

Minutes
Board of Trustees: May 17, 2023
First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh

Board Members Attending: Rob Schwartz, President (2024); Amy DeChicchis (2024); Kate Snow, Secretary (2023); Raeann Olander (2025); Nicholas Izzo (2025); Heather Masterson (2023); Bob Mitchell (2024); Kyle Gracey, Treasurer (2023); Christine Milcarek (2025)

Absent Members: none

Ex Officio Member: Rev. Kate Walker, Minister

Others: Kurt Summersgill, Recording Secretary

Visitors:

Call to Order (Rob) (7:00)

1. **Opening Words (Amy)** from the Jean Tepperman poem “Witch”
2. **Welcoming Guests (Rob)**
3. **Announcements (Raeann)**
 - a. The next regularly-scheduled Board meeting will be on Wednesday, June 14, 2023. It will be recorded.
 - b. Opening Words for June: Kyle Gracey
 - c. Committee Reports due in May: COSM and Safety
4. **Consent Agenda (Rob) (Documents)**
 - a. April 19, 2023 Board meeting minutes. Motion to approve by Nick. Second by Raeann. Approved unanimously.
 - b. Minister’s Report (see document).
 - i. Solar panels are coming next week.
 - ii. Church Picnic in Schenley Park, as a celebration of the 25th anniversary of her ordination.
 - iii. Bob: Membership and Growth is a theme ongoing.
 - iv. Kyle: Erica’s sabbatical: She is eligible for 5 months, but it is not set yet.
 - c. LRED Report (see document).
 - d. Committee Reports: Stewardship, Building (plans for installing the filters)
 - e. Board 2022-2023 Priorities (review)
5. **Quarterly Financial Report (Kyle)**
 - a. April Finance Committee Report.
 - i. Basically we are doing OK.
 - ii. Rob: In years past there has been a pie chart to help with understanding where things are and are going. (Kyle gives that kind of presentation during the budget presentation). The new accounting software for payroll accounting lumps a lot of things together, which in some ways makes it easier, but there is a separate report that breaks it down by employee, so there is a way to see each employee separately, if needed.

- iii. Bob: Electrical overage is surprising. Kyle: The delay in the solar installation is part of that, and there doesn't seem to be as much saving from the LED lights as expected. Another factor is that electrical rates have jumped considerably, and they are looking at switching providers.
 - iv. Total assets dropped by \$120,000, of which a large portion is for installation of the solar panels, as well as for the roof repair. Total liabilities also dropped by \$106,000, which is basically the money being held for the solar panels.
 - v. The Committee is recommending a review of the Share the Plate process. Perhaps this can happen at the retreat, or later on in the year.
 - b. Investment Committee report.
 - i. These are in pretty good shape. The market was down a bit by the end of the calendar year, so there was a noticeable drop in investments. It has picked up a bit.
- 6. **Vote:** Approve \$452.02 from Organ Restoration Fund to cover roof repair balance (Kyle). Other moneys have been taken from this account for this purpose. Motion to approve by Kyle. Second by Kate Snow. Motion carried unanimously.
- 7. **Vote:** Program Council structure "charter" (Rob)
 - a. Proposed to change the requirements of Council members to be members of the congregation. Rob moves to establish a Program Leadership Council, as revised. Raeann seconded. Motion passes unanimously.
- 8. June retreat planning (Rob). (9-3:00) (outgoing Board members do not need to attend.) There will be a meeting on Monday June 5, at 5:00, to plan the agenda for the retreat. (Executive Council meets June 6). Topics:
 - a. Financial positions pipeline and leadership pipeline.
 - b. Strategic Plan.
 - c. Board prioritization list.
 - d. If the COSM will be polling the congregation, we can run an assessment. There should also be a self-assessment of the Board. This could be done before the retreat, to include the outgoing members.
 - e. Rev Kate: We could have an informal exit interview with outgoing members at a separate time.
- 9. Wrap up details regarding the Annual Meeting May 21 (Rob)
 - a. Kate: Everything is on the Church website, including the agenda.
 - b. Food and drink will be contributed by the Board. The signup is in the congregational annual meeting folder. Someone should notify the hospitality folks.
 - c. Balloting and voting need to be closely fine-tuned.
 - d. Heather can help with the mic and with on-line voting.
- 10. Strategic Plan update (Bob, Kyle) (8:15) (document)
 - a. The centerpiece is the outcome of the discernment from the cottage meetings and the survey.
 - b. Priorities were:
 - i. Diversify, including age, as well as race, making sure that the Congregation is first aware of our own white privilege, and grow,

- ii. Create long-lasting and meaningful First Unitarian/Community partnerships advancing social justice,
 - c. They will add more granularity of the plan in the next few weeks.
- 11. Shall we have a Board book discussion of Terasa Cooley's book (Rev. Kate) Tabled.
- 12. Next steps in Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM) process (Kyle, Rob) (8:28) e-mail document
 - a. We wanted to review the process, for the future. Things that have gone well. Things that will need to be improved. Conversation on how we do that.
 - b. Heather: There is value in asking a wide range of people for their input.
 - c. Rev. Kate. They have picked a particular tool for the assessment, but there is no obligation to use it ongoing.
 - d. Rev. Kate. Congregation right to access to the minister's personnel record? That's tricky.
 - e. Nick: People generally just want to know if something is being done. "Is there a process, who is doing it?" All they want to know is that it is being handled, not specifics.
 - f. Rob: Next steps:
 - i. The Board could ask COSM for more detail. Invite whoever can attend to a Board meeting. Nick will ask Mary Denison, as Chair, and whoever is available.
 - ii. The Board needs to craft what our questions are before meeting with COSM members. (Kyle and Bob can help with this).
 - iii. The COSM ultimately expects to prepare a statement for the Board to recommend to the Congregation.
- 13. Appreciations and aspirations (All)
- 14. **Adjourn** (Rob) (8:55)

Respectfully submitted,
Kurt Summersgill, Recording Secretary
Approved by the Board: June 14, 2023
Kate Snow, Secretary