



**Meeting Minutes  
Board of Trustees  
First Unitarian Church, South Bend  
September 14, 2022, 7:00 p.m.**

*Present:* Gail deSomer, Florence Klecka, Karen Dickson, Rev. Chip Roush, Lynn Liston, Bill Stevens, Elena Wake, Ken Chambers, Becky Lindstrom

*Guests:* Pat Davis, Rin Adams

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:08. Rev. Chip led the Chalice Lighting. Next was check-in and recitation of Covenant.

Approval of minutes

Motion made to accept the August meeting minutes by Gail, seconded by Bill. Carried unanimously.

Changes to Agenda

Add to Old Business: Move Rin's Covid proposal to beginning, and add Minister's goals.

Reports

Reports from Minister, Treasurer, Office, and Committees received in packet. Additional information given in meeting:

*Minister:* Asked for any questions or comments. Gail thanked Chip for detail, as it helps the BOT to address concerns about Chip's activities.

*President:* Absolutely will be a report next month.

*Treasurer:* The budget forecasts a deficit, but for now we are still in the black, due to early pledges coming in. Toilet needed to be fixed, but no money was allocated to the Building budget. It was confirmed that this is not against Church by-laws, which require a congregational approval to spend more than 3% of the entire budget on a single item. The repair was just under \$500.

*Technology Committee:* Tabled until next month.

*Stewardship Committee:* Tabled until next month.

*Worship Arts Committee:* Asked BOT committee liaisons for help in framing a future service, about how each committee contributes to the work of the church, in particular fulfilling our Covenant. Several ideas came up, and BOT appeared willing to help.

COVID Proposal: Rin proposed “that the Board strongly suggest that when the Covid risk level has reached Green [low], two-way masking [everyone wearing masks], from when people enter the building on Sunday mornings, throughout the service, and until a chime is rung, 5 to 10 minutes after the conclusion of the day’s worship. This will help viral counts significantly lower indoors, even if someone is caught out for a few minutes if they had to use the restroom or wanted to fix a potluck plate and take it outside.”

*Discussion*: **Gail**: we already mask in the building. **Becky**: This will be harder to enforce when the risk level is green. The congregation will need to hear the BOT with one voice, as there will be pushback. Hard-of-hearing people do not like masks, as it makes it harder to understand people if their lips are covered. **Elena**: When masks are removed at the pulpit, it negates the effect of staying masked when not speaking. Speakers need to stay masked, and they are then miked. **Rin**: Singing masked is better than unmasked, but there is still a risk. HEPA filters might be useful near the podium. **Gail**: I have one, and we can see if using one, or fans, would be distracting. **Rin**: Some will mask if they see others doing it, or if they know someone at risk. Long Covid is serious. **Becky**: If we ask people to mask the whole service, it will be scary. But we need to protect the vulnerable around us. **Elena**: How about masking every other week, so people can decide when to show up in person? **Chip**: This would be potentially confusing. **Elena**: yes, consistency is important. There should be no unmasking at all, especially the speakers. **Bill**: What’s the science say about the various color levels? How dangerous is it when the risk level is considered low? **Ken**: We are really just accommodating the at-risk subset of the congregation. **Becky**: Color level definitions have changed, because fewer people are dying of Covid. But long Covid is still serious, even with advances in treatment. **Lynn**: What are we willing to live with? Who is being asked to make the biggest adjustment? **Elena**: Is it ableism to ask why the at-risk people don’t just stay home? **Gail**: What is the difference between the KN95s and other masks? **Rin**: Basically the fit, which keeps more droplets inside. Masks keep at-risk people freer to participate. **Becky**: This will be a culture shift. **Chip**: I can do a service the week after next, to bring this to the attention of the congregation. Rin can help with it. **Ken**: We will table this until Chip has done a service on this, and the congregation has heard more information about it. **Rin**: I appreciate your time. Thank you for listening.  
Proposal tabled until next month.

### Old Business

*Snow Removal*: Lynn will ask around for help to determine the Church’s procedures for getting snow removed. Anne handled it last year, and would know whom to call. Gail noted that Barb Carmichael may be helpful, as her Homeowners Association has a policy that can be a template for the Church’s policy.

### New Business

*Lasagna Dinner*: Gail will put the BOT auction event of a dinner for about 20 people, at a fairly low price, in the Auction on Oct. 1. The date will be June 3, with a rain date of 6/17.

*Interim Conflict Engagement Policy*: Becky proposed that the Board use the attached draft policy as a working policy, to adapt it as we see necessary, with the goal of having our own final policy in place by next September. Gail seconded it. Karen abstained, and the motion passed.

*Board Town Hall Meetings:* Ken proposed that the BOT hold quarterly meetings of the Board after church, open to the congregation, to address questions and concerns. Gail and Bill agreed this sounded good for open communication. Gail then moved that the Board hold two Town Hall meetings, one in October, and one in mid-April. Bill seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

#### Other Business

*Communication:* As discussed at the retreat, there are several steps the BOT and minister are taking to address concerns from last year:

- ⇒ Adult forums are starting soon, and will include several talks on better communication skills.
- ⇒ Chip will give some sermons on this topic.
- ⇒ Calendar items will be on the Facebook page (Gail)
- ⇒ Florence will work with Pat about putting Chirp information onto the chases in the Great Hall.

The issue of bringing in a consultant in was discussed. The tools needed to manage conflict are important to learn. Elena reminded us we have a deficit budget, and Becky suggested just one big workshop being the most economical. Chip mentioned that he and Lynn McDonald might know someone local who might be useful, and he will follow up on this.

*Minister's goals:* Tabled until next month.

#### Adjournment

It being late, several agenda items were tabled until next month, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Next Board of Trustees Meeting: Wednesday, October 12, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. eastern time

Respectfully submitted by:  
Florence Klečka, Secretary, Board of Trustees