

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

Present: Gail deSomer, Fern Hamlin, Francisco Gomez-Dossi, Karen Dickson

On Zoom: Justine Backus, David Mayfield, Eli Williams, (arriving during meeting) Ann Hoewing

Visitors: Barbara 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 February 11, 2026, meeting. Fern noted the misinformation in the February committee reports, specifically the minutes of the December 10, 2025, Endowment Committee meeting, in which it was incorrectly stated that the legacy from Barbara Boyd was designated, in her will, to pay off the church mortgage. It was actually only \$50,000 that was so designated. Karen requested that the entire paragraph from the will regarding this be entered in the minutes. This reads:

“I give the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) to First Unitarian Church, 801 E. Washington Street, South Bend, In 46617. Said gift shall be used by the Church to pay off any mortgage obligation it may have at the time said gift is distributed with the remainder of the gift thereafter being place in its general fund.”

The change will be made in the February committee reports, the first sentence of the second paragraph of the Endowment Committee report to read: “Will designated that \$50,000 of the over \$1.2K bequest be used to pay off mortgage (which was already paid off via special congregational member contributions at the time she died).” Eli noted that the February Share the Plate contribution was to BLUU (Black Lives Unitarian Universalists) as a national group, and not to any chapter thereof (February minutes showed contribution was to be to its Minneapolis chapter, which was incorrect). **Motion to accept the amended minutes** made by Francisco, seconded by Karen. **Motion carried with one abstention.**

E. Set agenda. David asked to add 3 items: (1) the \$1.3K CD coming due April 10; (2) the parking lot repair; (3) ICON software.

II. Reports

A. President’s report--Gail. Referring to her written report regarding the listening sessions (on how to use the Boyd legacy): lengthy discussion of how to solicit further input, the need to have questions more focused, the need to provide some numbers so members understand what is meant by “using interest” in real terms (i.e., how much money does this mean there is to spend). Top 4 items for spending the money on (from these sessions): supplement minister salary, supplement DRE or office manager salary, parking lot

repaving, finish part or all of basement. David recommends the parking lot be done with money from the Rainy Day Fund. Therefore, top choices to be suggested will be the two salary items and the basement. Gail also noted that participants at these sessions also thought there should be some form of 'guard rails' regarding the use of the legacy. She also thinks there may not be time to receive and consider further input before the May congregational meeting. We might only be able to recommend repaying the Endowment Fund at that meeting. She hopes we can get out a questionnaire to the congregation in two weeks' time.

B. Vice President's report--Karen. To date, \$125,964 pledged.

C. Treasurer's report--David. Financial report as written. We will have the accounts show the \$50,000 from the Boyd legacy which has been directed into the Rainy Day Fund. He also again brought up the need for legacy questioning/education, hopefully by the Stewardship Committee, ideally done at 5 year intervals.

D. Office report.

- Gail. Suggesting that for the church website, a minimum number of photos of members in the public section, but more in the members only section, including board members. Eli suggested that photographers at church events should let people know when photographs are being taken.
- Fern. Is Dr Louise Williams asking for the church to pay the \$350 registration fee for her to attend General Assembly? Gail thought that yes, she is asking that. David wondered if there was a group rate that we could use, since GA is all online this year. Eli was checking the website and didn't think so, though Gail will look into this further. She will also ask, via the Chirp, if other members are interested in attending. **Motion to pay the \$350 General Assembly registration fee for Dr Louise Williams, from line item 770 (Leadership Development)** moved by Eli, seconded by Francisco. **Motion carried.**

E. Committee reports/Task Force reports.

- Love is Love. Fern queried the large amount of donated food for an event for which we charged admission and which was not intended as a fundraiser. General board opinion was that this was fine, and that all who donated food and wanted to be reimbursed would have been.

III. Old Business

A. Minister search update--Gail. There is one very favorable candidate. We have to tell the UUA our ranking of candidates March 23. She and Chuck will be meeting with the candidate on zoom this week to discuss contract issues.

B. Certified letter sent 2/27/26--Gail. Per Policy for Disruptive or Inappropriate Behavior, the letter was sent to Jose Arevalo. There has been no response. At the April meeting the board can vote for permanent exclusion.

