

Minutes

Board of Trustees: October 20, 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: Jim Pashek

1. **Call to Order (7:01) (Heather)**
2. **Opening Words (Julie).** From an interview with Jane Goodall for Forbes Magazine.
3. **Welcoming Guests (Heather)**
4. **Announcements (Heather)**
 - a. The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be on Wednesday, November 17, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.
5. **Consent Agenda (Heather) (handouts).**
 - a. **Draft Minutes**
 - i. Motion by Heather, seconded by Sam to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2021, Board Meeting, as amended. Approved unanimously.
 - ii. Minister's Report
 - iii. Annual Budget Drive update. Pledging as of 10/16/21 was \$214,156, an increase of \$31,000 for these pledge units. We are on trend as compared to previous years.
 - iv. Schedule for reporting from Board Committees.
 - v. Minutes of the October Finance Committee meeting.
6. **Church solar panel proposal Q&A (Jim Pashek) (handout)** From the Building and Grounds Committee. Solar panels were always planned for after the geothermal system was installed. The heat pumps that provide heating and cooling as well as the pumps used to circulate coolant from the heat pumps through the geothermal wells are powered by electricity, so our electric bills have increased as a result, and solar panels would reduce those bills. The panels would be placed on the roof of the Mason Wing, which has a new rubber roof. From a couple of proposals, one used weights to secure it, and one would drill 150 holes in the new roof to attach brackets, and the fear is those holes might end up leaking. The arrays would save about 375 tons of carbon emissions per annum, which is a significant amount. As a non-profit, we do not have the tax advantages businesses do for installing solar. Jim will look into whether the company will arrange financing. Have we looked into grants? Jim is not aware of any. Is there a timeline? We can probably schedule for Summer, 2022, if we commit soon, but the Committee has no expectations for a time-frame. Amy asked Jim if he had information on other churches that had installed the system, so we could contact them and find out if they had received any

creative funding. He will get back to her on that. Rev. Kate will contact other UU churches. Kyle can put together an analysis of our existing funds to see if there are any potential funding sources. Bob mentioned that we are also planning to change all the lighting, which will substantially reduce our electric bill, as well. Is this something we liaise with the Green Sanctuary group? Sam suggested that we survey the Congregation to see how many would financially support this effort.

7. **Quarterly Treasurer's Report (Kyle) (handout)** (same as sent out to pledge units). Our finances are "OK", with no major issues. We are budgeting for a net loss.
8. **2022 Budget Update (Kyle) (handout) (7:36)** There are a lot of adjustments since last time, but not a change in the overall budget. If we open sooner than projected, that will improve the budget bottom line.
9. **Vote on changes to 2021 Budget (Kyle) (Handout)** He has adjusted for the Minister's health insurance premium cost, because we now know that amount precisely. He also adjusted for a higher rate of on-line giving, with a subsequent increase in total Breeze transaction fees. He has now added a feature on-line for people to include the transaction fee. Agreement for changes moved by Kyle; seconded by Kate Snow. Motion carried unanimously.
10. **Reimagining Fundraising Task Force recommendations and vote (Heather) (handout)** In April of 2021 the Board voted to establish a task force called the Reimagining Fundraising Task Force, which was charged with re-evaluating the mission and the charter of the Annual Budget Drive committee, as well as looking at all aspects of fundraising was being done at church. The goal was to explore new strategies and opportunities for the future, and a lot of work went into the process. The group met several times over the summer and fall and was joined in the fall by Rev. Kate. A lot of work went into this project. At this time they would like to propose that the Board vote create a Stewardship Committee by adopting the Committee Charter and terminate the current charter of the Annual Budget Drive Committee, assigning all responsibilities to the Stewardship Committee. They also request to terminate the current charter of the Planned Giving Committee, and assign its duties to the Stewardship Committee. The Task Force also recommends that they Board prioritize recruiting members to the Stewardship Committee, identifying and creating appropriate sub-groups to address specific issues, especially annual giving, planned giving, and fund-raisers. The goal is to pull concentration off the Annual Budget Drive and foster more of culture of giving in the Congregation that is year-round, including conversations with new members, capital improvement projects, looking for grant opportunities, and being a resource for fund-raising sources. Rev. Kate affirmed that this new direction in stewardship is more in line with other UU churches. There will be nine members with three-year terms in coordination with the fiscal year, and they will make their own determination regarding officers. Motion to 1) Authorize creation of the Stewardship Committee by adopting the committee charter presented at this meeting, 2) Terminate the charters of the Annual Budget Drive and Planned Giving Committees and assign their responsibilities to the Stewardship Committee. Motion by Heather, seconded by Kyle; Motion carried unanimously.
11. **Task Force to work on Minister/Congregation/Strategic Planning portion of the Governance Manual (Kate)** She and Bob have volunteered to work on this. The biggest thing we are adding is the Committee on Ministry. They will need more than two people

to help with this. A first step is to work with Rev. Kate and her draft document. Rev. Kate will reach to Ebe Emmons about also being included in the process.

12. **Draft Charter for the Marketing and Communications Team Q&A (Rob) (8:20) (handout).** A lot of this is from the original charter, which was approved by the Board in 2017. The current two members (Nancy Latimer and Mark Whitaker) are willing to continue on. They want at least one more person. The committee, which is standing, would work closely with the Communications Coordinator, who is a church employee. The Team is a Board committee, so they would report to the Board. They are looking for input, so please send any other comments to him. Motion to approve the draft charter, as written, by Rob, second by Kyle. Motion carried unanimously. Rob will be willing to serve as the Board liaison.

13. **Appreciations and Aspirations**

14. **Adjourn (Heather) (8:43)**

Respectfully submitted,

Kurt Summersgill, Recording Secretary

Approved by the Board: November 17, 2021

Kate Snow, Secretary