

**Minutes, Board of Trustees
Unitarian Universalists of South Bend
11 February 2026**

Present: Gail deSomer, David Mayfield, Francisco Gomez-Dossi, Justine Backus, Ann Hoewing, Fern Hamlin

On Zoom: Karen Dickson

Absent: Eli Williams

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 January 14, 2026, meeting. Motion to accept the minutes as read moved by Francisco, seconded by Justine. **Motion carried.**

E. Set agenda. Justine, speaking for the absent Eli, requested that Share the Plate item be added to New Business.

II. Reports

A. President's report--Gail. As written. At meetings to solicit input regarding use of the large legacy from Barbara Boyd, important to ask whether people propose spending all the money, spending only the interest, or a hybrid thereof. Congregation will also be able to give opinions on-line following the final Feb 19 scheduled small group meeting. Some discussion among board members as to what might be done if no consensus is reached; perhaps suggest only repaying the loan from the Endowment Fund and letting the rest sit in the bank, earning interest, until a decision can be reached.

B. Treasurer's report--David. As written. Regarding rentals to for-profit entities, the Finance Committee recommended seeking professional knowledgeable advice. Given the uncertainty on this subject, Gail has informed the prospective for-profit renter that we cannot rent now, not knowing the tax/not-for-profit implications. At the very end of the meeting David returned to the question of whether or not we should be trying to find out who amongst the congregation might be planning to make non-recurring donations. The Finance Committee does think this should be done and thinks it comes within the remit of the Stewardship Committee. Discussion/possible decisions tabled to March board meeting.

C. Office report. As written, plus today's communication from Dr Louise Williams regarding timeline for completion of projects being done during the additional 10 hours a week (until August 1). [This document needs to be included in the board packet for the church records.]

D. Committee reports.

- Care Committee--Gail. She is now the chair, Karen Heffernan is no longer the co-chair. People are needed for the Congregational Discretionary Fund Committee. Jim Curlee has agreed to be the Care Committee designee. Francisco suggested asking Lynn McDonald to serve as chair of the Congregational Discretionary Fund Committee. And per the CDF description, Karen Dickson, as board vice-president, will be the third member of the committee. Consensus on this arrangement. Gail will contact Lynn.
- Endowment Committee. Board members felt that the first sentence of the second paragraph of the committee minutes (“Will designated that the money...”) did not accurately reflect the fact that, from the legacy given by Barbara Boyd, \$50,000 was to be used towards the mortgage. Fern will contact Barbara Williams regarding clarification of this sentence, given that the committee minutes are now in this month’s board packet and therefore form part of the official church records and should therefore be accurate.
- Grounds Committee. Fern asked if we (i.e., Francisco and the Grounds Committee) were satisfied that the snow plowing company was doing what we wanted, when we wanted it, and particularly not dumping large amounts of salt. Francisco said he was satisfied with the work being done. Gail did point out that we sometimes have to contact them to do the sidewalks. Suggestions for other companies to explore for next winter are being sought via Chuck Leone.
- Marketing Committee. Fern contested the committee’s opinion that signage was not part of their remit. However, they have discussed this with Grounds Committee, which is willing to take on the project. Cindy Benedict will be exploring options for permanent signs. Karen raised the question of what was to be done with the signs that are up on Eddy Street, pointing in the wrong direction; no conclusion was reached.

III. Old Business

A. Minister search update--Gail. Of 4 candidates, 1 has withdrawn. Search committee must rank our choices by March 23, UUA transitions office tries to match church choices with candidates’ choices.

B. From Admin Committee

- Memorial Garden Policy. As far as we know, there has never been any Memorial Garden Committee, which appears multiple times in the original policy. **Motion to amend this policy** moved by Ann, seconded by Francisco. **Motion carried.** Fern will retype policy and send it to the office to be added to our website. Changes are to remove mention of Memorial Garden Committee and add need to check local and state requirements regarding spreading of ashes.
- Volunteer Recognition Policy. **Motion to approve this policy** moved by Fern, seconded by David. **Motion carried.**

C. Report from Personnel Policy Task Force--David. No report.

D. Request for ¾ time position for Dr Louise Williams, update on projects, what percentage of health insurance do we offer? Gail proposed we pay 60% of the insurance.