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

D. Report on Listening Conversations, next steps, survey? This was covered during the President's Report.

E. Office Manager Job Description. Changes to the job description: change the title from Office Manager to Office Administrator; change first bullet point under Minimum Qualifications to read simply “office experience”. **Motion to approve the amended job description** moved by Francisco, seconded by Ann. **Motion carried.**

IV. New Business

A. From the Perpetual Calendar--quarterly update on Endowment Distribution.

Barbara Williams prepared a report (in this month’s attachments) with information about the current status of the Endowment Fund and monies used from it for the current church building. She noted that the deadline for this year’s endowment grant applications has been extended to April 1 due to several that were submitted electronically but not received. Discussion of this report found several factual items that require correcting:

- Final sentence of the first paragraph (which begins “While Barbara’s will...”) is incorrect and is to be deleted.
- Item h under #3 regarding the 2024 Burn the Mortgage campaign is incorrect and is to be deleted. No monies for this campaign came from the Endowment Fund.
- Items c, e, f, and g under #3 are correct in that money came from the Endowment Fund to pay towards the monthly mortgage principal in those years, but these monies were in the form of Endowment fund GRANTS and were not loans.

[Later checking of the addition of the items listed under #3 resulted in a total of \$172,036.85 rather than the \$177,037 listed in the report.] It was agreed that the \$7668.85 listed for Burn the Mortgage should not be included in the total loaned from the Endowment Fund for building purposes. And possibly the \$20,000 received as Endowment Fund grants should not be included in the total of money loaned. None of this is to say that the board opposes putting some of the legacy money into the Endowment Fund; it is just intended to keep the record straight as to how much was loaned and therefore should be repaid.

Thoughtful discussion focused on where to put the Boyd legacy when its current CD comes due April 10. David strongly advised starting a second fund with the UUCEF in order to maximize returns on this capital, but there were equally strong questions about what limitations this would put on our access to the money. It was agreed that David would get the UUCEF contract information to share with us, and that we would have a special board meeting April 1, 7pm, to deal with this question before the CD comes due.

B. From the Admin Committee. Nothing.

C. General Assembly. Already dealt with during Office report.

D. Barbara Boyd plaque. Definitely support for this idea. Barbara Williams noted that all who had given the church bequests should be included, though she noted it’s not always easy to find the information. Support for this as well.

E. Think about Volunteer of the Year--Gail. We should be thinking about this, to deal with it during future board meeting.

F. Meeting to discuss budget?--Gail. Consensus to do this at April 8 meeting.

G. \$1.3K CD. Already dealt with under From the Perpetual Calendar.

H. Parking lot repair--David. Motion to approve repaving the parking lot based on the recommendation from the Grounds Committee, using money from the Rainy Day Fund moved by David, seconded by Francisco. Fern asked how much this was likely to cost, Francisco thought at least \$50,000, based on estimates he received a few years ago.

Motion carried. [Subsequent referral to our by laws indicated that this expense will need to be approved by the congregation, given that it exceeds 3% of the budget. Similar concerns for redoing our security system and the ADA doors.]

I. ICON--David. Gail noted that there is no recommendation to change from the ICON system. She is planning to meet with Finda, to check how work is going for her, to ask if there's anything she needs. Ann noted the importance of making sure that she knows she is appreciated by the church.

V. Other Business. None.

VI. Privilege of the Floor. No takers.

VII. Adjournment. Motion to adjourn made by Francisco, seconded by Karen. **Motion carried.** Meeting was adjourned at 9:50pm.

The next meeting of the board will be Wednesday, 1 April 2026, 7pm in the conference room. The regular monthly meeting of the board will be Wednesday, 8 April 2026, 7pm in the conference room.

Fern Hamlin
Board secretary

Summary of assignments from March board meeting:

Fern Communicate with office regarding February minutes and packet changes; Office Manager job description changes; March Endowment Report changes

Gail

- Questionnaire for congregation regarding uses of Boyd legacy
- Ask if any members are interested in attending this year's online GA
- Meet with Finda

David Questions for UUCEF regarding possible second fund

Francisco Check on repaving estimates