatements and other irregularities in corporation records, including the intentional misstatement of the results of operations
3. Forgery or other alteration of documents
4. Fraud and other unlawful acts

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship specifically prohibits these and other illegal activities in the actions of the Administrative Team, all employees, and all others responsible for carrying out its activities.

## **Policy B: Employee/Volunteer Treatment**

With respect to treatment of employees and volunteers, the Administrative Team may not cause or allow conditions that are inhumane, unfair, or unprofessional.

Accordingly, the Administrative Team may not:

1. Discriminate (as defined by city, state, and federal laws) among existing or potential employees/volunteers on other than clearly job-related criteria, individual performance, or individual qualifications.
2. Subject employees or volunteers to unsafe or unhealthy conditions.
3. Withhold from employees a due-process internal grievance procedure.
4. Prevent employees from grieving to the Board of Directors when:
  - a. internal grievance procedures have been exhausted and
  - b. the employee alleges either that:
    - i. Board established (BUF) policy has been violated to the employee's detriment, or
    - ii. Board established (BUF) policy does not adequately protect the employee's rights.

## **Policy C: Compensation and Benefits**

With respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers, and volunteers, the Administrative Team shall not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or public image. Accordingly, the executive team may not:

1. Change individual Administrative Team members' compensation, benefits, or allocated professional expenses as established by the Board of Directors
2. Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.
3. Establish current compensation and benefits that:
  - a. Deviate materially from the applicable nonprofit or geographic market for the skills employed, absent legitimate articulated reasons.
  - b. Create obligations over a term longer than revenues can be safely projected, in no event longer than one year and in all events subject to losses of revenue.
4. Establish deferred or long term compensation and benefits that:
  - a. Cause unfunded liabilities to occur or in any way commit the organization (BUF) to benefits that incur unpredictable future costs.
  - b. Provide less than some basic level of benefits to all full-time employees, though differential benefits reflecting market conditions or other appropriate factors are not prohibited.

## **Policy D: Financial Planning**

With respect to planning fiscal events, the Administrative Team may not jeopardize fiscal integrity of the organization (BUF). Accordingly, the Administrative Team may not cause or allow fiscal projections that:

1. Contain too little detail to enable reasonably accurate projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, cash flow and subsequent trails, and disclosure of planning assumptions.
2. Plan the expenditure in any fiscal year of more funds than are conservatively projected to be received in that period, absent legitimate articulated reasons.
3. Deviate materially from Board-stated priorities and requirements (see Ends policies) in its allocation among competing fiscal needs.

## **Policy E: Financial Condition**

With respect to the actual, ongoing condition of the organization's financial health, the Administrative Team may not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or loss of allocation integrity. Accordingly, the Administrative Team may not:

1. Allow cash to drop below the amount needed to settle payroll and debts in a timely manner.
2. Expend any endowment or designated funds other than for the purposes determined at time of receipt or designation.
3. Borrow funds on other than the short-term basis as defined and outlined in these (End/Board) policies.
4. Fail to establish and fund a reserve account for the purpose of meeting financial needs for which there are no budgeted funds available. *Specifications for this fund are as follows:*
  - **FUND GOAL** – Equal to 10% of the most recent approved operations budget
  - **ANNUAL FUND ALLOCATION GOAL** - Not less than 1% of the operations budget.
  - **RESERVE FUNDING** – The approved amount must be deposited in a liquid, conservative, interest or dividend earning account.
  - **USES of FUND** - Use of the reserve funds must be authorized by a formal Board resolution.
5. Fail to establish and fund a sabbatical leave account to be deposited in a liquid, conservative, interest or dividend earning account.

## **Policy F: Asset Protection**

With respect to proper stewardship of the corporation's assets, the Administrative Team may not risk losses beyond those necessary in the normal course of business.

