

**Minutes**  
**Board of Trustees: February 21, 2024**  
**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); Bob Mitchell (2024); Jean Schmidt (2026); Christine Milcarek (2025); Amy DeChicchis (2024)

**Absent Members:** all listed in attendance

**Ex Officio Member:** Rev. Kate Walker, Minister (Absent)

**Others:** Arthur Notaro, Recording Secretary

**Visitors:** Louie Portella

**Call to Order (Raeann) (7:00) (Zoom)**

1. **Opening Words (Amy)** Poem by Sojourner Truth
2. **Welcoming Guests (Raeann)**
3. **Announcements (Brian)**
  - a. Next Board meeting: Wed., March 20, 2024
  - b. Reset June Board Meeting Date (proposed June 12) Raeann proposed a potluck that day for the future in person meeting
  - c. March Opening Words: Kyle
  - d. Committee reports due in March: Building, COSM, Finance, Safety
4. **Consent Agenda (Raeann) (Documents)**
  - a. Draft minutes from January board meeting. Motion to accept (with edits) by, Rob. **Motion carries unanimously.**
  - b. Minister's Report. (Document) No report noted.
  - c. Treasurer's Report (document)  
Pledge target was exceeded but this does not fundamentally change the upcoming budget. There was concern over hedging future giving versus overall increased total giving. In general, people give less than pledged, so this is a future consideration.

Health insurance is higher than budgeted by around \$5000. The switch to a new copier will cut \$11,000 expense in about half. Kyle plans to ask board to vote on an updated budget in the future with an improved estimate without anomalies given new information.

Brian reinforces Kyles' concern over the effect on future giving of asking for additional contributions to cover the current year.

Rob: Does this update include revised pledges from the board? The number I saw was higher. At least 9+ pledging units total were affected by the appeal. Some made extra donations.

- d. Committee reports:
  - i. Safety. (documents)  
None found, Safety committee has been dormant
- e. Board Priorities update

5. **Investment Report (Kyle)**

- a. Better performance is observed in 2023 than 2022 but not better than 2021. Closed out Simon Future fund for solar panel.
- b. Donaldson/Genzler fund is increasing, It is a key repository for gifts from estates and planned giving.
- c. Is the Goldsmith fund restricted to music? It is restricted to capital, not necessarily music. Two funds. One funds general fund, the other goes into a music reserve fund. The reserve fund money is used for concerts, or any music expenses or general operating expenses which reinforces the music budget.
- d. Nick comments that the spending of all bequests are intended to honor the donors intent, though this can be confusing to implement depending on wording of bequest.
- e. Brian asks if there is a document clarifying the intent of the funds, especially the Goldsmith but any that are less clear? Kyle said yes and he can provide.
- f. Bottom line is endowment is back over 3 million, less than 2021 but partly returned.
- g. Question about air filter sanctuary purchase. Simon future fund, geothermal extra capital expenditure funds, small number of specific donations, and there is still a \$7,000 deficit.
- h. Endowment Withdrawals  
2.5 of 3.5 percent of 3 year rolling average goes mostly to general fund. Whatever is left beyond that: Music Major Repair fund and Office new equipment reserve (tech replacement fund,) are well covered, while the Building R&M fund receives the bulk of the remainder including funding for the landscaping fund. Ellen mostly determines the Music Major Repair fund, Kris doesn't draw from the capital funds.

6. **Vote on annual withdrawal from Endowments.**

- Kyle Gracey moved to authorize the 2024 annual withdrawal of \$39,214.58 from the Endowment Fund, to be deposited into the following accounts:
  - \$26,280 to the General Fund
  - \$650 to the Music Major Repair reserve
  - \$639.33 to the Office New Equipment reserve
  - \$11,645.25 to Extraordinary Building Repair and & Maintenance reserve

**The motion was approved unanimously**

7. **VIM Report on plans for cottage meeting with Young Adults and RE Families**

- a. Take a stab at rewording questions 3 and 4 explicitly to include children.
- b. Trying to understand how welcome and engaged laity are, how to link this with the strategic plan.

