

# Minutes

## Board of Trustees: November 16, 2022

### First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh

**Board Members Attending:** Rob Schwartz, President (2024); Amy DeChicchis (2024); Bob Mitchell (2024); Kate Snow, Secretary (2023); Christine Milcarek (2025); Raeann Olander (2025)

**Absent Members:** Nicholas Izzo (2025); Kyle Gracey, Treasurer (2023); Heather Masterson (2023)

**Ex Officio Member:** Rev. Kate Walker, Minister

**Others:** Kurt Summersgill, Recording Secretary

**Visitors:** Peggy Parsons

1. **Call to Order (Rob)**
2. **Opening Words (Chris).** A Thanksgiving Prayer
3. **Welcoming Guests (Rob)**
4. **Announcements (Raeann)**
  - a. The next regularly-scheduled Board meeting will be on Wednesday, December 21, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at church
  - b. Opening words for December: Heather
  - c. Congregational Budget meeting December 4.
  - d. Committee Reports due in December: Stewardship and Safety.
  - e. Interdenominational Service. Rev. Kate will be presenting a sermon on anti-racism efforts at an Interdenominational Service, Tuesday, November 22, at 7:30 at Third Presbyterian Church. (Negley and Fifth)
5. **Consent Agenda (Rob) (Documents)**
  - a. October 19, 2022 Board meeting minutes. Motion to approve by Raeann, as corrected. Second by Chris. Approved unanimously.
  - b. Minister's Report (see document).
  - c. LRED Report (see document)
  - d. Committee reports: Stewardship, Building and Grounds, VIM
  - e. Minutes, November Finance Committee meeting
  - f. Update on Draft 2023 Budget
  - g. Quarterly Investment Report
  - h. Updated Board Liaison Reporting Calendar. Kate Snow will create a folder.
  - i. 2022-2023 Board Priorities. (review). Rob suggests that the Board Priorities document remain in its own folder in the 2022 Board documents, as a working document. The consent agenda for each month can reference the updated document. The Usher signup sheet is still active and it is a good way to increase Board visibility.

**6. Ratification of e-mail votes (Rob)**

- a. Electing Mary Redford as UU Cluster Board representative from First Church, and Rob Schwartz as First Church delegate. Motion by Kate Snow. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously
7. Discuss next steps in creating a mid-level liaison between the Board and Rev. Kate, who could deal with issues related to, e.g., non-Board committees and non-church activities that have been well-received by the church, such as Habitat for Humanity and PIIN (Rob)
- a. The problem is that there is no mid-level committee, like a “Program Council,” to deal with these. Pre-COVID, we would have an Activities Fair, which can be revived. The Grounds Committee needs members. Membership and growth should be a priority across the board. Such a council would be responsible for this. Rob, Nick, Rev Kate, and, potentially, someone from the congregation will get together to work on this.
8. Vote: Roof repair estimate (Nick) (document). Rob thinks we need more information on the insurance claim, along with Nick and Kyle to explain things, before we vote to pay for this roof repair. Tabled.
9. Discussion and vote. (7:43) Report on the results of testing the SecureAire system in the Undercroft, with and without the HEPA filters. Move to purchase the single SecureAire unit that’s on loan to us (Bob) Documents (Bob) and e-mail from Kyle.
- a. First is an acknowledgment of Peg Parsons and Sue Oerkvitz for all they have done.
  - b. We have been addressing air quality by running the HVAC in continuous fan mode and opening the windows, which will not work as it gets colder.
  - c. Looking at SecureAire slimline that can be installed in each heat pump to remove small particles that are known to carry the Covid virus. Everything we have been looking at basically removes particles by passing them through a filtering device.
  - d. To evaluate various filtering systems, tests were performed in the Undercroft, Schweitzer Room, and the Sanctuary. In each case, windows and doors were first opened to bring in outside air, which typically has high particle levels. After the counts reached a high, steady-state level, the windows/doors were closed and the filtering device(s) turned on. Air quality monitors measured the reduction of both “small” (0.5+ micron) and “large” (2.5+ micron) particles. The key comparison metric used is the time to reduce small particles by 50% -- because virus-carrying particles should be reduced at that rate.
  - e. On two different days, the loaned SecureAire unit reduced small particles in the Undercroft by 50% in 20 minutes and 18 minutes. In another test with 3 HEPAs in the Undercroft, the small particle count dropped by 50% in 14 minutes. It should be noted that the SecureAire unit is at a disadvantage in this test because the HVAC system is bringing in about 20% outside air. At the end of the test with the HEPA filters, turning on the SecureAire unit caused small particles to drop by an additional 50%.
  - f. In addition to the above testing in essentially empty rooms, there was limited testing with people. One test monitored during an art show to see how a large group (40-50 people) would affect the particles. The small particle count went up, but not very much.

- g. A previous test on August 28 measured particles in the Sanctuary during the service with windows/doors open, and then after the service when windows/doors were closed. There was a substantial drop in large particles— by 50% in 7 minutes and by about 80% overall. That occurred in spite of the fact that the HVAC is bringing in outside air. That was not the case with small particles, which dropped very slowly – as expected, because MERV 8 filters are not designed to remove them. The job of the SecureAire device is to increase the size of the particles from small to larger and converts them to the equivalent of a MERV 13, making them a size able to be removed by our MERV 8 filters.
  - h. One could use a lot of HEPA's in the Sanctuary (maybe a dozen to remove a similar number of particles). It would be cheaper, about \$4,000, but there would be additional noise, and they take up floor space. They have to be manually operated, as compared to the programmed HVAC with SecureAire filters.
  - i. Next steps: At the very least, he recommends keeping the loaned SecureAire for the Undercroft (\$2,250).
  - j. Rob: Time frame? Bob: We have no time limit from the company on the loaner model. The time consideration for the Sanctuary is the weather and lag time from ordering to delivery. One of Kyle's points is that there was a lot of information in a short time, and determining where the money will come from, so he recommends deferring any vote to the next meeting.
  - k. Raeann: The biggest question is where the funds will come from. Rob: Another question is whether the cost/benefit ratio is worth it? Rev. Kate: There are already complaints about the windows being open.
  - l. The Undercroft is where we have the most people close together and with food. This might be the best space to start with the HEPA and SecureAire.
  - m. Rob: How many people are staying away from church because of the current situation? Can we do a quick survey to see how many are staying away? Rob will put together a survey quickly, and circulate for review.
10. December Board meeting. (Rob)
- a. Should we have an in-person potluck? Discuss budget and priorities. Meet and eat at 6:00 to 7:30. Pat Schuetz has agreed to be recording secretary for that meeting. Rob will check with the other members.
11. **Appreciations and Aspirations (All)**
12. **Adjourn** (Rob) (8:50)

Respectfully submitted,

Kurt Summersgill, Recording Secretary

Approved by the Board: December 21, 2022

Kate Snow, Secretary