Accordingly, the Administrative Team may not:

1. Fail to insure against theft and casualty losses at replacement value less reasonable deductible and/or co-insurance limits.
2. Fail to insure against corporate liability and personal liability of Board Members and employees, taking into account pertinent statutory provisions for indemnification and exemptions applicable to Washington non-profit organizations.
3. Subject facilities and equipment to improper wear and tear or insufficient maintenance.
4. Unnecessarily expose the organization, its Board and employees to claims of liability or risk the nonprofit status.
5. Make any purchase of over \$2,500.00 without at least two competitive bids.
6. Receive, process, or disburse funds under controls insufficient to meet the Board appointed auditor's standards or other government standards.
7. Invest operating capital in insecure instruments, including uninsured checking accounts and bonds or CDs of less than 'A' rating.
8. Fail to protect intellectual property, information, and files from significant damage, excluding the work of called ministers of the church, who are the sole owners of their intellectual property.

**Policy G: Conflict of Interest**

The Administrative Team shall not cause or allow any conflict of interest in awarding purchases or other contracts.



## **Policy H: Communication and Counsel to the Board**

With respect to providing information and counsel to the Board of Directors, The Administrative Team may not cause or allow the Board to be uninformed or misinformed. Accordingly, the Administrative Team may not:

1. Fail to inform the Board in a timely manner of relevant trends, public policy initiatives, public events of the organization, and material external and internal changes, particularly changes in the assumptions upon which any Board policy has previously been established.
2. Fail to submit the monitoring data required by the Board policy IV.C. (“Monitoring Administrative Team Performance”) in a timely, accurate, and understandable fashion, directly addressing provisions of the Board policies.
3. Fail to gather sufficient employee and external points of view, issues, and options as needed for fully informed board decisions.
4. Present information in unnecessarily complex or lengthy form.
5. Fail to recommend changes in Board policies, the need for which become known to them.
6. Fail to limit public statements about the official position of the congregation or board on controversial social, political, and/or congregational issues to what the congregation or board has formally and explicitly adopted as positions of record. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to infringe upon the fundamental principle of freedom of the pulpit.
7. Fail to prepare, implement, and share with the board within three months of the annual executive team evaluation annual individual professional development plans that respond to the evaluation.

## **Policy I: Growth of the Church**

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship is growing in numbers, programs, and budgets, in our own sense of community and in our outreach to the wider community. This growth is rooted in the spiritual and religious lives of the people of our church as we live out our values in the community. Accordingly, in guiding the church's growth, the Administrative Team will not fail to:

1. Be governed by our church's mission, vision and values
2. Respect the history and heritage of our church and faith
3. Maintain the current location at 'I Street
4. Communicate regularly with all of its stakeholders, as appropriate, about its plans regarding growth
5. Be mindful of the needs of the congregants of all ages and abilities when making changes to the building.

## **Policy J      Non-Pledge Donation Policy**

Spirit: To ensure that all donations outside of regular member Annual Pledges are consistent with the activities, policies, mission, goals of the Fellowship.

**Policy: The Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship may accept Financial Donations, Material Donations, and Special Project – Building & Grounds Donations on a selective basis. All restricted or targeted donations and projects with a value greater than \$250 will be submitted to the Admin Team for discussion, evaluation and decision.**

Paddle Calls, Capital Campaigns, Endowment Funds and Board directed actions, plate and miscellaneous offerings are outside the scope of this policy.

### **TYPES OF DONATIONS UNDER THIS POLICY**

1. **Financial Donations:** Acceptance of Financial Donations by the Fellowship is subject to the following restrictions:
  - a. Donations must clearly correspond to an existing element of the Fellowship's mission and vision.
  - b. There must be an written mutual understanding (\*) that the Fellowship can honor restrictions, if any, on a donation, for an indefinite period only, and that the restriction may be waived in the future if the restriction is no longer reasonable or needed, as determined by the Admin Team.
  - c. The Fellowship may not accept donations linked to a requirement that a product, policy, or service be endorsed by the Fellowship in any way.
  - d. Donors are to be encouraged to give priority to the Fellowship's General Fund.
  - e. Financial donations of less than \$250 will be directed to the appropriate committee for evaluation and decision, with appropriate notice to and oversight by the Admin Team.
  - f. Donors will receive proper and timely documentation for tax purposes.
  - g. Requests for project naming rights shall be decided by the BUF Board of Trustees.
  - h. Donations in excess of 2% of the current year's operating budget shall require board approval.
  
