

APPROVED

**Minutes, Board of Trustees
Unitarian Universalists of South Bend
10 December 2025**

Present: Gail deSomer, Francisco Gomez, David Mayfield, Ann Hoewing, Justine Backus, Karen Dickson

Absent: Fern Hamlin, Eli Williams

Visitors: Neal Austin (on zoom)

The meeting was called to order by Gail deSomer, Board president, at 7pm.

I. Introduction

A. Chalice lighting

B. Check-in

C. Covenant

D. Approval of minutes from the 12 November 2025 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes as read. Moved by Ann, seconded by David. **Motion carried.**

E. Set agenda. Metal sign by West door entry needs updating (see committee reports).

II. Reports

A. President's report--Gail. Health insurance issue will be dealt with under Old Business.

B. Treasurer's report--David. Recently learned that auto renewal of CD opened on 8/15/25 came with reduced interest earning of 0.01%, standard checking account interest rate. Closed this CD and reopened at new rate of 3.75%. Current checking acct contains about \$134K, almost the full year's budgeted funds. **Motion to move additional \$40K from checking (earning 0.01%) to CD to earn increased interest rate of 3.75%.** Moved by David, seconded by Karen. **Motion carried.** David will proceed with these changes.

C. Office report--Dr Louise Williams. As written.

D. Committee reports

1. Marketing: Able to complete donation of special collection money totaling \$1K to WVPE. Additional collected funds, about \$500.00, will be used to advertise the "love is love" dinner being done in February 2026. Temporary sign with UUSB address has been ordered with plans to place this on the former sign's posts. Marketing and Grounds committees jointly will explore new permanent signage for UUSB. Gail suggested possible Task Force to be formed sometime in early 2026 to work with them on this.

2. Metal sign by West door has Chip's name as the pastor. This needs to be updated. Dave will explore likely option to "mill" off the permanent pastor name and leave a clear area on which a removable brass plate can be placed to update this appropriately in the future.

III. Old Business

A. Minister search. Finalized UUSB profile placed on UUA website. Updated to request full-time minister for a 2-year contract. Salary offered is mid-range of congregation size “one size up” from our current status. Overall cost of salary + benefits projected to be in mid \$150K. Require pastor to live within 14 miles radius from UUSB. Health insurance offered will be the UUA PPO plan, UUSB proposed contract will cover 80% or more of cost and will cover up to 50% of cost of similar insurance for their family.

B. Health insurance for office staff, progress on HRA. UUA updated its own website information on this issue based on Gail’s query. UUSB is unable to establish an ICHRA due to law changes. UUA recommends office staff be on same type health plan as minister or reimburse employees for personal health insurance expenses with additional reimbursement to cover FICA costs for the increased earnings.

C. January 18 Informational meeting – agenda set for retreat. No changes, as previously discussed at last retreat.

D. From Administration Committee discussion of special collections. Tabled until January 2026 when Fern returns.

E. Report from Personnel Policy task force. David informed BOT that they are in the process of reviewing the UUA recommended congregation HR policy book to incorporate this into our current Personnel Policy for an updated comprehensive Personnel Policy to be reviewed and approved by the BOT in the future. Tabled until January 2026 when this comprehensive Personnel Policy proposal can be submitted for BOT review.

F. Health Reimbursement for 2025 for Dr. Louise. For fiscal year 2025-2026, Dr. Louise has currently getting \$50/mo health reimbursement. We also need to compensate her for and additional \$150 July to Dec. 2025 as we agreed she would be reimbursed 50% of her health insurance costs through the Marketplace. David calculated that through December 2025, UUSB needs to reimburse her an additional \$1001.25 for health insurance. Dr. Louise voiced concerns about these reimbursements affecting her Marketplace Insurance subsidy so that she may have to pay back some of the subsidies. This will be reviewed by the BOT if it becomes an issue. **For 2026** it was discussed whether she should continue getting health insurance through the Marketplace or be changed to the same plan that will be offered to the future Minister and their family. **Motion to offer the same health plan to the office manager as it is offered to the future Minister.** Moved by Francisco, seconded by Justine. **Motion carried.** For informational purposes, David reviewed the current budgeted amount for office insurance and the projected cost will remains well within the budgeted monthly amount of \$500/mo. There also remains sufficient funds to cover the above amount due to Dr. Louise for 2025.

