



**Meeting Minutes
Board of Trustees
First Unitarian Church, South Bend
January 11, 2023, 7:00 p.m.**

Present: Gail deSomer, Florence Klecka, Karen Dickson, Lynn Liston, Ken Chambers, Elena Wake, Becky Lindstrom

Absent: Rev. Chip Roush, Bill Stevens

Guest: Louise Williams

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:08. Florence lit an invisible Chalice. Next was check-in and recitation of Covenant.

Approval of minutes

Motion made to accept the December meeting minutes by Gail, seconded by Lynn. Carried.

Changes to Agenda

Louise Williams' letter was placed as part of the Committee reports, and Tamara Ciszczon's room request was added to New Business.

Reports

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

President: Nothing to report.

Treasurer: We're still in the black. Finance Committee would like to use the balances in the Building Fund (\$350) and Capital Campaign (\$4,887.97) to pay down the mortgage principal. Gail so moved, and Elena seconded. Discussion: Gail asked if repairs should come out of those funds. Elena said no, those are not operating funds. There are operating funds with small or nonexistent budgets that apply to regular maintenance, and that's where the money should be assigned. A deficit balance at the end of the year will inform next year's budget. Motion passed.

Building Committee: Pat Littlejohn is willing to head up the Building Committee. Much rejoicing.

Marketing Committee: Louise Williams is willing to head up the Marketing Committee. Florence moved to approve Louise's plans, detailed in attached letter, to expand the church's marketing efforts. Gail seconded. Motion passed. More rejoicing.

Old Business

Board Town Hall Meeting: The suggestions made during the December 18 meeting, including those written on clipboards, were sorted by committee and put into a document (attached). Florence suggests these should be delegated by the Board committee liaisons to their committees, to be discussed and possibly acted on. Lynn asked if the Board should still be responsible for whether action is taken on a given item. Several of the suggestions were discussed as to feasibility, and whether the correct committee was chosen to handle it. Florence replied that this was only the beginning of the process, and that the committees should discuss their items first.

Becky suggested that a form be created, to make committee reporting less onerous, and simpler to complete: what has happened in the last month, what progress has been made on a given issue, and what will be worked on next? She is willing to make up this form, and Board consensus approved of this.

The question of the date of the next Town Hall meeting came up. If quarterly, it should be March, which is when the Stewardship campaign should kick off. In Bill's absence as Stewardship Committee liaison, Gail emailed Bill, Gary Metzler, Anne Mannix, and Barbara Boyd to suggest March 5 as the kickoff date.

New Business

Membership List Review. Gail presented a document listing the current church membership, with members added and deleted from the list. Discussion on how membership is determined, and when to delete a member. Florence moved to approve the list to be sent to the UUA. Lynn seconded. Passed.

Other Business

Temple Beth El: Temple Beth El has sold their building, and needs another building to use for the next 1-2 years. They have toured ours, determined that it will not work to share ours (since they need two offices). However, they are interested in periodically renting our sanctuary on Friday nights. Ken will follow up with building use documents to determine their needs, our rental rates, and the feasibility of this. Incidentally, the estimated cost of finishing the basement for public use was \$100,000, but that was several years ago.

Tamara Ciszczon's Building Use: Tamara Ciszczon has applied for a room request on February 12 for the Humanist group to celebrate Darwin Day, from 4 to 7 p.m., and would like the fee waived. This is done on a case-by-case basis, with Board approval. Gail or Ken will be available to lock the doors for them. After Gail's phone discussion with Tamara, Florence moved to waive the fee. Gail seconded. Motion passed.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Next Board of Trustees Meeting: Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. eastern time

Respectfully submitted by:

Florence Klečka, Secretary, Board of Trustees

Marketing Committee – Letter from Louise Williams – January 2023

Hello,

This is Louise and I am writing to give a bit of information on the marketing work that I would like to do for our congregation. One of the reasons I am interested in volunteering in this way is because I have a passion for leveraging online tools to make real life impacts. In my past I've managed digital marketing for graduate student orientation at Notre Dame, for the Center for Philosophy of Religion, and currently I run my own online business using exclusively digital marketing strategies. My business primarily is based on Instagram. You can take a look at it here: www.instagram.com/empowermentthroughthought

I've detailed below some of my first ideas on how to jumpstart our marketing efforts. I would like to engage in this project in three main phases.

Phase 1 (now - May) Focus on getting clarity on our wants and needs in terms of digital marketing, as well as identify examples that we would like to draw on. This would involve me listening to folks ideas and trying to bring them together into a single action plan. I'd familiarize myself with the current efforts and the backend of the website.

Phase 2 (May - Dec) Executing that plan with an emphasis on sustainable growth. This would involve establishing and following through on a manageable content schedule and potentially recruiting and training other volunteers to work the plan.

Phase 3 (2024+) Begin to diversify beyond digital marketing. And revise previously established strategies based on feedback from the volunteers and the congregation more widely.

Some of the specific things I would like to do include

- Streamlining the website for better SEO and usability
- Introducing a blog to improve SEO and increase traffic to the website
- Develop a social media strategy which may include
 - Creating a church specific YouTube
 - Creating an Instagram (best suited to targeting Millennials)
 - Optimizing the church Facebook to befriend the current algorithm preferences
 - Communicate best practices to the congregation so they can support these efforts

With whatever marketing projects we'd pursue, I would want to get very clear up front about our goals, how those goals support the board's efforts as well as how they support our UU principles more broadly. I also want to mention that I am aware of and want to respect the fact that not everyone is comfortable having their image shared online. I would be sure to prioritize consent throughout these projects.

Thank you for considering this,
Louise Williams