2. **Material Donations:** Acceptance of Material Donations by the Fellowship is subject to the following restrictions:
  - a. The donated items must be in good condition, and be of use immediately or in the near future.
  - b. If appropriate, legal title of the donated item must be obtained.

- c. If the item requires accommodation of any sort to the extent that budgeting funds for the purpose is necessary (financial, physical, etc.), then Board approval is required before the donation may be accepted.
  - d. In-kind donation receipts will be available to donors upon their request.
3. **Special Projects – Building & Grounds Donations:** Acceptance of funds for Building and Grounds is subject to the following terms in addition to 1. Financial Donations above. The Building & Grounds Committee (B&G) shall create, each year during the budgeting process, two lists of projects for the improvement of the physical plant of the Fellowship:
- i. The first list shall be submitted to the Board as part of the Annual Budget of the Fellowship. The Board shall propose through the budget which projects are to be funded under the General Operating Budget of the Fellowship for that fiscal year.
  - ii. The second list shall include the items which do not receive funding in the annual budget, and other items specified by B&G. This list shall be approved by the Admin Team on an annual basis, updated as needed by B&G with the Admin Team notified of additions, and shall be the list of special projects from which donors may choose.
  - iii. Donors may suggest special projects they wish to fund. Such projects with a dollar value of greater than \$100 are subject to approval by the Admin Team.

(\* ) Donor must complete a *Non-Pledge Donation Agreement* form for donations to BUF which are not directed to the general operating fund.

Date of policy approval: November 13, 2014

Accompanies the following form and procedures:

- 1. Non-Pledge Donation Agreement Form
- 2. Non-Pledge Donation Procedures

### III. Governance Process

## **Policy A: Governing Style**

The Board will approach its task with a style that emphasizes strategic leadership rather than administrative detail, clear distinction of Board and employee roles, future rather than past or present, and pro-activity rather than reactivity. In this spirit, the Board will:

1. Focus chiefly on intended long-term impacts or ends, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects
2. Direct, control, and inspire the organization through the careful establishment of the broadest organizational values and perspectives (policies). Policies will address:
  - a. Ends: What benefits for which needs at what cost
  - b. Administrative Team Limitations: Boundaries of prudence and ethics to be observed by the Administrative Team
  - c. Governance Process: Board roles and responsibilities
  - d. Board/Administrative Team Relationship: Linkage between the Board and the Administrative Team
3. Enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence.
  - a. Discipline will apply to policy-making principles, respect for defined roles, and attendance.
  - b. After subjects have been discussed and voted upon, both majority and minority will support the action taken and speak with one voice.
4. Be accountable to the congregation and other stakeholders for competent, conscientious, and effective accomplishment of its obligations as a body. It will allow no officer, individual, or committee of the Board to usurp this role or hinder this discipline.
5. Monitor and regularly discuss the Board's own process and performance.
6. Ensure the continuity of Board's improvements through systematic treatment of its own institutional memory.
7. Be an initiator of policy, not merely a reactor to employee initiatives. The Board itself, not the employees, will be responsible for Board performance.