G. Creating a Safety/Security Policy see <https://www.uua.org/safe/handbook>. Tabled until after the Personnel Policy is updated and approved.

IV. New business

A. Office Manager job description. Dr. Louise produced a description of her current duties as the office manager. There is a job description for the office manager that had been produced before Dr. Louise was hired. Dave will merge these two documents to

produce an updated Office Manager job description. This new document will be reviewed by Gail, Ann and Justine.

B. Request for 3/4 time position by Dr. Louise. The Jewish Federation of St. Joseph Valley has offered a full-time job to Dr. Louise. They are discussing whether or not to provide health insurance with that job. Dr. Louise is offering to remain at UUSB if we increase her time from 1/2 to 3/4 (20 hr/wk current to 30 hr/wk) until the new Minister is hired and UUSB maintains the other current benefits. Gail has asked her to put together a formal **proposal for submission to the BOT** in January 2026. Additional discussion was done regarding the Pro's & Con's of congregation members who become congregation employees. David has a document outlining these that he will email to the BOT members for their review for the January meeting.

C. From the Perpetual Calendar--President initiates annual membership certification, quarterly update on Endowment disbursements, order 1099 forms from IRS. The Membership Committee will proceed to certify all members & friends of UUSB. Discussion regarding those who had been members for many years but now cannot participate, due to factors such as health, and whether they should remain members or become "friends" ensued. In the past the congregation's dues to the UUA were based on membership number but this has changed to a financial basis. Therefore, **they can continue to be members of UUSB if they remain interested.** Endowment committee quarterly update on disbursements will be obtained from Barbara, chair of the Endowment Committee, after she returns from being out of town. New 1099 Forms are obtained by Finda and she has done this already.

D. From Administrative Committee. Peace & Social Justice Committee description reviewed. Issues remain regarding this committee. The Committee on Ministry is pursuing these issues. **Motion to approve Peace & Social Justice Committee description as written.** Moved by David, seconded by Ann. **Motion carried with one abstention.** Outside Contractor Policy tabled to allow further review by BOT members.

E. Menu for Italian dinner. Expected participants: 28 people + BOT members.

Fern - minestrone soup (traditional, gluten free)

David - salad

Ann & Eli - alcohol

Karen - garlic bread

Gail & Justine - desserts (tiramisu, cannoli)

Francisco(vegetarian), Gail(gluten free) & Justine(traditional) - lasagna.

V. Other business.

A. Reviewed letter from Rev Byrd. She voiced concerns regarding accessibility to the building due to our doors not being ADA compliant. Discussion regarding the need for ADA compliance for the building's entry doors (both East & West) was done. The East Door continues to have problems working appropriately with weather changes. Changing these doors to be ADA compliant is considered a repair as we are currently out of compliance. David proposed that we use the Rainy Day Funds as well as those funds already allocated by the Endowment Fund to repair the entry doors and make them ADA compliant. **Motion**

to have the East & West entry doors be repaired and brought into ADA compliance using a combination of funds from the Rainy Day Fund and the Endowment funds already allocated by the congregation in May 2025. Moved by Francisco, seconded by Justine. **Motion carried.**

B. Signature authority for banking accounts and UUSB credit card. David brought up the difficulties with changing the authorized signers of the bank account and credit card. Currently these are the BOT president and VP. He suggested the BOT appoint a person(s) who is/are not necessarily on the BOT. This may reduce the need to change these authorized signatures as frequently as on an annual basis as is the current situation. The BOT will review this at the January 2026 meeting.

VI. Privilege of the Floor. No takers.

VII. Adjournment. Motion to adjourn made by Justine, seconded by Ann. **Motion carried.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56pm.

The next regular board meeting will be Wednesday, 14 January 2026, 7pm.

Francisco Gomez-Dossi
in lieu of Secretary

Summary of assignments from 10 December 2025 board meeting:

Gail: notify Building committee regarding ADA compliant entry doors fund approval

David: Move funds from checking into new CD, review "milling" work of metal sign by West entry door, provide updated Personnel Policy, produce updated Office Manager Job description, distribute article regarding Pro's & Con's of congregation member-employee,