

Minutes
Board of Trustees: October 18, 2023
First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh

Board Members Attending: Raeann Olander, President (2025); Brian Junker, Vice-President (2026); Kyle Gracey, Treasurer (2026); Nicholas Izzo, Secretary (2025); Rob Schwartz, (2024); Amy DeChicchis (2024); Bob Mitchell (2024); Jean Schmidt (2026); Christine Milcarek (2025).

Absent Members: None.

Ex Officio Member: Rev. Kate Walker, Minister

Others: Kurt Summersgill, Recording Secretary

Visitors: none

Call to Order (Raeann) (6:50)

1. **Opening Words (Bob)**
2. **Executive Session (6:55 to 7:35) (Raeann)**
3. **Welcoming Guests (Raeann):** There were no guests
4. **Announcements (Brian)**
 - a. The next regularly-scheduled Board meeting will be on Wednesday, November 15, 2023.
 - b. Opening Words for November: Raeann
 - c. Committee Reports due in November: Stewardship, Building, Finance, Investments
 - d. PGH Cluster Meeting at Sunnyhill UU, Nov 11.
 - e. Congregational Budget Meeting will be Sunday Dec 3 @ 12:30 PM, Virtual on Zoom. Kate will arrange for the Zoom to be set up. Nick will send out the link, on November 13 in accordance with the 14 days' notice stipulated by the by-laws.
5. **Consent Agenda (Raeann) (Documents)**
 - a. Draft minutes from September board meeting. Motion to accept with one modification by Rob, Second by Brian. Motion carries unanimously.
 - b. Minister's Report. (Document).
 - c. Committee reports: Stewardship, Finance, Personnel, Program Endowments, VIM.
 - i. Brian: Endowment Reports: There is some confusion on the Music Endowment about who is on it. Kyle: Kiki should have rolled off, and Martin should be on it.
 - ii. Jean: Social Justice Endowment had a resignation, and Jean is going off in December, so the Nominating Committee needs to know to replace two members.
 - d. Board responsibilities. Raeann will be getting started on three issues.
6. Delegates for UU Cluster meeting (Raeann). This has been announced. We are allowed five delegates. Nick moves to appoint Mary Redford as a delegate. Second by Jean. Motion carried unanimously

7. Quarterly Treasurer's and Finance Committee report (Kyle) Documents
 - a. Our finances are OK. Not really different from the last quarter. Pledge payments are up, as expected. We are just a little bit behind.
 - b. Nick: Are the numbers reported for the plate collection the church's share after share the plate donation? Kyle: Yes, that is correct. The church's share of the plate collection is now at pre-COVID levels, even with the change in how we do it.
 - c. Rob: Electricity: Kyle: The solar panels are working. Electricity accounts for much of the budget deficit, as we thought the panels would be on line sooner.
 - d. There are several overages on staff salaries. Some things have to be cut back or adjusted.
 - e. We are expecting a \$17,000 loss more than we were planning to have this year, for a projected loss of about \$22,000.
8. Budget update (Kyle). (Document). No massive changes from last month. He puts changes in the Highlights in "**bold**". He is budgeting a lower cost of living increase. He is planning for a balanced budget. We will have to prioritize what we want to spend money on.
9. Vote Minor Bylaw amendment (Kyle) document (8:05). A technical correction to amend Article VI – Nominating Committee, Section 1: Eligibility and Elections, Old language: "The Nominating Committee will follow the procedure set forth in **Article VI, Section 3**, to make nominations for the Nominating Committee." New language: "The Nominating Committee will follow the procedure set forth in **Article V, Section 4**, to make nominations for the Nominating Committee." Motion by Kyle. Second by Nick. Carried unanimously. This can be ratified at the Annual Meeting.
10. Vote: Consolidating Reserve Accounts (Kyle). There are many accounts whose purpose has been lost, or no-one was using them. Most have been inactive for 5 years or more. The Finance Committee is calculating for some contingencies for an Emergency Reserve and a Music Presentation and Equipment Fund. Document. Motion, as adjusted to exclude four accounts for now, by Kyle. Second by Nick. Carried unanimously. Thanks to the Finance Committee for undertaking this huge task.
11. Update on meeting with COSM (Committee on Shared Ministry) RE: Ministry assessment with emphasis on membership growth and diversity (Jean, Bob, Rob)
 - a. They met with them last week. Rob and Jean presented three categories and three questions (see last month minutes). They recommended using the tool from the Diversity Workshop. The net outcome was that the COSM wanted to look at potential tools. Jean: Their concern is "What is this assessment in the grand scheme? This would not be longitudinal. Kate: The volunteers on this committee are concerned about the amount of work involved, and want it focused/narrowed by the Board. Bob: His sense is that the COSM is not well-aware of the strategic plan.
12. COSM Minister Assessment feedback. (Kyle) (document)
 - a. The idea is that this would be concise, forward-looking, not introducing any new ideas, putting in writing.
 - b. Rev Kate: She sees a gap between the Board and what she and COSM sees. There needs to be a joint conversation.

- c. Brian: He feels that the Board does not know the standard practices for evaluations, that it is necessary to know this before tasking COSM. Communication should also be spoken and in person.
 - d. Rob expressed reservations about whether a survey was the correct tool for an evaluation like this.
 - e. Jean: an important questions is “How is this going to help the Board, the Minister, and the Congregation?”
 - f. Kyle: next step: Hold this for now. 1. We need to know more about ministerial assessments. 2. We then need to discuss this with COSM so that our perceptions match. Volunteers to carry this forward and come back to the Board: Kyle, Rev. Kate, Rob. Raeann will contribute.
13. De-brief on “Building a Culture of Inclusion” (All). Tabled.
14. Appreciations and aspirations (All)
15. **Adjourn** (Raeann)

Respectfully submitted,
Kurt Summersgill, Recording Secretary
Approved by the Board: November 15, 2023
Nick Izzo, Secretary