## **Policy B: Board of Trustees Job Contributions**

The job of the Board is to make contributions that lead the congregation toward the desired performance and assure that it occurs. The board's specific contributions are unique to its trusteeship role and necessary for proper governance and management. Consequently, the job of the Board shall be to:

1. Link between Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship and its stakeholders.
2. Write governing policies that, at the broadest levels, address:
  - a. Ends: Organizational products, impacts, benefits, outcomes (what good for whom at what cost).
  - b. Administrative Team Limitations: Constraints on administrative authority that establish the prudence and ethics boundaries within which lies the acceptable arena of executive activity, decisions, and organizational circumstances.
  - c. Governance Process: Specification of how the Board conceives, carries out, and monitors its own task.
  - d. Board-Administrative Team Relationship: How power is delegated and its proper use monitored.
3. Assure Administrative Team performance (as individual members and as a team) through monitoring and evaluation in accord with policies 2.a., 2.b., and 2.d. above.

## **Policy C: Officers' Roles**

### **President**

1. The job of the President is to assure the integrity of the Board's process. The President is the only person authorized to speak for the board.
2. The job output of the President is that the Board behaves consistently with its own rules and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization.
  - a. Meeting discussion content will be only those issues that, according to board policy, clearly belong to the Board to decide, not the Administrative Team
3. The authority of the President consists of making any decision on behalf of the board that falls within or is consistent with board policies on governance process and the Board-Administrative Team relationship.

### **Vice President**

1. The job of the Vice President is to assure the integrity of the Board's operational process.
2. The job output of the Vice President is that the Board operates in an orderly and efficient manner.
  - a. Board meeting discussion/deliberation will be timely, fair, orderly, and thorough, but also efficient, limited to time, and to the point.
  - b. Roberts' Rules are observed except where the Board has suspended them.
  - c. The authority of the Vice President consists of making any decision on behalf of the board that falls within or is consistent with board policies on governance process and the board-Administrative Team relationship.
    - i. The Vice President is empowered to chair board meetings with all the commonly accepted powers of that position (e.g., ruling, recognizing).
    - ii. The Vice President's authority does not extend to making decisions within Ends and Administrative Team Limitations policy areas.
    - iii. The Vice President's authority does not extend to supervising, interpreting Board policies to, or otherwise directing the Administrative Team. Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere



with mutual interaction about individual understandings of policies.  
(See also IV.A.5.)

## **Secretary**

1. The job of the Secretary is to assure the integrity of the Boards records. The Secretary is responsible for ensuring the:
  - a. Recording and distribution of accurate minutes of Board meetings.
  - b. Maintenance of the master copy of the current policies by recording amendments, distributing current policies to Board members and the Administrative Team, and making the current policies accessible to Board and Administrative Team members.
  - c. Public announcement of the annual meeting and other duties as assigned by the corporate bylaws.

## **Policy D: Board of Trustee's Members' Code of Conduct**

The Board expects of itself and its members ethical and businesslike conduct. This commitment includes proper use of authority and appropriate decorum in group and individual behavior when acting as Board members.

1. Trustees must represent unconflicted loyalty to the interests of the ownership. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups and membership on other boards or staffs. This accountability supersedes the personal interest of any trustee acting as an individual church member.
2. Trustees must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility. Taking into consideration individual circumstances involving a contract or transaction, the Board may waive the conflict of interest if:
  - a. the Board received full disclosure of the specific terms of the contract or transaction by the interested board member;
  - b. the Board determines that the contract or transaction is fair, reasonable and in the best interest of Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship; and
  - c. the Board agrees to waive the conflict by a majority vote of Board members present at a meeting of the Board (not counting the interested trustee).
  - d. The interested Board member may be present during the Board's discussion of the conflict to answer questions raised by any Board member, but may not be present during the Board's vote. The minutes of the Board meeting shall clearly reflect that the requirements above have been met.
3. There must be no self-dealing or any conduct of private business or personal services between any Trustee and the organization except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity, and equal access to "inside" information.
  - a. Trustees must not use their positions to obtain for themselves, family members, or close associates employment within the organization.
  - b. Should a trustee be considered for employment by the organization, the Trustee shall withdraw from Board deliberation, voting, and access to applicable Board information.
  - c. Should a trustee be employed by the organization or act as a paid consultant, the trustee must resign from Board service.