Fern asked what the real dollar amounts were. Answer: monthly, \$929.14 medical, \$65 dental and vision. David noted that 60% of the \$994 total is close to the \$500 we budgeted for. **Motion to pay 60% of the total monthly health insurance premium for Dr Louise Williams while she remains a ¾ time employee** moved by Francisco, seconded by Justine. **Motion carried, 6 in favor, 1 opposed.**

E. Signatories on church credit card, scope of use--David. This would mean that, for the authorized use of the church credit card, the board would appoint specific trusted individuals who were not necessarily church officers and would not be limited by time or term, but rather at the board's discretion. Currently the president, vice-president, and treasurer are the authorized individuals. Gail explained the kinds of things we have been using the church credit card for. Fern commented on the importance of the treasurer and bookkeeper being informed of all credit card uses, as is currently happening but has not always, making prompt payment of the bill problematic. Gail noted this would be added to the church Perpetual Calendar, so that every July the new board would approve current signatories or make changes. Karen had concerns about fiduciary responsibilities of church members which could not be answered at this time. **Motion to appoint trusted church credit card signatories who would not be term limited, rather than automatically using board officials** moved by David, seconded by Francisco. **Motion carried, 6 in favor, 1 abstention.**

IV. New Business

A. From the Perpetual Calendar--Gail. Nothing for this month.

B. Share the Plate--Gail. Eli Williams is doing this coming Sunday's service on black history. She has discussed with Peace and Social Justice Committee (and they are agreed) wanting to donate this Sunday's entire loose collection to BLUU (Black Lives Unitarian Universalists). **So moved** by Justine, seconded by David. **Motion carried.**

C. Safety Plan for ICE--Gail. See handout "Whole Congregation to get on the plan" in attachments. Board consensus that we agree with the proposal, important to educate the congregation, get any possible training. David is concerned about multiple whistles being blown and freaking everyone out, but whistles would be limited to the greeters. The board assigns support for the safety plan to the office manager's tasks. Gail will provide information in the Chirp and will work with Dr Louise Williams on further efforts. David suggested we form a safety team. It was agreed that Gail would ask those who began the safety work for the Trans Day of Remembrance if they were willing to be involved with this. She will try to bring a description of the Safety Team with functions to the March board meeting. It seems preferable to refer to it as the Safety Team rather than a committee, although that is basically what's being proposed.

At 9pm the board entered Executive Session. Discussion concerned a congregation member cited under the church Policy for Disruptive or Inappropriate Behavior.

At 9:20pm the board returned to its regular meeting. Motion to exclude Jose Arevalo permanently from the church, per Level 3 of the Policy for Disruptive or Inappropriate

Behavior, having followed the previous steps as required in the Policy moved by Francisco, seconded by Ann. **Motion carried unanimously.**

V. Other Business. None

VI. Privilege of the Floor. No takers.

VII. Adjournment. Meeting was adjourned at 9:25pm.

The next regular meeting of the board will be Wednesday, 11 March 2026, 7pm, in the conference room.

Fern Hamlin
Board secretary

Summary of assignments from February board meeting:

Gail

- Contact Lynn McDonald regarding CDF committee
- Discuss Sunday share the plate with Eli and Finda
- Work with Dr Louise Williams on Safety Team and safety plan. Provide description of Safety Team functions next month.
- Follow up on member exclusion, per Policy for Disruptive or Inappropriate Behavior

Fern

- Contact Barbara Williams regarding Endowment Committee minutes
- Retype Memorial Garden policy, sent it to office for inclusion of church website

David: Office manager health insurance premium payment information to Finda

Dr Louise Williams

- Add special projects timeline to board packet so that it is part of official record
- Note current approval date of Volunteer Recognition Policy on church website
- Add newly approved Memorial Garden Policy to church website