



**Meeting Minutes
Board of Trustees
First Unitarian Church, South Bend
July 12, 2023, 7:00 p.m.**

Present: Gail deSomer, Florence Klecka, Lynn Liston, Bill Stevens, Elena Wake, Dan Holm, Chuck Leone, Jeremiah Cox, Rev. Chip Roush

Guests: Karen Dickson, Barbara Williams, Byrd Tetzlaff

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:03 by Bill Stevens. Rev. Chip led the Chalice Lighting. Next was check-in and recitation of Covenant.

Approval of minutes

Motion made to accept the June meeting minutes by Gail, Chuck seconded. Carried.

Changes to Agenda

Under New Business: Next meeting in person? and policy for between-meetings electronic votes. Task Force report to be moved to Old Business.

Reports

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

President: He is encouraged by the high level of activity, and hopes the vitality continues to inspire us.

Minister: Florence moved to designate the same percentage of salary as housing allowance as was designated last year. Lynn seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer: End-of-Year loss is presently \$7,751, and will go up to about \$9,000 once Rev. Chip's GA expenses are taken into account. This is better than budgeted.

Committee reports: Howard Berberick has joined the Committee on Ministry, and Barbara Williams has joined the Finance Committee. Endowment Committee: The Board officially approved Chuck's recommendation to transfer Endowment funds from the previous years' unused Endowment Fund grants to the 2023-24 Endowment Fund grants as follows:

Office Computer Upgrade:	\$1,016.24
70th Anniversary:	\$2,082.30
Tech Task Force:	<u>\$ 856.55</u>
Total:	\$3,955.09

This transfer was approved by the congregation at the Annual Meeting in May, consistent with the Endowment Committee Report to the Congregation. This will fully fund all of the grants approved in the current funding cycle.

Old Business

Changing Ministerial Discretionary Fund: Elena presented a proposed new policy to replace the MDF with a Congregational Charitable Fund, in hopes that it would give the Board and Finance Committee more control over how the funds are spent. Also, Elena would like the records to be kept in the office, where she has access to them. See attached proposal. Points discussed:

- The new name and associated policy is a response to Rev. Chip's handling of the present policy, which Elena feels is not rigorous enough.

- Confidentiality is compromised if copies are made of expenditure documents and attached to check requests.
- The Board has a fiduciary responsibility to the congregation, and recently the MDF has had more money; this makes control by other parties more important.
- Should the bookkeeper, as an employee, supervised by the minister, be part of that control?
- Finance Committee fully supports the policy, but the Board is responsible for setting policy.
- The present MDF policy is nearly identical to that of most other UU churches; size of fund should be irrelevant. However, fine-tuning it may be desirable, to make the Treasurer's job more efficient and less stressful.
- How much of the minister's time is spent on disbursing the funds? (Several hours a week.) Is this too much?
- Elena has contacted the UUA for guidance, and has received no help from them.
- Giving specifically to the MDF is a specific, allowed form of directed giving, and it would be insulting to the donors to override their wishes.
- If there is no clear evidence of malfeasance, there should be no danger of losing nonprofit status.
- The MDF should not be used to pay for the bookkeeper's paid time; Chuck disagreed, saying administrative costs should be allowed.
- Churches are different from other nonprofits; looking to the IRS for guidance is not enough.
- Several UUA resources, including checklists and guidelines, were put into the Chat box, and Jeremiah will email them to the BOT for review.
- Finance Committee needs to deposit a recent \$10,000 check into the MDF. No vote needed, as this follows the current policy.

Florence moved to table the topic, until more study can be undertaken, and Bill seconded, urging the entire Board to study the UUA's resources, talk to other churches, Rev. Chip, the Committee on Ministry and Finance, to get the best idea of how to solve the problem of documenting expenditures to Elena's satisfaction. Motion carried.

Ministerial Evaluation: Gail suggested a new deadline of 8/15 for evaluations to be returned. Jeremiah has converted it to a fill-in form, contacted the COM, and it can be sent out by the office. Several demographic questions were added. Gail asked who will get the survey. Members and friends will get the form, and Committee liaisons will take it to their committees, who will decide which sections to fill out as the evaluation pertains to their area of practice. Florence suggested a deadline of Saturday night to respond to Jeremiah's proposed "preamble" to the survey, so it will be ready to send out before Sunday's Town Hall meeting.

Task Force: Lynn suggested a meeting very soon with Florence, Jeremiah and Louise Williams, to determine the next steps to take. Chuck advised going carefully and not rushing into any projects. Lynn noted that Louise has been polling the congregation for those items that are the most popular. All agreed that the upcoming Town Hall meeting will help get people aware of the need for people to staff event committees, fundraisers, etc., to get the ball(s) rolling.

Church Alarm System: Chuck, as Vice-President, will be added to the list of people to come to the building in case of emergencies. Logistics, keys, codes, etc. will be worked out soon.

Insurance Renewal: The latest insurance bill has been paid.

BOT Retreat: Bill reminded everyone that the Board retreat will be at his home on Saturday, August 19, starting at noon, to go until about 4 p.m. Menu, basic agenda will be finalized at the August meeting.

New Business

Check Signing: Need authorization for Chuck and Bill to be added as signatories. Elena noted that this can be done digitally, and will provide a form from the bank to be attached as documentation that the Board has authorized this (Gail moved, Jeremiah seconded, motion carried).

Between-meetings electronic votes: Jeremiah asked if there could be a time frame for responding to email requests for votes between BOT meetings. Suggested a 48-hour minimum response time, with 5 days maximum. Chuck suggested we look into any state laws for nonprofits doing business electronically before voting on this. Topic was tabled.

Next meeting in person?: Earliest everyone could be available would be 6:30 p.m., as some people still have day jobs. This would not be a permanent solution; location will be decided on a month-to-month basis.

Mission Statement: Tabled until the Retreat, or after.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Next Board of Trustees Meeting: Wednesday, August 9, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. eastern time, at the church (Zoom for those unable to attend in person).

Respectfully submitted by:

Florence Klečka, Secretary, Board of Trustees