4. Written policies, adopted by majority vote of the Board, in the four areas of governance, shall exercise authority over the organization. Individual trustees may not attempt to exercise authority over the organization. The board will speak with one voice through its adopted policies.
  - a. Trustees' interaction with Administrative Team members or employees must recognize the lack of authority in any individual trustee or subgroup (committee, task force, ministry team) of trustees.
  - b. Trustees' interaction with the public, press, or other entities must recognize the same limitation and the similar inability of any trustee except the President (Policy III.C.1.) to speak for the board.
  - c. Trustees will make no judgments of the Administrative Team or employee's performance except as that performance is assessed against explicit Board policies by a formal evaluation process.
  - d. Trustees are encouraged to continually self-monitor their individual performance as trustees against policies, against the qualifications listed in the current trustee position description, and against any other current Board evaluation tools.

## **Policy E: Committee Principles**

The Board may establish committees to help carry out its responsibilities. Committees will be used sparingly to preserve the Board's functioning as a whole when other methods have been deemed inadequate. Committees will be used so as to minimally interfere with the wholeness of the Board's job, and so as never to interfere with delegation from Board to Administrative Team.

1. Board committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Such authority will be carefully stated in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the Administrative Team.
2. Board committees are to help the Board do its job, not to help the employees do their jobs. Committees will assist the Board chiefly by preparing policy alternatives and implications for Board deliberation. Board committees are not to be created by the Board to advise staff (employees).
3. Board committees cannot exercise authority over employees and in keeping with the Board's focus on the future, Board committees will not ordinarily have direct dealings with current employee operations. Further, the Board will not impede its direct delegation to the Administrative Team by requiring approval of a Board committee before an Administrative Team member action. The Administrative Team works for the Board, never for a Board committee or officer.
4. This policy applies only to committees that are formed by Board action, whether or not the committees include non-board members. It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the Administrative Team members.

## **Policy F: Complaint Procedure**

### A. A Board member receives a complaint

1. If the Board member is confident that the incident is not a violation of current Board policy and/or no new policy is required to cover the incident in the future, then the matter is dropped. The Board member informs the Administrative Team about the nature of the incident and follows up with the person who brought the complaint within 20 working days. If the person bringing the complaint is not satisfied s/he can submit the complaint in writing to the Board President.
2. If the Board member is not confident that the incident is not a violation of current Board policy and/or whether new policy is required to cover the incident in the future, the Board member instructs the person to put the incident/complaint in writing. If a written document is received the matter is brought to the Board GRIEVANCE TEAM\* (GT) within 20 working days of the receipt of the written document. The GT will decide whether full board action is required.
  - a. If the GT decides full Board action is required
    - i. If the matter is urgent, the Board President (a member of the GT) calls a special meeting of the Board within 20 working days and informs the Administrative Team.
    - ii. If the matter is not urgent, the Board President (a member of the GT) places the item on the next meeting agenda; the Board chair informs the Administrative Team about the incident.
  - b. If the GT decides full Board action is not required the matter is dropped. The Board member receiving the complaint (a member of the GT) follows up with the person who brought complaint within 20 working days. The Board President informs the Administrative Team of incident.

### B. If the matter comes before the full Board, the Board determines if there is applicable policy to cover the incident.

1. If there is applicable policy the Board reviews this policy. The Board may request an interpretation of the policy from the Administrative Team.
2. If in the Board's opinion the Administrative Team's interpretation does not fall outside "any reasonable interpretation" of applicable Board policy the matter is dropped. The Board follows up with the member who brought the complaint within 20 working days of Board action. A Grievance Resolution Report\*\* is filed.