- c. Jean will ask for edits through email discussion  
 YA Questions:  
 What led you to the church?  
 What do you want from your relationship with the church?  
 Appreciative enquiry is the question mantra.  
 March 10th definitive date.  
 Categories of group activities that fit under church involvement.  
 YA folks attended the board recruitment at the meeting. (Cass, Marley, Cait, Surya, Rachel, Arthur, Aspen)  
 Jean proposes to go back to drawing board for YA questions, tackle comments and reconvene to review.

**8. Discussion on ways to increase awareness of discernment planning/assessment process (Jean and Bob)**

- a. Reviewed discernment planning assessment (DPA) cycle document
- b. Using VIM can identify problems before they arise.
- c. Include discernment planning assessment as part of UU orientation?
- d. Kyle - focus on how to reach the most members, intersperse the message throughout communications during the year so members are aware.
- e. DPA is about maintaining intentionality
- f. Brian - nitty gritty not too important to many members,

**9. Discuss updates to Treasurer and Controller position descriptions (Kyle)**

- a. Kyle reviewed differences between Treasurer and Controller positions in new job descriptions. Treasurer is more outward focused maintains membership list while the Controller focuses more on record keeping. Kyle moved to approve the job descriptions. They were unanimously approved

**10. Vote on members of endowment committees (Brian)**

- a. **Brian moved to approve appointment of new committee members**
- b. Children and Youth RE Endowment: Sarah Hooper (3 year term)
- c. Music Endowment: Danny Rectenwald (3 year term)
- d. Social Justice Endowment: Sandy Woolley (2 year term, due to a resignation) and Joan Harvey (3 year term)
- e. Campus Ministry Endowment: Michael Safran (3 year term)

**All nominees were unanimously approved.**

**11. Draft Statement on use of Church building in alignment with our principles and values (Brian)**

- a. Review of current statement. Proposal to clarify wording between Brian and Kyle offline. Should this be focused on events that happen on church property or also off property.  
 Brian proposes to make revisions per comments, run past Kyle so it is clear,

**12. Annual Meeting Planning (Raeann)**

- a. Raeann reviews planning update. May 19th 2024 is the date. 5 pm dinner, 6-630 start

**13. Suggestions for Future Business (All)**

- a. Kyle notes difficulty in hearing from UUA about board assessment. Raeann will follow up with Rev Kate for clarification moving forward.
- b. Nick mentioned that the safety committee was mentioned and will set up meeting. Raeann will follow up with several related items with Rev. Kate. Rob mentions updating usher training. Raenn mentions Goodwill active shooter training, with state police, Kate wants to update ushers and greeters in the fall. Kyle needs to know who the committee members are so he can coordinate applications. Louie has been working with Department of Homeland Security to learn about the nonprofit grant program. Says a state actor will be in town.

**14. Appreciations and Aspirations (All)**

- a. Amy - this Sunday is 4th Sunday, membership will have intro to UU following service in the Priestley Room.
- b. Kyle - with new bylaws, please consider running again.
- c. Brian - thanks to Bob and Jean for their careful consideration of the discernment process
- d. Bob and Rev Kate will be in Nashville next week for PINN related training
- e. Jean appreciates Arthur for quietly working in background!
- f. Rob appreciation to Louie, Bob and Jean(correct?) and Amy and Raeann for board on board meeting.
- g. Raeann - appreciation and momentum for appreciation of activities that make the board more visible.
- h. Louie - appreciation to Rob for appreciation, and to the church for all the hard work and transparency, and to the overall UU community in general.

**15. Adjourn (Raeann) (Time)**

Respectfully submitted,  
Arthur Notaro, Recording Secretary

Approved by the Board: March 20, 2024  
Nick Izzo, Secretary