

Minutes

Board of Trustees: September 15, 2021, Virtual Meeting

First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh

Board Members Attending: Julie Downs (2022); Lee Carnes, Vice President (2022); Sam Hens-Greco (2022); Heather Masterson, President (2023); Kyle Gracey, Treasurer (2023); Kate Snow, Secretary (2023); Bob Mitchell (2024); Rob Schwartz (2024), Amy DeChicchis (2024)

Board Members Absent: none

Ex Officio Members: Rev. Kate Walker, Minister

Others: Kurt Summersgill, Recording Secretary

Visitors: Ebe Emmons, Rev. Stephanie Gannon

1. **Call to Order (7:02) (Heather).**
2. **Opening Words (Amy).** Reading from Hymnal: "Atonement Day," Chaim Stern.
3. **Welcoming Guests (Heather)** Ebe Emmons.
4. **Announcements (Heather)**
 - a. Board Retreat, Friday October 8 (social and dinner) and Saturday, October 9.
 - b. The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be on Wednesday, October 20, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.
5. **Consent Agenda (Heather) (handouts).**
 - a. **Draft Minutes**
 - i. Motion by Heather, seconded by Rob Schwartz to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2021, Board Meeting, as revised by Bob. Approved 7 Yes, 2 Abstentions.
 - ii. Minister's Report
 - iii. Minutes of the September Finance Committee meeting.

Motion to accept Minister's Report and Minutes of the September Finance Committee passed unanimously. Sam reminded the Board that it cannot vote to approve Finance Committee reports. Rev. Kate advised that we were not voting to approve, only voting to accept. Heather said she has been doing some research on how to handle Consent Agendas, and she will bring that up for discussion in the future.

6. **Personnel Policy Change vote. (Rev. Kate)** (handout/e-mail) Cicely Moultrie has requested parental leave effective approximately Oct. 1. Current Personnel Policy does not currently grant family/parental leave. Rev. Kate is recommending First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh amend its current Personnel Policy to grant paid parental leave. (This is the only change being requested at this time, but the whole personnel policy will need to be revised in the next year.) Financial implication: We might need to pay for a temporary employee, though we are hoping to get most responsibilities covered by

volunteers. Cicely's pay would continue, including benefits, for up to 12 weeks. Motion made by Kyle Gracey to amend the current Personnel Policy of First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh in order to grant paid parental leave in line with current UUA guidelines. Seconded by Kate Snow and passed unanimously, to apply immediately.

7. **Affiliated Minister vote (Rev. Kate)** (7:29) (Handouts) Rev. Stephanie Gannon was a guest and talked about her request for affiliated minister status. This has no budget implications and requires execution of the negotiated Covenant of Affiliation between Rev. Gannon and First Unitarian. Motion to approve by Rob. Second by Bob. Motioned carried unanimously.
8. **Initial Draft 2022 Budget (Kyle)** (7:48) (handouts). All existing programs and staff are preserved. This also assumes that the church is closed into the next year. It will provide cost of living increases, which were not provided last year. It is a balanced budget (sort of: some miscellaneous reserves would be strategically drawn down, about \$35,000), but will need to accurately reflect the pledge drive. Currently it is informational and provides the shape of the budget and general figures. In the short term Coronavirus has had an effect; in the long term declining membership has the pledge income slowly creeping downward. A budget vote would be in December.
9. **Vote to amend the reopening policy for Phase 2 (current phase) (Kyle)** (8:19) Vote to amend the reopening policy for Phase 2 (current phase) to state that masks are "required" when inside the church (replacing current language that they are "strongly encouraged"). This is only for gatherings, not imposing a recommendation on staff when in office. Motion by Kyle. Second by Lee. Motion carried unanimously.
10. **Pledge Drive Committee Update (Heather)** (8:22). The budget assumes \$415,000 to be raised by pledges. Kick off of the drive is October 3 and will run through Oct 31. The committee has been meeting weekly and favors a more traditional pledge drive this year, rather than a roll-over pledge. The theme is Need a Bigger Table. They are hoping to host two in-person activities/coffee hours, Sept 26, and Oct 3, in the Courtyard, perhaps limited to 30 people per session with social distancing and masking requirements. There will be a virtual conversation on October 11. Co-chairs of the committee are Maria Lauro and Eleanor Mayfield.
11. **Board Retreat (Heather)** (8:27). (handouts) For the Friday session: Most favor an outdoor session. Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. is planned, outdoor or by zoom.
12. **Startup Retreat (Heather)** (8:32). (handout) Rev. Kate has found this process to be very helpful in the past; it is best to do it about 6 months in. Proposed dates: Saturday, January 8 (Sessions 1 and 2) and Saturday Jan 22 (Sessions 3 and 4) with a worship service incorporated with one of those dates. Rev. Sunshine has provided input. Basic arrangement: Session 1: 1.5 hours with the Board, Minister, and program staff (LRED). Session 2: 2hours with the full congregation, and including program and music staff.

Session 3: 2 hours with church leadership (Board, Minister, committee chairs, perhaps key committee members, and others deemed necessary). Session 4: 3 hours (same as Session 1). Goal is to explore how decision-making occurs in this congregation, what will help the ministry start well, and what relationship Board and Minister and staff want to have with each other. Rev. Sunshine recommends that session with congregation go through a cultural anthropology exercise.

- 13. Board volunteering for one of the Sunday Night Homeless Shelter Dinners? (Sam)**
(8:40). First Unitarian cooks a dinner the first Sunday of every month at EECM (East End Cooperative Ministry) shelter. Different groups take responsibility for certain months. He is proposing the Board volunteer for the month of January to serve a couple purposes: a way for the Board to be together separate from the meeting and to lead by example. Because of Covid at this time, all are cooking at home and then taking it to the shelter. Cook for about 50 people. Delivered to EECM shelter, Sunday at about 5:30 pm. There is a fund for reimbursement, if desired. There was a sense of the Board to not obligate this or future Boards to a commitment. However, there is tentative agreement that some Board members agreed to volunteer to cook that dinner. Sam will follow-up with a date and reminders.

- 14. Adjourn (Heather)** (9:02)

Respectfully submitted,

Kurt Summersgill, Recording Secretary

Approved by the Board: October 20, 2021

Kate Snow, Secretary