3. If in the Board's opinion the Administrative Team's interpretation falls outside "any reasonable interpretation" of policy, the Board determines the degree of seriousness and takes appropriate action. The Board follows up with the member who brought the complaint within 20 working days of Board action. A Grievance Resolution Report\*\* is filed.
- C. If the Board determines that there is not an applicable Board policy to address the incident, the Board decides whether to amend existing policy.
1. If the Board decides to amend existing policy, the reported incident would be made explicitly unacceptable in the future. The Board would determine whether other action is required concerning the incident. The Board follows up with the member who brought the complaint within 20 working days of Board action. A Grievance Resolution Report\*\* is filed.
  2. If the Board decides not to amend existing policy the matter is dropped. The Board follows up with the member who brought the complaint within 20 working days of Board action. A Grievance Resolution Report\*\* is filed.

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\* Grievance Team: Two Board members appointed by Board chair to serve one year terms (January – December), the Board President, and the member who received the complaint. Since the member who received the complaint may already be a GT member, the GT will be three or four Board members in any given instance.

\*\* In all cases a Grievance Resolution Report (GRR) is completed by the Board Secretary and made part of the permanent church record.

**IV: Board of Trustees – Administrative Team Relationship**

## **Policy A: Delegation to the Administrative Team**

The Board's job is generally confined to establishing topmost policies, leaving implementation and subsidiary policy development to the Administrative Team members. Ends policies direct the Administrative Team to achieve certain results; Administrative Team Limitations policies constrain the Administrative Team to act within acceptable boundaries of prudence and ethics. All Board authority delegated to staff (employees) is delegated through the Administrative Team, so that all authority and accountability of employees can be phrased, insofar as the Board is concerned, as the authority and accountability of the Administrative Team. The Administrative Team members report to the Board for their areas of responsibility and as a team for collaboration towards overall achievement of Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship's mission, ends, and strategic plan.

1. The Administrative Team is authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions and develop all activities that are true to the Board's policies. The Board may, by extending its policies, "un-delegate" areas of the Administrative Team's authority but will respect the Administrative Teams choices so long as the delegation continues. This does not prevent the Board from obtaining information about activities in the delegated areas.
2. No individual trustee, officer, or Board committee has authority over the Administrative Team. Information may be requested by any individual trustee, officer, or committee, but if such request in the Administrative Team members' judgment requires a material amount of staff time, it may be refused with explanation.
4. The Administrative Team may not perform, allow, or cause to be performed any act that is contrary to explicit board constraints on Administrative Team authority (see Administrative Team Limitations policies).
5. Should the Administrative Team member deem it necessary to violate board policy, the Administrative Team member shall inform the Board President or another Board Officer if the President is not available. Informing is simply to guarantee no violation is intentionally kept from the Board, not to request approval. Trustee response, either approving or disapproving, does not exempt the Administrative Team member from subsequent Board judgment of the action nor does it impede any Administrative Team member decision.
6. Administrative Team authority does not extend to supervising, interpreting Board policies to, or otherwise directing, the Board President, individual trustees, or Board subgroups regarding Board policy. Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere with mutual interaction about individual understanding of policies. (See also III: Policy C. VP 2. c. iii.)



## **Policy B: Administrative Team Job Contribution**

As the Board's official link to the operating organization, the Administrative Team and its individual members are accountable for all organizational performance and exercise all authority transmitted into the organization by the Board via Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship's governing policies. Administrative Team member performance will be considered to be synonymous with the performance of Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship.

Consequently, the Administrative Team job contributions can be stated as their performance in three areas:

1. Accomplishment of organizational ends as stated in Board policies,
2. Organization operation within the boundaries of prudence and ethics established in Board policies on Administrative Team limitations, and
3. Appropriate use and delegation of power.

## **Policy C: Monitoring Administrative Team Performance**

Monitoring Administrative Team performance is synonymous with monitoring organizational performance against Board policies on Ends and on Administrative Team limitations. Monitoring will be as automatic as possible, using a minimum of Board time so that meetings can be used to create the future rather than review the past.

