



Meeting Minutes
Board of Trustees
First Unitarian Church, South Bend
October 11, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Present: Gail deSomer, Chuck Leone, Florence Klecka, Bill Stevens, Jeremiah Cox, Lynn Liston and Dan Holm (in person); Rev. Chip Roush, via Zoom.

Guests: Karen Dickson via Zoom.

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:40 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 September meeting minutes by Gail, seconded by Lynn. Carried.

Changes to Agenda

Dan asked to add discussion of Ambroise Niyongabo's financial needs to Other Business; Jeremiah asked to discuss the status of SoUUnds South Bend, possibly at a future meeting (Chuck offered to find policies about concert funding in old Board documents); Chuck asked to discuss the Strategic Plan in New Business (this was later tabled to a separate meeting). Dan asked that the completion of the minister evaluation be moved to an executive session, after adjournment. Bill also asked to discuss some of the UUA Board Basics webinars that Rev. Chip suggested at the Oct. 2 evaluation meeting before the monthly reports.

Webinars

Bill: Much was made of listening to others. Lynn: Different church boards have different procedures. It is important to act as representative of the group you are in at the moment. Dan: We should be referring to the 2018 Strategic Plan to identify our mission, plans, and the church itself. Chuck: How much authority do committees have? Lynn: The BOT is responsible for what happens, and committees determine how.

Reports

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

President: Bill said he was happy to be herding these cats, as it were.

Minister: Gail asked about the request for a blood drive from Versiti, determined to be a nonprofit. Rev. Chip asked that it be directed to the appropriate committee (P&SJ? Building Use?).

Treasurer: Chuck as Finance Committee liaison, with notes from Kathy Vetter, gave the report.

- The Defeat the Deficit Task Force will work with the Finance Committee to make sure that any DTD income is spelled out in the financial reports.
- The money from the UUA toward the Endowment will show up in the October statements.
- OWL expenses have gone \$25.43 beyond their budgeted grant from Endowment. Gail moved that the extra money come from the 2013 Website Upgrade grant, which still has a balance. Dan seconded; motion passed.
- The preliminary report from Barbara Williams and Chuck Leone, as to the Ministerial Discretionary Fund documentation, was discussed, with suggestions to Chuck on editing it.

Marketing: The Notre Dame picnic was cancelled.

Grounds: A workday is being planned for November.

Building: The new RE door is not ADA-compliant. Pat Littlejohn is working on that. Note: Those last out of the building on Sundays need to check that the sanctuary door, as well as the new RE door, are locked.

RE: The playground is being enhanced. So far, Garry Roberson hasn't charged for labor, but if he needs to buy wood, can the unspent 2019 Endowment funds be used? (Per Chuck: yes.)

Peace and Social Justice: The CROP Walk made \$1,500. Hurrah!

DTD Task Force: The fundraising is pausing in October, to give more support to the Service Auction. A few phone calls were made, testing the waters for a one-time pledge addition. This, too, is on hold, to later coordinate with the Stewardship campaign. Dan asked about trying to raise funds from outside the church. Lynn agreed that the Task Force came up with events toward that goal.

Old Business

Office Staffing Request: Many suggestions arose as to where to recruit candidates, at \$19/hour (per UUA guidelines), 15 hours per week, preferably from outside the church, to maintain time and professional boundaries. Lynn, Jeremiah, Rev. Chip, and Bill agreed to work on a subcommittee, with Chuck helping with background checks and asking Dr. Louise Williams to post information via social media. The Board asked Rev. Chip to tell Pat that the Board has started looking for a replacement, and will keep her posted.

New Business

Building Use request: Greg Young has asked about parking his car in the church parking lot for two weeks while he is out of town. Gail suggested informing Kathy Vetter and Pat, who might otherwise report the car as abandoned. The Board agreed by consensus to allow this, at no charge.

Stewardship Campaign: Barbara Boyd has stepped down from the Stewardship Committee; current members are Anne Mannix, Chuck Leone, Gary Metzler, and Eli Williams. Gail volunteered to help. Chuck has access to ICON/CMO, the software that tracks church finances. Jeremiah suggested using the UUA guidelines on giving, since many newer members have no idea what is expected. Another challenge is that people are more likely to give money for specific projects than for the general operating fund.

Town Hall Meeting: Do we need a November Town Hall meeting? Lynn suggested that the Pulpit Host just make announcements about what the Board is doing every month or so. Bill promised to do so on October 15, when he is the Pulpit Host next. Jeremiah offered to figure out how to make a summary financial statement for the congregation quarterly. The January congregational meeting will cover the church's financial position.

Guests at Board Meetings: The Board discussed and agreed with the UUA guidelines as mentioned in the online article suggested by Rev. Chip (namely, that guests have specific items to discuss, and do not participate in Board discussions outside their requested presentations).

Other Business

Ambroise Niyongabo, a church member from Burundi, is still waiting for his family to come to the USA from Rwanda, where the embassy has not processed their visas yet. The P&SJ committee will get him an attorney, and a case number, to help. In the meantime, he needs to send \$500/month for his family's living expenses. Dan asked that the Ministerial Discretionary Fund be used to pay three months of school fees. After discussion, it was decided that Rev. Chip can arrange for this amount to be taken from the MDF; after this, Ambroise would have to wait a year for any other money from that fund. Dan agreed to determine how to move the funds safely to Rwanda.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned to an Executive Session at 9:55 p.m.

Next Board of Trustees Meeting: Thursday, October 26, 6:30 p.m., in the Conference Room. Executive Session, to finalize the Ministerial Evaluation letter to be written by Bill.

Next Regular Board of Trustees Meeting: Wednesday, November 8, 2023, 6:30 p.m., in the Conference Room.

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