Minutes, Board of Trustees
Unitarian Universalists of South Bend
14 September 2026

Present: Karen Dickson, David Mayfield, Fern Hamlin, Ben Tovar, Rev Jenn Gracen
On Zoom: Ann Hoewing, Justine Backus
Absent: Francisco Gomez-Dossi, Cat Rambo
Visitors: Abby Joiner, Barbara Williams

The meeting was called to order by Karen Dickson, board president, at 7pm.

I. Introduction

A. Chalice lighting

B. Check-in

C. Covenant

D. Approval of minutes from the August 10, 2026, meeting. Fern noted her mistake in the spelling of Jenn's surname. Justine noted that she had checked with Barb Carmichael, who is indeed the chair of Peace and Social Justice committee. **Motion to approve the amended minutes** made by David, seconded by Karen. **Motion carried.**

E. Set agenda. Two items added: UUCEF signatory authority, Authorization to Spend.

II. Reports

A. Minister's report--Jenn. As written. She has been getting to know our area, this next month's focus may be more internal.

B. President's report--Karen. None.

C. Vice-President's report--Francisco. None.

D. Treasurer's report--David. As written. Fern noted, for the official record, that, in July, the $126,268 loan to the church from the Endowment Fund (which went towards purchase and renovation of our building here at 801 E Washington) was repaid from the Boyd Fund (both funds within our UUCEF account). It was also noted that we have no information on the use/cost of electronic signatures.

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

F. Committee reports/Task Force reports. As written.

III. Old Business

A. Collection of Payment Policy--David. There are two places in the policy that require procedural documentation (updating of items for sale in the POS system, and the tracking of cash and check payments). David felt that, since these are procedures and not changes to policy, the Finance committee could work these out and there would be no need for board approval. This was acceptable to the board.

B. Dr Louise Williams' work hours. This business item was considered in Executive Session, at the end of the agenda.

C. Committee chairs and board members meeting (Sept 27)--Karen. Karen is working on an agenda, which will include: discussing the November start-up meeting with Matthew Johnson; familiarization with committee descriptions, budgets, and reimbursement process; second Endowment grants; church credit card. It was suggested that committee chairs should be prepared to present a brief summary of the committee plans/goals for the year. Advance notice will be given for this, and Karen will be sharing the agenda before the meeting takes place.

D. Start-up with Matthew Johnson from the UUA--Karen. Friday evening (Nov 13) and Saturday (Nov 14). Friday evening: potluck for all, conversation with those present regarding hopes, worries, history. Saturday morning: 2-2-1/2 hours with church leaders--expectations, responsibilities, roles, how things get done, communication. Saturday lunch with board members and minister: process what we've heard, covenant, next steps, goals. Karen will discuss meal requirements with Kathy Platt.

E. UUCEF Signatory Authority. Fern moved, and David seconded, **to recognize that the Board President, Board Vice-President, and the Board Treasure all have signature authority for the church UUCEF accounts. Motion carried.**

IV. New Business

A. Crop Walk collection (Peace & Social Justice committee). Fern moved, and David seconded, **to approve the CROP Walk collection: all loose and designated offerings on Sept 20 will be for the CROP Walk, and we will continue to take designated donations to Oct 11.**

B. Fundraising proposal from Abby Joiner. The proposal was discussed and ultimately not accepted. David moved, and Fern seconded, **to offer reduced rate ads (half price) in the Service Auction program to members and friends wishing to advertise their professions/businesses/services. Motion carried.** David will discuss this with Kathy Platt, so she knows what has been decided.

C. Endowment 2nd Distribution--Proposed Schedule & Congregational Meeting--Barbara Williams. Minutes of the Endowment committee's Sept 2 meeting explained the committee's suggestions for this second round of endowment grants, as approved at the May 2026 congregational meeting. Barbara explained there will probably be about $8500 available for grants. Suggested timeline: proposals due to committee by Nov 20, committee will meet Dec 9 in order to have its recommendations to the board for its Dec 14 meeting, congregational meeting to approve grants in Jan/Feb 2027. Board decision to set 17 January 2027 for the congregational meeting with 24 January as the (snow) alternate date.

D. Person to take minutes in Fern's absence (October). Karen will ask (1) Florence, (2) Francisco, (3) Ben as backup.

E. Authorization to Spend Budgeted Operating Funds and Special Funds for the 2026-27 Fiscal Year. Prepared by Kathy Vetter, confirmed by the Finance committee. Fern moved, and Ann seconded, **to approve this year's authorization to spend. Motion carried.**

The board entered into Executive Session at 8:26pm. Subject discussed was the number of weekly hours for the church office manager.

The board exited Executive Session at 9:15pm. David will go through the data ("crunch the numbers") to summarize the office manager position's tasks, resources, and requirements. Fern moved, and Ann seconded, **to continue the office manager's 30 hours weekly to the end of October, with the board committing to consider this topic again at its October meeting and vote on it at that time. Motion carried.**

V. Other Business. None.

VI. Privilege of the Floor. No takers.

VII. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

The next regular board meeting will be Monday, 12 October 2026, at 7pm in the conference room.

Fern Hamlin
Board secretary

Action Items from 14 Sept 2026 board meeting:

Dr Louise Williams
--Barb Carmichael is Peace & Social Justice committee chair. Please list accordingly.
--Add 17 Jan 2027 congregational meeting (snow date Jan 24), 12 noon, to calendar.

Francisco
--Info on electronic signatures
--Any update for winter snow removal?

David
--Work with Finance committee to draw up necessary procedures for Collection of Payment policy.
--Discuss Service Auction program ads with Kathy Platt

Karen
--Send out agenda for Sept 27 committee chairs and board members meeting.
--Discuss food aspect of Nov 13-14 meetings (and January congregational meeting) with Kathy Platt.