1. The purpose of monitoring is to determine the degree to which Board policies are being fulfilled. Information that does not do this will not be considered to be monitoring.
2. A given policy may be monitored in one or more of three ways:
  - a. Internal Report: Disclosure of compliance information to the Board from the Administrative Team or its individual members.
  - b. External Report: Discovery of compliance information by a disinterested external auditor, inspector, or judge who is selected by and reports directly to the board. Such reports must assess administrative performance only against policies of the Board, not the opinions of the external party unless the board has previously indicated that party's opinion to be the standard.
  - c. Direct Board Inspection: Discovery of compliance information by a Trustee, a Board committee, or the Board as a whole. This is a Board inspection of documents, activities, or circumstances directed by the Board that allows a "prudent person" test of policy compliance.
3. Upon the choice of the Board, any policy may be monitored by any method at any time. However, each Ends and Administrative Team Limitations policy of the Board will be classified by the Board according to frequency and method of regular monitoring (see chart). As often as possible these reports should be included in the Board mailing for regularly scheduled Board meetings so that trustees may thoroughly review them prior to the meeting.
  - a. Monthly internal reports: Ends, financial condition, staff change information (additions and departures, plans for replacement).
  - b. Quarterly internal reports: Ends, employee/volunteer treatment, financial planning, membership (net losses and net gains and totals).
  - c. Semi-annual internal reports: Asset protection, employee-volunteer complaints filed under grievance procedure (number and nature).
  - d. Annual internal reports: Ends, communication and counsel.

- e. Annual external reports: Asset protection/financial condition (Board arranged audit).

4. Chart: Frequency and Method of Regular Monitoring

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Protection of assets</b>	Internal report External report (audit)	Semi-annually Annually
<b>Financial condition</b>	Internal report External report (audit)	Monthly Annually
<b>Employee compensation and benefits</b>	Internal report	Annually (February)
<b>Employee \ Volunteer Treatment</b>	Internal report (staff changes) Internal report Internal report (complaints) Direct inspection	Monthly Quarterly Semi-annually Annually (including grievance procedures)
<b>Financial planning (budget)</b>	Internal report (planning) Direct inspection	Quarterly Annually (Spring)
<b>Program outcomes (Ends)</b>	Internal report Internal report (membership) Internal report	Monthly Quarterly Annually
<b>Strategic Plan</b>	Internal Report	Semi-annually

Any other policy shall be monitored by internal report each calendar quarter.

5. Policy Violation Process

The Board will pursue the following process in the event that it determines a policy violation has occurred and the degree and seriousness of the violation is judged by the Board to warrant initiation of a disciplinary process:

- a. Verbal warning (noted as such in writing to establish appropriate documentation of said step); more frequent monitoring of the violated policy; the Administrative Team member will present to the Board at the next Board meeting (via the Board mailing prior to the meeting) a plan to remediate the violated policy.
- b. First written warning. This step will be taken if there is no noticeable improvement in the Administrative Team member's willingness and/or ability to refrain from the policy violation following a reasonable period of time for the Administrative Team member to implement changes and

for the Board to monitor them.

- c. Second written warning. This step will be taken if the policy violation continue. If the violation involves a called minister, the Board at this point may also determine whether to notify the congregation, the means of doing so, and the content of the communication.
- d. If further policy violations occur, the Board will determine whether to suspend (with or without pay) or to terminate the employee / volunteer.
- e. If the individual is a called minister, the Board will:
  - i. Call a meeting of the congregation in compliance with Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship bylaws regarding selection/removal of the minister,
  - ii. Make known to the congregation the nature of the ongoing policy violations as well as the ongoing efforts to address the issue at every point, and
  - iii. Recommend termination of the called minister for continued policy violation. The Board will meet with the minister to determine how to address the minister's departure.

