

## MINUTES

### Board of Trustees: December 16, 2020, Virtual Meeting First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh

**Board Members Attending:** Scott Smith, President (2021); Lynne Porterfield (2021); Eleanor Mayfield, Secretary (2021); Ebe Emmons, Vice-President (2022); Heather Masterson (2023); Kate Snow (2023); Kyle Gracey, Treasurer (2023); Sam Hens-Greco (2022)

**Board Members Absent:** None.

**Ex Officio Members:** Rev. Constance Grant, Interim Minister

**Others:** Kurt Summersgill, Recording Secretary

1. **Call to Order (7:02) (Scott)** Scott called the meeting to order.
2. **Opening Words (Scott)** “Stay Together and Stick Together”--Rod Richards.
3. **Welcoming Guests (Scott)** None
4. **Announcements (Scott)**  
Next regularly scheduled Board meeting: January 20, 2021, 7:00pm.
5. **Consent Agenda (Scott) (handouts)**
  - a. Approval of November 18, 2020, meeting minutes. Moved by Scott, seconded by Kyle. Approved. Item #7 typo to be corrected.
  - b. Finance Committee December meeting minutes. (Kyle)
6. **E-mail votes since November meeting, for the record (Scott)** On Dec. 4 the Board voted unanimously by email to increase the lower bound of the salary range for the new settled minister by making the following change to the Minister’s Agreement:

“3.1 Salary and the Allocations to Housing Allowance

3.1.1 Based on the minister’s level of experience, the Congregation will provide to the Minister a starting salary, including housing, of **\$6,750** to 7,083 (per month) which on an annual basis is **\$81,000** to 85,000. Salary and Housing shall be payable [semi-monthly beginning on (date)].”

Motion to ratify the email vote. Moved by Scott, seconded by Kyle. Carried unanimously.

7. **Minister’s Quarterly report (Connie) (handout)**
  - a. “Moving Forward into 2021 and Beyond,” December 13. Some church members had indicated that they felt a need to further process the departures of ministers from First Unitarian Church in recent years. The Ministerial Search Committee has been working hard toward the goal of calling a new settled minister to begin serving in August 2021, and this meeting was a way to help ensure that the congregation is ready to welcome that person by getting past experiences that might keep them from doing so. The Zoom meeting provided congregants with an opportunity to discuss unresolved issues with other congregants and the Interim Minister. Congregants were also invited to schedule private discussions with the Interim Minister. Connie said that the meeting seemed to go very well. About 35-40 people attended. A second session may be offered in January.
  - b. Updating of membership roster. Connie has been updating the membership roster to provide a more realistic count of church members. She has reached out via e-mail to inactive members to see what their interest might be in continuing their church membership. Six people were granted honorary lifetime membership; three were granted

financial waivers. Several who have moved away requested that their names be removed from the membership roster.

- c. Solstice service. A local NPR station interviewed Erica about the service.
- d. Church building reopening plan. It's time to get the reopening task force together, especially with the vaccine now being deployed.

#### **8. Pledge Drive Committee update (Heather).**

- a. A total of just over \$375,000 has been pledged for 2021; 31 pledging units have not yet responded. For about half of these pledging units, the committee will default to their previous pledge, and has sent them a letter with that information. If these pledges are fulfilled, that would account for nearly \$15,000. The other half do not have a 2020 pledge or haven't paid on it. They received a "final ask" letter. There will be no more Pledge Committee meetings.
- b. Kyle will be sending out an e-mail to update members on where they stand on their 2020 pledge.

#### **9. Approval of draft 2021 Budget (Kyle) (handout)**

Kyle is still projecting income of about \$493,000 and costs of about \$544,000 for 2021, resulting in a deficit of about \$50,000 that will be covered in part by the 2019 surplus as well as by de-obligating some reserve funds. No cuts in programs, salaries, or benefits are being proposed, but there will be no increases either. Kyle said that he had prepared an alternative proposal that would achieve a balanced budget by making 8% across-the-board cuts to staff and programs. He emphasized that he was not proposing this alternative but was providing it for the Board's information.

Kyle said that the budget may need to be revised when (a) the full financial impact of the coronavirus pandemic is known, and (b) we have a signed contract with a new settled minister. He also noted that the current budget does not take into consideration the \$74,000 Paycheck Protection Program loan that the church received in the spring. Kyle added that the vote to approve the budget will also give the Finance Committee authority to de-obligate reserve funds if necessary.

Responding to a question from Sam, Kyle said that the final amount of the 2019 budget surplus was \$41,000, of which he anticipated that \$27,000 will be available to apply to the projected 2021 deficit. Scott asked whether Kyle had any concerns about spending down reserve accounts to cover the projected deficit. Kyle responded that some of these funds had been sitting unused for years and that others were intended to cover operating budget shortfalls.

Motion to approve the 2021 budget by Kyle, seconded by Eleanor. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **10. Vacant Board Seat (Scott) (handout)**

Confirmation of Lee Carnes to fill the Board seat vacated by Julie Downs, as proposed by the Nominating Committee, for the balance of her term, which will be completed in 2022. Motion by Scott, seconded by Kate. Motion carried unanimously. Scott will contact Lee to get him "up to speed" before the next Board meeting. Scott suggested that each member send Lee a welcoming email. Eleanor will add him to the Board email list.

**11. Vacancy on Nominating Committee (Scott and Heather)**

Replacement of Michael Safran on the Nominating Committee. Discussion of potential nominees and next steps. Scott said that several names had been proposed. He and Heather will discuss and rank the nominees and begin calling them.

**12. Update on review of governance policy documents (Ebe)**

An initial meeting will be scheduled for next week to discuss a division of labor for the revision of the Governance Manual.

**13. Building and Grounds update (Sam)**

The contractor, Scott Anderson, has removed the old shed and installed a new one. The Board allocated \$3,500 for this project; so far it has cost \$2,300, but is not quite complete yet. The estimated cost of creating a walkway to the shed using existing paving stones is about \$800, which will bring the total cost to about \$3,100.

**14. Update on Ellsworth Avenue bike lanes proposal (Sam)**

Shadyside Bike Corridor. The fourth meeting took place this evening. The organizers provided attendees with six options for the corridor, only four of which involved Ellsworth in front of the church. The next meeting will be on January 7, when attendees will vote on the options. Sam said that he would clarify whether all stakeholders have a vote. The selected option would then be presented at a public hearing. Information about the proposed options is available at <https://moveforwardpgh.org/shadyside/>.

**15. Appreciations & Aspirations (All)**

**16. Adjourn (9:03) (Scott)**

Respectfully submitted,  
Kurt Summersgill, Recording Secretary  
Approved by the Board: January 20, 2021  
Eleanor Mayfield, Secretary

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