## **Policy E: Ministerial Compensation**

With regard to ordained ministerial compensation, Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship recognizes and supports the compensation recommendations as ratified by the UUA General Assembly in June 1995. **[COMMENT: Most recent UUA compensation schedules are found at:**

**<http://www.uua.org/leaders/leadership/benefitscompensation/compensation/>]**

1. Ministerial compensation consists of salary (including housing allowance) and benefits. Professional expenses are not part of compensation but as a cost of doing business are included in the total cost of ministry.
2. The Board will annually approve an amount of increase in the minister's salary as appropriate to current financial conditions. Annual increases for the minister are in two separate categories:
  - a. A cost of living increase will occur annually, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) estimate for the current year.
  - b. A merit increase above the adjustment for cost of living is appropriate every two to three years, depending upon current financial conditions. The Board will compile the results of the minister's performance evaluations for the time period since the last merit increase and use these to assist in determining such a merit increase. A merit increase is compensation for increased skill and growth in two areas:
    - i. Accomplishment of organizational ends as stated in Board policies.
    - ii. Organization operation within the boundaries of prudence and ethics established in board policies on Administrative Team limitations.
3. Benefits consist of **[ADD: Benefits provided by BUF]**
4. The Board will maintain records of ministerial salary increases and review this policy annually.

## **Policy F: Director of Administration's Compensation**

With regard to Director of Administration compensation, Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship recognizes and supports providing compensation comparable to jobs at similarly sized nonprofit organizations in the metropolitan area. [i.e. The Council on Nonprofits may be a source (but need not be the only source) of information regarding comparable nonprofit job descriptions.]

1. The Director of Administration's compensation consists of salary and benefits. Professional expenses are not part of compensation but are a cost of doing business and are outlined here. Examples of professional expenses include (but are not limited to) continuing education, books, professional conferences, periodicals, and attendance at General Assembly.
2. The Board will annually increase the Director of Administration's salary as appropriate to current financial conditions. Annual increases for the Director of Administration are in two separate categories:
  - a. A cost of living increase will occur annually, based on the CPI estimate for the current year.
  - b. A merit increase above the adjustments for cost of living is appropriate every two to three years. The Board will compile the results of Director of Administration's performance evaluation for the time period since the last merit increase and will use these to assist them in determining the current merit increase. A merit increase is compensation for increased skill and growth in two areas:
    - i. Accomplishment of organizational ends as stated in Board policies.
    - ii. Organization operation within the boundaries of prudence and ethics established in Board policies on limitations.
3. Benefits consist of **[REVIEW: Add benefits provided by BUF]**
4. The Board will maintain records of Director of Administration salary increases and review this policy annually.

## **Policy G: Development Ministry Team Chair's Professional Expenses**

The chair of the Development Ministry Team (DMT) is currently an unpaid volunteer position. In order to encourage professional development in areas of fundraising and development, a budget for professional expenses will be established. Professional expenses may include continuing education, books, professional conferences, periodicals, and attendance at General Assembly.

**Policy H: Administration Team Composition, Authority & Duties**

VERSION DATED: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ BOARD APPROVAL: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**PURPOSE:** To define the composition, authority & duties of the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship [BUF] Admin Team.

**INTENT:** To aid the Board of Trustees (BoT) in its charge of delivering the Mission and Vision of BUF.

**DURATION & SUPREMACY:** This policy is in effect upon approval by the Board of Trustees (BOT) and notification to BUF Stakeholders, superseding all previous versions of the same and remains in effect until modified by the Board of Trustees (BoT).

**COMPOSITION:** The Admin Team shall be comprised of BUF's

- (1) Minister
- (2) Administrator
- (3) Treasurer, or their designee
- (4) A Building & Grounds Committee Chair, or their designee
- (5) A BUF Member as appointed, annually, by the BoT to a 1 year min/3 year maximum term

The Minister, Administrator, Treasurer/Designee, and the B&G/Designee terms of service do not expire.

**AUTHORITY & DUTIES:** The AT has the authority to exist and perform as granted them by the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship Governing Policies. It is the duty of the AT to create and oversee all BUF Administrative Policies and Procedures that are needed to support the BoT.